



**The Undergraduate
Spectrum**

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Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the 2021 edition of *The Undergraduate Spectrum*, a journal showcasing the rich diversity of artistic and rhetorical practice at Saint Mary's College of California. Published here are winners of the 31st annual Newman Awards for writing in Collegiate Seminar and the 33rd annual Spectrum Awards for writing in the disciplines.

Each year, the difficult task of narrowing the field of submissions requires much serious deliberation by our diverse panel of judges, consisting of both professors from across the curriculum and student Writing Advisers in the Center for Writing Across the Curriculum (CWAC). Accordingly, we extend our deepest appreciation to all the professors who nominated their students' writing, to all the students who submitted their own writing, and to all the judges who gave of their time and wisdom throughout the year.

Following the first round of selection, a staged editing process — mirroring that which occurs when writers work with professional publications — brings finalists to CWAC to work with a Writing Adviser as they revise their work through three drafts. Working with Advisers, finalists review both idea- and sentence-level issues and refine and resubmit their pieces for final consideration. Winning texts are then selected from among these finalists.

For this issue, we also have the privilege of publishing *Women in Sports: Coronavirus Journals*, a compilation of writing from Kinesiology students at Saint Mary's which documents how the COVID-19 pandemic has been affecting women's athletics. Through a personal journal format, the students captured news bits, related anecdotes, and digested their hopes and fears about COVID's impact on the women's sports community. We've published these journals with minimal editing in order to preserve the authenticity of the students' voices. The journals depart from the academic tone of pieces usually published in *The Undergraduate Spectrum*, so we've isolated it in its own section between *The Spectrum* and Newman Award winners.

Ryan Shepherd

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Informational Interview

Kayla M. Stephens

For this informational interview, I decided to meet with Tatijana Bowman, who works as a Corporate Partnerships Seasonal Assistant for the NFL team, the Kansas City Chiefs. Bowman recently began working with the Chiefs; therefore, the topics discussed within this conversation are a reflection of this past football season in which the Chiefs won the Superbowl. I was particularly interested in collaborating with Bowman due to the fact that she works in an industry I hope to pursue in my future, a professional sports organization. Additionally, I was fascinated by Bowman's first experience working with a professional sports team because it was one in which the team won it all. I wanted to learn not only what everyday tasks are on an in-season and off-season day but also the nature of the environment when a team is competing in an event as significant as the Superbowl. Compared to collegiate and recreational sports, I have always found professional sports especially intriguing be-

cause of the level of intensity and pressure on the business side. Therefore, I wanted to dive deeper into what a position in the professional sports industry entails from the perspective of a newly hired individual. Throughout my interview with Bowman, I learned the difference between in-season and off-season daily responsibilities, skills that are essential in this type of high-pressure environment, and the extent to which education impacts future job opportunities.

The first topic Bowman and I discussed was what an everyday life is like on an in-season and off-season work day. Bowman also included her experiences of a game-day because she considers it as a whole category in itself. When beginning with off-season tasks, Bowman states that her primary responsibilities consist of creating decks and contracts, preparing deals for pitching opportunities, and collaborating with sponsorship partners (T. Bowman, personal communication, Sept. 23, 2020). For instance, Bowman explained the spon-

sorship deal between the Chiefs and Ford Motor Company (T. Bowman, personal communication, Sept. 23, 2020). Within this collaboration with Ford, Bowman prepared a presentation which included how many people watched the Ford commercial aired during Chiefs games, the number of people at a Chiefs game signed up to win a Ford, and the number of people in Kansas City who now prefer Ford over a competitor compared to the beginning of the season. After this presentation, Ford would reflect on the information and decide if they wanted to renew or discontinue their sponsorship with the Chiefs. One of the most interesting points that Bowman made is that the dollar amount of the sponsorships that the Chiefs had with other organizations increased after the Chiefs won the Superbowl (T. Bowman, personal communication, Sept. 23, 2020). This is because more people wanted to be associated with a winning team. This connects to a topic discussed in Chapter 9 of *Contemporary Sport Management* by Paul M. Pederson. Pederson states that “corporate sponsorships have become one of the main sources of revenue for professional sport teams and leagues” (Pederson, 2019, p. 195). This is exemplified through my interview with Bowman, as she describes the extent to which she and her team would make the constant effort of connecting with organizations and setting up sponsorships. In fact, the majority of her efforts in the off-season would be dedicated to sponsorships because it is such a vital source of revenue. Additionally, Bowman relayed insight as to how a typical in-season or game-day plays out. The preparation for and activities on game-day consist of responsibilities such as ensuring the

scoreboard displays the correct messages, distributing pizza coupons to the correct winning fans, and ensuring that people who need field passes for the game have received them. A story of Bowman’s that I found especially entertaining was when she had a client who was attending a game, arriving in a helicopter near the football stadium, and Bowman needed to send someone to pick up the client in a golf cart (T. Bowman, personal communication, Sept. 23, 2020). Although both of these periods of the season seem intense from how Bowman describes, they also seem exciting because every day consists of different duties.

The next topic I discussed with Bowman is the essential characteristics that she finds especially important when working in the NFL. The first characteristic Bowman named is the ability to be flexible (T. Bowman, personal communication, Sept. 23, 2020). As we discussed her day-to-day activities and how they constantly differ, Bowman mentions this is where flexibility comes into play because one must adjust to the different tasks they are faced with. This concept of flexibility is similar to the idea of contingency theory of leadership discussed in Chapter 5 of *Contemporary Sport Management*. The author states, “When dealing with change, it is important for sport leaders to examine themselves, their followers, and the leadership context” (Pederson, 2019, p. 102). Pederson’s theory can be applied to the idea of flexibility because it is imperative that communication and the understanding of others is widespread throughout the organization. This leads not only to working together as one unit, but also helps to eliminate any conflict between the company. In relation

to being flexible through tasks, Bowman recognized that being flexible through communication and presentation is a must (T. Bowman, personal communication, Sept. 23, 2020). For instance, Bowman referenced times, such as game-days for example, when she would interact with a great number of clients and fans. With clients, she must be professional yet be able to hold a casual conversation. Whereas with fans she must be able to answer questions and be understanding of any concerns or needs they have. Thus, being flexible within a sports organization stems into fulfilling a variety of responsibilities as well as approaching different audiences.

Lastly, Bowman and I discussed her own path of education and how it impacts future internship and job opportunities (T. Bowman, personal communication, Sept. 23, 2020). In terms of receiving an undergraduate degree, Bowman earned two bachelor's degrees: sports business and business law. Then, Bowman decided to get her MBA with a focus on sports. As she reflected on her time in graduate school, she shared that graduate school was all about the internships and getting field experience. This topic is referenced in Chapter 2 of *Contemporary Sport Management* as Pederson offers insight into how field experience builds a network. "Field experience provides an opportunity to build your professional network. The people in your network can be vitally important to you when you search for jobs in the future," Pederson states (Pederson, 2019, p. 35). The information that Pederson provides goes hand-in-hand with Bowman's experience in graduate school. Within her time earning an MBA, Bowman gained the opportunity to intern with Fox Sports. Shortly after her

internship ended, the person whom Bowman worked with at Fox Sports provided an excellent reference, which led to a job offer with the Chiefs. Bowman emphasizes how important it is to build a network, form relationships, and put oneself outside their comfort zone because everyone you meet truly matters when wanting to further a career (T. Bowman, personal communication, Sept. 23, 2020).

Upon reflecting on this informational interview, I was surprised to learn how much of an impact networking has on one's career. If it was not for Bowman deciding to go to graduate school or receiving the opportunity to work at Fox Sports, she may not have been able to work with the Chiefs. This makes me realize that every opportunity truly counts and to make the most out of what I spend my time on. This interview has also made me recognize the significance of sponsorships. Although I knew that sponsorships are important to sport organizations, I did not know the extent to which they mattered. It was not until hearing that Bowman spent most of her time during the off-season focusing on research and preparation of presentations for potential sponsors that I understood how vital sponsorships are for the sports industry. In terms of next steps, Bowman recommends that I take a deeper look into graduate school, not only because of the increase in competition in the sport industry, but also because of the importance of networking.

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Author's Note

As a third year Business Marketing major and Kinesiology minor, I have always loved the idea of expressing creativity and imagination and sharing it with others. Whether this is through writing, digital arts, or social media, I continuously explore not only how I can share my individuality but how I can view others' as well. Before attending St. Mary's College, all I knew was that I wanted to dive deep into the marketing world, but nothing surprised me more than my experience after my first Kinesiology class. I immediately fell in love with the knowledge I was gaining, and developed an immense respect for my professors because they exemplified such passion within their courses. Not only were the assignments beneficial to my knowledge of the sports industry, but they were also relevant and relatable to my own life, allowing me to explore the path of a sports marketer.

When approaching this informational interview assignment, I wanted to make the most of this opportunity to learn more about a career I could see myself pursuing. I did not want to look at this experience as a course assignment, but instead, a chance for me to acquire a deeper understanding of a career in the sports industry. Fortunately, a family friend had recently begun to work with the Kansas City Chiefs, which I knew would be a perfect fit. After the interview, I had never been more excited to share my findings and feedback because I wanted everyone to be inspired to discover a new passion of theirs, just as I did.

I would like to thank Professor Williams for believing in me and my writing, and allowing students the chance to explore careers that could potentially be their future. I would also like to thank Professor Lamont and Professor Riordan for inspiring me to continue my Kinesiology courses through their dedication to support students on their journey to a higher education. Lastly I would like to thank Tauah, my CWAC adviser, for sharing new ideas and insight about how I can improve my writing skills for the long-term.

Marxism and Postcolonialism: Frankenstein's Creature as a Collective and an Individual

Elizabeth Correa

Frankenstein is undoubtedly one of the most famous stories in existence. It has been adapted countless times for cinema, and it is known in one form or another by most of the Western world. Unfortunately, cheap theatrical adaptations of *Frankenstein* as a horror film have given the story a reputation as a rather simplistic tale. The book itself, as I discovered when I first read it and compared it to famous movie versions, though quite nuanced and detailed, is most often referenced as a fable that warns of the dangers of “playing God.” This view does not give nearly enough credit to the true depth of the novel, which can be analyzed from a variety of different perspectives. *Frankenstein* has, as a matter of fact, been interpreted through the lens of a variety of different theoretical approaches, each one of which offers a unique interpretation of the work. Two of these theoretical approaches to *Frankenstein* that I find particularly interesting are Warren Montag’s Marxist criticism, “The

‘Workshop of Filthy Creation’: A Marxist Reading of *Frankenstein*” and Allan Lloyd Smith’s Postcolonial criticism, “‘This Thing of Darkness’: Racial Discourse in Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*.”

On my initial reading of *Frankenstein*, I was ignorant as to the social and political events taking place during the time at which *Frankenstein* was both set and written. Equipped only with knowledge of what is explicitly included in the text itself, my interpretation of the work took somewhat of a more psychoanalytic tilt. Initially, I interpreted the monster as an externalization of Victor Frankenstein’s guilt, thereby serving as a scapegoat for him, and an external object at which to direct his own self blame and hatred. However, after studying both the Marxist and the Postcolonial theories, as well as two essays making use of these theories as analytic approaches to *Frankenstein*, I am much more inclined to consider how the incredibly complex political occur-

es and revolutions of the time may have shaped the narrative, however indirectly they may have done so. Both approaches work well together to show that the monster may be seen to represent the monstrousness of the various oppressed groups at the time, be they black slaves or groups that were created by the higher classes—groups that became monstrous by virtue of their revolutions. While both the Marxist and the Postcolonial theories make strong, somewhat similar arguments, they each have strengths that make them powerful in different ways. Marxist literary theory gives a better explanation for many of Frankenstein's Creature's most cruel and inhuman acts by showing the Creature as the revolution itself—revolutions often starting out as an ideal but becoming horrible in their reality. Postcolonial theory, however, does what Marxist theory does not by giving a much deeper explanation of the more human and domestic traits of the Creature, such as his desire for education, companionship, autonomy, and sexuality. In this light, the most comprehensive analysis may result from a consideration of the two approaches to *Frankenstein*, and the Creature in particular, in concert: Marxism for its exploration of the Creature's actions as those of an oppressed political collective and Postcolonialism for exploration of the Creature's actions as those of an oppressed individual. While both approaches have a great deal to offer, especially in discourse with each other, I have come to prefer the postcolonial approach to Frankenstein because it offers greater insight into the Creature's motivations and contradictions as an individual.

In order to understand either approach to *Frankenstein* in its entirety, one must first

understand what makes that approach theoretical. Montag's criticism, to begin with, finds its basis in Marxist ideas. At the most simplistic level, Montag's approach is material, meaning that it is based more on the real world and historical events than it is on more abstract, theoretical concepts. The first step Montag takes in his piece is to attempt to ascertain the exact context of the time at which *Frankenstein* was both written and set. This makes sense, as Marxist critics "do not attempt to discover hidden meanings in texts" until after they have seen the text as "a material product to be understood in broadly historical terms" (Murfin 447). In Montag's particular case, *Frankenstein* is viewed as a product of the major class-related revolutions of the time: the French and Industrial Revolutions. Again, Marxism is shown to provide the foundation for Montag's argument, as it is Marxism that views "history as class struggle" (Barry 160). I have a fondness for approaches that make use of historical context, provided that the context does not overwhelm the text it is being used to analyze.

Marxist literary theory does more than just provide the historical background under which Montag views *Frankenstein*. Montag's interpretation of the Creature is also defined by Marxism. The interpretation of the Creature, as argued in Montag's work, is that he is, as asserted by Franco Moretti, who is quoted in Montag's piece, "that monster, simultaneously the object of pity and fear, the industrial working class" (qtd. in Montag 472). The Creature is the proletariat—the proletariat being the working class, while its antithesis is the capitalist class (Murfin 449)—and therefore, in a sense, the Creature is the

revolution. Much like the monster, the revolutions of the time period, in particular the French Revolution, were meant to bring justice and progress, but instead they brought about almost the opposite. This depiction of the proletariat as a monster can also be explained by Marxism. As radical as Mary Shelley may have been, she was still a middle to upper class woman. One of the main tenets of Marxist literary theory is that “a writer’s social class, and its prevailing ‘ideology’, ... have a major bearing on what is written by a member of that class” (Barry 161). Thus, in Montag’s Marxist criticism, historical context reveals that revolutions of the lower and working classes will have had a strong influence on *Frankenstein*; which allows us to recognize that the Creature himself is a representation of the proletariat class; which is represented as monstrous because Mary Shelley’s own class status would not allow her to see them as otherwise. This overarching argument, that the basis for Shelley’s work lies in the revolutionary nature of the time period, serves also as Montag’s thesis, which is:

Even the most cursory examination of this singular period [between the French Revolution of 1789 and the period of relative social stability that started with the passage of the Reform Bill in 1832 in England] reveals that its key themes are precisely those of *Frankenstein*: there is everywhere a sense of monstrous forces unwittingly conjured up in order to serve the project of progress and the Enlightenment but that have ultimately served to call that very project into question. (Montag 470)

Montag’s approach, for all that it is strong-

ly steeped in history, does not have a very long Works Cited page. Montag uses quotations and very specific evidence sparingly. His historical evidence, the contextual information about the revolutions taking place during the story of *Frankenstein*, is not attributed to any particular source. In fact, Montag seems to use his own personal background knowledge of the history of the time period as his evidence. Most of Montag’s evidence that is not just generalized knowledge of the time period is from *Frankenstein* itself. Montag uses the passage in which Victor reminisces about the Revolution in 1642 England, which happened “more than a century and a half before” (qtd. in Montag 470) to establish the time period of the novel. Montag also draws on a poem, “The Mask of Anarchy” by Percy Bysshe Shelley, Mary Shelley’s husband, which empathizes with both the pain and suffering of the English lower classes, while also portraying the cruelty and bloodthirst perpetrated by those oppressed classes, resultant of their suffering. Montag uses this poem to evidence Shelley’s probable political leanings as regards the issue of class injustice. Interestingly, however, most of Montag’s evidence from *Frankenstein* is used to point out “contradictions, discrepancies, and inconsistencies” in the work (Montag 475). The most prominent examples of this use of evidence are when Montag focuses on the “incompatible worlds of industry (workshop) and theology (creation)” (478) and when he notes that “London, at a time of explosive growth and development ... is not described at all although he [Victor] and Clerval passed ‘some months’ there” (479). The inconsistencies in the novel, Montag claims, are meant to not only

show how unnatural the industrial was in the world, and by extension the creation of the proletariat class, but also to show the “unrepresentability” of the proletariat (Montag 480). Montag’s tendency to read between the lines of what is said in *Frankenstein* would seem to be in breaking with the strictly material basis of the theory. Yet it does not at all undercut the Marxist elements, and it may, in a way, strengthen the criticism by allowing it greater depth than just a surface level analysis of an economic product.

While Montag offers a great deal in his interpretation of *Frankenstein*, it is still a limited interpretation. As with all literary theories, the strength that comes from having a set of guidelines and a somewhat fixed perspective from which to view literature can also be a weakness. Using, as he does, a Marxist interpretation, Montag is primarily concerned with how class struggle and industrialization is represented in the novel. Because of this, his interpretation offers no insights into Victor’s odd relationship with his family, especially those of his mother and Elizabeth. These relationships, and the female characters involved, would almost certainly be considered in a feminist criticism. It seems to me that these characters, and their relationships with Victor, play enough of a role in the story that they should warrant at least a passing commentary, regardless of the literary theory being utilized. Aside from failing to address these fairly major characters in the novel, Montag’s criticism fails to offer a truly in-depth interpretation of why Victor frequently takes complete responsibility for the evil acts of his Creature, while at other times completely denouncing the Creature’s actions as separate from him.

It also fails to interpret why the Creature commits particularly cruel crimes against female characters, especially Justine and Elizabeth. These things are at least briefly addressed in the Postcolonial criticism by Allan Lloyd Smith, thus, despite the many similarities between the Marxist and Postcolonial approaches, one must look to Smith’s essay for insight on these particular issues.

Allan Lloyd Smith’s postcolonial approach to *Frankenstein* takes a much less generalized, large scale approach than does Montag’s Marxist approach. Like Marxism, Postcolonialism relies heavily on historical context, as well as on the way contemporary culture and ideologies influenced a work (Murfin 532). Largely, the historical context featured in Smith’s piece highlights many of the same issues as the historical context used in Montag’s piece: revolution and oppression. Smith’s piece, however, looks at different aspects of these issues of revolution and oppression. While Smith notes that the French Revolution may very well have served to influence the work, he offers that the Haitian Revolution, which occurred at approximately the same time, but was a rebellion of slaves in the West Indies, may have had greater influence on Shelley’s writing (Smith 561). Clearly, Smith is among the Postcolonial critics who would “prefer to see race, class, or gender difference privileged over the opposition colonizer/colonized” (Murfin 537). Further proof of this is that Smith addresses the Creature’s crimes that are particularly directed against women, arguing that these crimes are a reflection of the Creature’s sexual frustrations, resulting from being “denied control and fulfillment in sexuality” (Smith 559). Smith com-

pletes this interpretation with the contrary analysis that the Creature's violent crimes against women reflect "the supposed insatiable desire of black men for white women" (Smith 560). Given that Smith is partially making the case that Shelley's novel was an attempt to show both sides of the issue of slavery equally, this makes a great deal of sense.

In fact, Smith's thesis states that:

Kari J. Winter argues that in *Frankenstein* Mary Shelley "attempts to give voice to those people in society who are traditionally removed from the centers of linguistic power, people who are defined as alien, inferior, or monstrous solely because of physical features (such as sex or race) or material conditions (such as poverty)." This raises, if obliquely, the question of race inflections in Shelley's Gothicism that I wish to explore here. (Smith 548)

Though Smith's work is considered to be Postcolonial, he has chosen to focus particularly on the racial aspect of that theory of criticism. Interestingly, Smith's thesis attributes beneficent intentions to Shelley. Where Marxism argued that Shelley was likely only influenced by the French Revolution, and, more so, that her class position forced her to both view and portray the oppressed group represented by the Creature (in the Marxist interpretation, the proletariat) as monstrous, Smith makes the case that Shelley was purposefully "presenting both sides of the issue: sympathetic to the Monster, but also registering shock and horror at his however justifiable excesses" (Smith 562). Already, in the thesis, Smith gives Shelley credit for much more deliberateness in her novel, that is,

the deliberateness to knowingly represent slaves through the character of the Creature, whereas Marxism does not necessarily allow that the writer of a work has that full level of conscious intent. I agree with the claim Marxism makes, which is that one's position in society is likely to influence one's worldview without one's full awareness. That being said, what I know of Mary Shelley indicates that she was the sort of woman who would deliberately want to make a statement.

In stark contrast with Montag's piece, much of Smith's evidence is contextual documentation to indicate the likelihood that Mary Shelley was both well aware of, and sympathetic to, the plight of African slaves. Additionally, he goes on to reference the similarities, in both content and style, between the Creature's story and slave narratives, "His fall into self-awareness leads to the recognition of a need for politicised self-assertion, revenge, and autonomy, just as the defining moment of the slave narrative is an assertion of the rights of the self against the wrongs of the slave-holding system" (Smith 556). The portions of slave narratives that Smith goes on to quote or paraphrase support his assertion.

While very detailed in ways that Montag's criticism lacks, Smith's piece, similar to Montag's, also fails to address the significance of Victor's mother and her death. Like Montag's piece, the majority of the interpretation is focused on the monster, with very minimal analysis devoted to Victor's character, except to say that his guilt over the Creature's acts is attributable to the fact that "Frankenstein is responsible for the actions of his Creature, just as a slaveholder would be held responsible

for the actions of his slaves” (Smith 565). This makes sense, but I find it still to be unconvincing. Victor doesn’t just feel an ashamed responsibility for the Creature’s actions, he feels such violent guilt that he passes out with a fever and, wailing, implicates himself in his Creature’s crimes. This indicates to me a far deeper, more internal reason for his guilt than just an owner’s legal responsibility. Finally, I would say that Smith’s piece’s primary deficit is an element of postcolonialism that is neglected. Though he mentions briefly the Creature’s “double consciousness,” (Smith 556) Smith fails to delve deeper into the issue of the Creature’s hybridity, which is a characteristic of Postcolonialism (Barry 197). It is disappointing to read a Postcolonial criticism of *Frankenstein* that fails to make mention of the Creature’s mixed “heritage.” The Creature, created by a Swiss man born in Italy, was himself created in Germany and educated there in the French language by a French family. This aspect of the novel could almost, in my opinion, provide sufficient content for an entire Postcolonial discussion.

After reading multiple criticisms of *Frankenstein*, written from multiple different theoretical standpoints, I can safely say that there is no one right theory. Each of the different theories have their strengths and their weaknesses. If I were going to write my own theoretical case study of *Frankenstein*, I would most likely choose postcolonialism, with some support from Marxism. However, I would probably choose a form of postcolonialism closer to the kind practiced by the Postcolonial and Psychoanalytic critic Frantz Fanon, which used some psychoanalytic elements to better understand the internal aspects

of a work, and not just focus on externalities. This would give a more well-rounded reading of Shelley’s novel. I think that postcolonialism and Marxism both work incredibly well with Shelley’s work, especially because she was known to be an incredibly politically minded person who could be seen, more so than some other writers, to write a novel strongly influenced by politics. When one works off of the assumptions made by Postcolonialism and Marxism regarding the historical nature of the novel, the two theories offer an understanding of the complex mixture of pity and horror that was felt towards revolutionary groups at the time, be they slaves or merely the working classes. This in turn helps the reader understand the seemingly sympathetic nature of the Creature, coupled with his absolute bloodlust at times. These two theories make the case that the novel does not necessarily show the entire story of the Creature: that the story does not show the monster entirely as he sees himself, but merely how the rest of the world sees his actions. Both Marxism and Postcolonialism are very similar in this view, but the fact that Postcolonialism focuses more on the monster as an individual slave, an individual part of a revolution, while Marxism takes the broader view that the monster is the entire working class, the entire revolution, allows them to build off of each other, and depict different aspects of the Creature’s revolutionary nature. These are far more developed interpretations than my initial, non-theoretical interpretation of the Creature as an aspect of Victor’s self. Part of the reason for this higher level of development in a theory-based interpretation, I believe, is that the theories start out with much more

of a foundation than just a simple reading of the novel, whereas a non-theory-based reading can work only with what is offered in the text for its initial impressions. Not to say that a non-theoretical interpretation has to necessarily be lesser than a theoretical one, but theories offer the critic additional ideas and guidelines from which to build an interpretation.

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Author's Note

When I wrote this essay, I was a fresh-

man finishing up my first year of college. English 29 was my first literary theory class. Up until that point, I honestly didn't know much about what literary theory was. I was used to interpreting the text based on nothing more than the text itself and, perhaps, a bit of historical knowledge. My initial impression of literary theory was that it could only limit my interpretation. Why should I be forced to limit all my observations about the text to those that somehow connect to psychoanalytic, or Marxist, or postcolonial concepts? It is true that this can be a limiting factor, but what I discovered is that theory can also enhance an interpretation. Using a literary theory focuses one's reading of a text. Writing this essay allowed me to discover how, while a theoretical reading of a text is narrowed, it is also focused and detailed in ways a broader reading cannot be.

I would like to thank Professor Lisa Manter, who taught me everything I know about literary theories and made this class enjoyable. I would also like to thank Mr. Richard Rosenthal, my 11th grade English teacher, without whom I would not be the writer I am today. Finally, but not least, I would like to thank my mom, who is always there to proofread for me and point out every typo I make when I'm too tired to think straight.

Genetic Mutations in Melanocortin 1 Receptor: Gingers Across Taxa

Isabella Ateshian

Introduction

It is a well known fact that the Human Genome Project changed biological study forever. Although it was very controversial at its conception, the project was extremely pertinent in paving the way for understanding genetics like never before. A genome is the complete set of genes, or genetic material, present within a cell of an organism. It is exceptionally unique. The genome serves to instruct growth, development, and repair across all domains of life. Thus, the investigation enabled us to understand the blueprint for building a person alongside the functions of numerous genes and proteins and their relationship to disease. Eventually we began to see an amazingly large collection of non-human sequenced genomes using what were essentially the same tools used for humans. The ability to examine and compare the genes of different genomes provided evidence of incredible genetic dichotomies, rates of evolution, and types of evolution. The Human

Genome Project explained how and why we are human, rather than something else entirely.

Odd-Toed Ungulates: the Horse

The domestication of the horse, beginning in Kazakhstan nearly 6,000 years ago, was an event that would also change the course of human history. The majestic and handsome horse became an ally to the primitive man, and has served as such (and much more) to this day. The Horse Genome Project was one of the many results of the Human Genome Project. In October 1995, 70 scientists from 20 countries met in Lexington, Kentucky to devise a plan for mapping the horse genome. Horse owners were curious; they needed better vaccines for infectious diseases, improved therapies for respiratory ailments and allergies, as well as more information about occurrence, diagnosis, and prognosis of developmental diseases affecting horses globally. While the initial goal of the Horse

Genome Project was limited to making a genetic map for the horse, there were other worthwhile bits of information revealed regarding genes and junk DNA responsible for coat color and hereditary diseases, both of which share great commonality with humans. In February 2006, sequencing of the horse genome began, reaching its completion in January 2007.¹

Assembling the Horse Genome

Twilight is a Thoroughbred mare born and raised at Cornell University, and it was her DNA which was used for the whole complete genome sequence of the horse. The horse genome was assembled and completed at the Broad Institute in Cambridge, MA. The scientific name for this species is *Equus caballus*, and the “EquCab3.0” (EC 3.0) genome is distributed over 31 autosomes and two sex chromosomes. The sequencing technology used to identify DNA nucleotide base pairs (A, T, G, & C’s) for genome mapping includes Illumina HiSeq, Sanger, and PacBio RS, all technologies with unique levels of accuracy and precision.² The genome sequence is 2,506,966,135 base pairs long. Notably, EC 3.0 is a greatly improved genome assembly from the preceding EquCab2.0 (EC 2.0), specifically as it pertains to contiguity and composition — “the number of gaps was reduced 10□ fold, and the number of assembled bases in the incorporated chromo-

somes improved from 2.33 to 2.41 Gb (3% increase).”³ The genome was assembled at the level of chromosome using Celera Assembler and HiRise, both of which are types of shotgun sequencing used for humans. Shotgun sequencing involves dis-assembling DNA sequences in multiple variations then reassembling the sequences by matching regions of overlap. Roughly 46% of the genome assembly was specific to equine, and these were mainly repetitive sequences. The genome size of the horse was revealed to be larger than dog but smaller than human and bovine genomes. The mapping of the horse genome began with only 300 known markers which were scattered on the horse chromosomes. A genetic marker is a DNA sequence with a specific physical location on a chromosome, and they help link an inherited disease with the responsible gene. There are now approximately 4,350 mapped markers distributed over the ~2.8Gbp long equine genome.⁴ These markers contribute to the high resolution physical maps of vertebrate chromosomes and are significant because they support incredible comparative genomic discoveries. Identification of DNA base pairs and their respective locations provide us with a visual picture of the genes on a chromosome. Furthermore, a genetic map provides evidence for gene

3 Raudsepp, T., Finno, C.J., Bellone, R.R. and Petersen, J.L. (2019), Ten years of the horse reference genome: insights into equine biology, domestication and population dynamics in the post-genome era. *Anim Genet*, 50: 569-597. doi:10.1111/age.12857

4 Chowdhary, B.P., Raudsepp, T. The Horse Genome Derby: racing from map to whole genome sequence. *Chromosome Res* 16, 109–127 (2008). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10577-008-1204-z>

1 “The Horse Genome Project.” *Horse Genome Project*, 2014, www.uky.edu/Ag/Horsemap/welcome.html.

2 “EquCab3.0 - equCab3 - Genome - Assembly - NCBI.” *National Center for Biotechnology Information*, U.S. National Library of Medicine, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/assembly/GCF_002863925.1/.

linkage, or the likelihood that genes will be inherited together if they exist in close proximity to each other on a genetic map.⁵

Horse Genome Commonalities

After comparing the horse and human chromosomes, researchers discovered that there was strong conservation synteny between both species as “seventeen horse chromosomes comprise material from a single human chromosome.”⁶ Additionally, the gene set of the horse is similar to that of other eutherian mammals; of the 20,322 protein coding genes, 16,617, 17,106, and 17,106 have evidenced ethology to human, mouse, and dog, respectively. The remaining genes comprise other protein coding genes which are novel along with pseudogenes. Three of the notable “one-to-one” orthologs with humans are the keratin genes related to nail bed thickening in humans (hoof formation in horses), opsin genes (photoreception in both), and melanocortin-1-receptors (for hair, skin, and coat coloring in both).⁷

Melanin & Pigmentation

When it comes to hair color, pigmentation gives rise to different observable,

5 Lewin, Harris A et al. “Every genome sequence needs a good map.” *Genome research* vol. 19,11 (2009): 1925-8. doi:10.1101/gr.094557.109

6 Wade, C M et al. “Genome sequence, comparative analysis, and population genetics of the domestic horse.” *Science (New York, N.Y.)* vol. 326,5954 (2009): 865-7. doi:10.1126/science.1178158

7 Wade, C M et al. “Genome sequence, comparative analysis, and population genetics of the domestic horse.” *Science (New York, N.Y.)* vol. 326,5954 (2009): 865-7. doi:10.1126/science.1178158

or phenotypic, traits. Additionally, the pigments, or melanins, in our skin are the body’s very first line of defense when it comes to UV radiation. Melanin is produced by special cells called melanocytes, thus it will absorb UV radiation and spread it so that healthy cells are not affected. The melanocytes of both the horse and human are only able to produce two types of melanin pigments: eumelanin (brown-black pigment) and pheomelanin (yellow-red pigment). The darker eumelanin will dissipate the UV radiation as heat, disabling the rays from further penetration and preventing damage to DNA, subsequent mutations, and some forms of cancer. People from sunnier regions of earth are genetically predisposed to produce more eumelanin so that they are protected from intense UV.

Horse Coat History

An equine topic I’ve found most intriguing, aside from dental floating, is horse coat coloration. What makes a chestnut a chestnut, rather than an appaloosa, bay, or palomino? While many colors are possible, all variations in horse coat coloration are produced by the changes in a few genes. The very first horse ancestor, *Hyracotherium*, lived 35-55 million years ago in the northern hemisphere. Equus appeared 0.12-2.6 million years ago in North America and migrated to Asia. The wild coat color of the first horses is believed to be light brown body with dark mane, tail, and limbs plus a kind of dilution of the body color which served to provide sufficient camouflage against predators. Later, genetic mutations would give rise to different phenotypic coat colorations; changes in coat coloration are also thought to correlate with major climactic and

geological events (i.e. black horses appearing in Europe at the beginning of the Holocene era could elude to pastiche age migration and subsequent selection due to increasing forestation of areas). The domestication and associated confinement of equine population in smaller spaces led to restricted mating and slaughter of undesirable individuals, thus creating a departure from Hardy-Weinberg equilibrium gene balance principle. The chances of mating between individuals carrying mutations increased, therefore providing the birth of homozygotes for never-before-seen phenotype expression. Interestingly, different coat colors drew certain audiences — people holding some kind of power, whether it be political, financial, or religious, thought that riding a certain color horse would represent the power those people had.⁸

primarily discuss the MC1R gene.⁹ As you may have surmised, humans containing more pheomelanin than eumelanin in their bodies will display a phenotype of red hair, the abundance being a result of genetic origin. A recent study has suggested that there are multiple genes associated with pheomelanin.¹⁰ If mutated, the collection of red hair genes will produce a range of red hair color, pale skin, and an increased susceptibility of skin cancer. The melanomaortin-1-receptor (MC1R) is embedded in the surface of the melanocyte, and it specifically produces eumelanin.

- MC1R gene locus exists on equine chromosome 3 (figure 1) and human chromosome 16.
- The dominant allele determines the production of eumelanin (black), while the recessive allele determines the

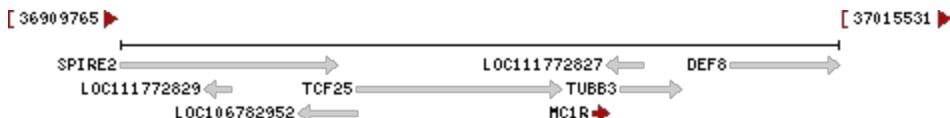


Figure 1. Equine Chromosome 3 - NC_009146.3ⁱ

Hair Coloration Genetics

The two pigments, pheomelanin and eumelanin, with help from six other genes, will produce variations in coat and hair color through melanogenesis. Three basic colors, black, bay, and chestnut, come from the interaction of two genes: melanocortin-1 receptor (MC1R gene) and agouti signaling protein (ASIP). For the purposes of my own investigation and intrigue, I will

production of pheomelanin (red).

- MC1R gene encodes production of protein melanocortin-1 receptor, which can be found on the surface of melanocytes.
- Upon activation by melanocyte stimu-

⁹ Neves, Adriana Pires et al. “Beyond Fifty Shades: The Genetics of Horse Colors.” (2017).

¹⁰ Morgan, M.D., Pairo-Castineira, E., Rawlik, K. *et al.* Genome-wide study of hair colour in UK Biobank explains most of the SNP heritability. *Nat Commun* 9, 5271 (2018).

ⁱ https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/gene/?term=mshr%20Equus%20caballus&utm_source=gquery&utm_medium=search

⁸ Neves, Adriana Pires et al. “Beyond Fifty Shades: The Genetics of Horse Colors.” (2017).

lating hormone (MSH), eumelanin is produced. If the receptor is defective (produced by homozygous recessive genotype), pheomelanin will only be produced. The result of the imbalance produces people with reddish hair as well horses with chestnut or reddish coats.

- Recessive homozygous alleles at the MC1R locus always encode pheomelanin animals.¹¹
- The recessive allele occurred about 7,000 years ago.

Homologous Causation of Donkey Coat Coloration

I chose to examine the MC1R ortholog in *Equus africanus asinus*, or what we more commonly know as the donkey. The donkey is one of the more accessible equine species to observe and name as a closely related ancestor to *Equus caballus*. Researchers are unable to phylogenetically separate another horse species, named *Equus przewalski*, from *Equus caballus*, for reasons concerning species convergence. Furthermore, *Equus africanus asinus* exists on a distinct taxon.¹² Interestingly, a missense mutation in MC1R is also associated with a reddish coat coloring in

donkeys.¹³ Missense mutations are single nucleotide mistakes in DNA which result in the wrong amino acid being incorporated into a protein. Using the known nucleotide sequence of the *Equus caballus* MC1R gene,¹⁴ I conducted a base-by-base nucleotide comparison between the two species *Equus caballus* and *Equus africanus asinus*. Doing this allowed me to find the accession number (or identification code) of the MC1R ortholog as it exists in the donkey genome.¹⁵ Results from this amino acid sequence alignment yielded 99.054% similarity between the *Equus africanus asinus* MC1R ortholog and the MC1R sequence found in *Equus caballus* (see figure 2). Specific amino acids are assigned based on the identification and order of nucleotide base pairs on a strand of mRNA during the process of DNA transcription. Results from the nucleotide sequence alignment between close donkey relative *Equus asinus* Maral har breed and *Equus caballus* MC1R gene yielded 99.16% identical sequences between both species, with 946 out of 954 nucleotides matching between the two organisms (see figure 4). In simpler terms, the mutated gene responsible for red-coat-coloring in horses is almost exactly conserved in donkeys. The study of sequential nucleotide bases proves

11 Marklund, L., Moller, M.J., Sandberg, K. *et al.* A missense mutation in the gene for melanocyte-stimulating hormone receptor (MC1R) is associated with the chestnut coat color in horses. *Mammalian Genome* 7, 895–899 (1996). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s003359900264>

12 Wade, C M *et al.* “Genome sequence, comparative analysis, and population genetics of the domestic horse.” *Science (New York, N.Y.)* vol. 326,5954 (2009): 865-7. doi:10.1126/science.1178158

13 Abitbol, M., Legrand, R. and Turet, L. (2014), A missense mutation in *melanocortin 1 receptor* is associated with the red coat colour in donkeys. *Anim Genet*, 45: 878-880. doi:10.1111/age.12207

14 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/nuccore/NC_009146.3?from=36979313&to=36980266&report=genbank

15 <https://www.uniprot.org/uniprot/A0A097A2P6>

how incorrect, or mutated, functionality of MC1R gene is associated with different pheomelanic shades (yellow to red) in humans, horses, and donkeys altogether.

to be tailor-made. Furthermore, the mapping of an individual's genome will reveal those conditions which they are predisposed to based on heredity, and a



Figure 2. Location of MC1R gene on *Equus africanus asinus* genome; MC1R is noted to exist on scaffold architecture of genome. (Unplaced Scaffold - NW_014637080.1 Reference ASM130575v1 Primary Assembly).ⁱⁱ

Conclusion

The great mission to decipher the human genome benefited biology and medicine forever. We continually gain insight to our biotic relatedness, even if it concerns something as simple as hair color. In the beginning, the complete sequencing and mapping of the genome appeared to be unachievable. It is astounding to think that only 1.5% of the three billion base pairs that comprise the human genome contribute to the genes that encode the proteins which make our bodies work. Roughly, 22 years of deliberate research made it possible for us to understand the “stuff” that makes us what we are. The technologies used to sequence the human genome work just as well for other organisms, more or less. Using various methods of comparison, the study of genetics enables us to articulate the evolutionary relationships amongst all life on earth. Additionally, these technologies have paved the way for personalized medicine. If we can identify how our genes interact and which parts of the genome become mutated to affect certain diseases and conditions, then a patient's medical treatment has the potential

preventative approach will address those conditions before serious progress ensues. Thus, there are no wasted efforts when it comes to the study of Genetics. The “wheel,” as it were, was not “reinvented” for each and every organism on earth. Genetics proves this. We are alike, in more ways than one; yet, humans retain distinction as well. Albeit there is great evidence to prove similarity between various groups, the Human Genome Project explains how and why we are human, rather than something else entirely.

CLUSTAL O(1.2.4) multiple sequence alignment

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SP |P79166|MSHR_HORSE          MPLQGQRRLLGSLNSTLPATPYLGLTTNQTEPPCLEVSI PDGLFLSLGLVSLVENVLVV 60
TR |A0A097A2P6|A0A097A2P6_EQUAS MPLQGQRRLLGSLNSTLPATPYLGLTTNQTEPPCLEVSI PDGLFLSLGLVSLVENVLVV 60
*****

SP |P79166|MSHR_HORSE          TAI AKNRNLHSPMYFICCLAVSDLLVMSNVLEMAILLLLLEAGVLATQASV LQQLDNIT 120
TR |A0A097A2P6|A0A097A2P6_EQUAS TAI AKNRNLHSPMYFICCLAVSDLLVMSNVLEMAILLLLLEAGVLATRASV LQQLDNVI 120
*****

SP |P79166|MSHR_HORSE          DVLICGSMVSSLCFLGSAVD RYISIFYALRYHSIMMLPRVWRAIVAIWVVSLSSTLFI 180
TR |A0A097A2P6|A0A097A2P6_EQUAS DVLICGSMVSSLCFLGSAVD RYISIFYALRYHSIMMLPRVWRAIVAIWVVSLSSTLFI 180
*****

SP |P79166|MSHR_HORSE          AYYNHTAVLLCLVTFV FVAMLVMAVLVYVHMLARACQHQHARGIARLHKRQHP IHQGFGLKGA 240
TR |A0A097A2P6|A0A097A2P6_EQUAS AYYNHTAVLLCLVTFV FVAMLVMAVLVYVHMLARACQHQHARGIARLHKRQHP IHQGFGLKGA 240
*****

SP |P79166|MSHR_HORSE          ATLTI LLGVFFLCWGPFFLHLSLLILCPQHPTCGCVFKNFKLF LTLILCSAIVDPLIYAF 300
TR |A0A097A2P6|A0A097A2P6_EQUAS ATLTI LLGVFFLCWGPFFLHLSLLILCPQHPTCGCVFKNFKLF LTLILCSAIVDPLIYAF 300
*****

SP |P79166|MSHR_HORSE          RSQELRKTQEVLLCSW 317
TR |A0A097A2P6|A0A097A2P6_EQUAS RSQELRKTQEVLLCSW 317
*****
    
```

Figure 3. Uniprot amino acid sequence alignment between “MC1R Horse” Equus caballus and “A0A097A2P6” Equus africanus asinus melanocortin-1 receptor genes. A yield of 99.16% identical sequences between both species, with 946 out of 954 nucleotides matching.

Score	Expect	Identities	Gaps	Strand
1718 bits(930)	0.0	946/954(99%)	0/954(0%)	Plus/Minus
Query 1	2932251	ATGCCCTCGCAGGGCCCCAGAGGCTGCTGGGCTCCCTCAACTCCACCCCTCCAGCC		60
Sbjct		.....		2932192
Query 61	2932191	ACCCCTACCTCGGGCTGACCACCAACCAGACGGAGCCCCGCTGCCTGGAAGTGCCATT		120
Sbjct		.....A.....G.....		2932132
Query 121	2932131	CCTGATGGGCTCTTCTCAGCCTGGGGCTGGTGAGCCTAGTGAAAATGACTGTGGTG		180
Sbjct		.....		2932072
Query 181	2932071	ACTGCCATCGCCAAGAACCGCAACTGCACCTACCCATGTA TACTACTCATCTGCTGCTG		240
Sbjct		.....		2932012
Query 241	2932011	GCCGTGTCGACCTGCTGGTGAGCATGAGCAACGTGCTGGAGATGGCAATCTGTGCTG		300
Sbjct		.....C.....		2931952
Query 301	2931951	CTGGAGCCGGAGTCTCTGGCCACCCAGGCCCTCGGTGTG CAGCAGCTGGACAACATCATT		360
Sbjct		.....A.....G.....G.....		2931892
Query 361	2931891	GATGTGCTCATCTGCGGCTCCATGGTGTCCAGCCTCTGCTCTCTGGGCAGCATGCCGTA		420
Sbjct		.....G.....		2931832
Query 421	2931831	GACCGCTACATCTCCATCTTCTATGCGCTGCGGTACCACAGCATCATGATGCTGCCCGT		480
Sbjct		.....		2931772
Query 481	2931771	GTGTGGCTGCCATCGTGGCCATCTGGGTGGTTAGTGTCTCTCTAGCACCCCTCTTCATC		540
Sbjct		.....C.....		2931712
Query 541	2931711	GCTTACTACAACCACACGGCTGCTCTGCTCTGCTCGTACCTTCTTGTGGCCATGCTG		600
Sbjct		.....		2931652
Query 601	2931651	GTGTCATGGCAGTGCTGTACGTGCACATGCTCGCCAGGGCGTGCCAGCAGCCCGGGGC		660
Sbjct		.....		2931592
Query 661	2931591	ATCGCCCGCTCCACAAGAGGCAGCACCCCATCCACCAGGGCTTTGGCCTCAAGGTTGCC		720
Sbjct		.....		2931532
Query 721	2931531	GCCACCCTCACCATCCTGCTGGGCGTTTCTCTCTGCTGGGCCCCCTTTTCTCTGCAC		780
Sbjct		.....		2931472
Query 781	2931471	CTCTCACTCCTTATCCTCTGCCCTCAACACCCACCTGCGGCTGTGTCTTCAAGAACTTC		840
Sbjct		.....		2931412
Query 841	2931411	AAGCTCTCTCCACCCCTATCTGTGTCAGCGGCATCGTCGACCCCTCATCTATGCCCTC		900
Sbjct		.....		2931352
Query 901	2931351	CGCAGCCAGGAATTCGAAAGACGCTCCAGGAGGTGCTGTGCTCTCTGCTGTA 954		
Sbjct		.....		2931298

Figure 4. BLAST Nucleotide alignment between Equus asinus (NW_014637080.1) and Equus caballus (JQ328025.1) yields 99.16% identical sequences.

Author's Note

As the nursery rhyme goes, “Twinkle, twinkle, little star. How I wonder what you are...” You see, from the very beginning, most of us have grown inquisitive as to why things exist the way they do. Curiosity invites imagination, and most of the time innovation follows suit. The assumed purpose of humans is an interdisciplinary study, and these exist in multitude. When it comes to “what” a human is we must cast our gaze to biology. Genetics is a biological discipline that helps us understand our uniqueness, above and below the surface of our skin. The comparative analysis of genomes, the complete set of genes existing in an organism, provides explanation to evolutionary relatedness. Genetics explains our individual biological inheritance from our parents, and theirs before them. Additionally, problems of various severity may arise when certain genes in our genome become mutated. The study of genetics is an essential gateway to personalized medicine.

To quench my own curiosity and entertain my sense of amusement, I chose to study gingers in two equine ancestors and humans. Redheads are rare. The cause of the red-haired phenotype is attributed to a mutation in the melanocortin-1-receptor (MC1R) gene, and it is observed in homozygous recessive allele individuals. The study of genomics allowed me to compare the nucleotide and amino acid sequences in closely related equine species, such as the horse and donkey. Upon further research, it was clear that red-haired people, chestnut horses, and your typical red-coat donkey share the same genetic mutation in their MC1R gene (equine chromosome 11, and human chromosome 16). I found this

shared characteristic to be absolutely fascinating. While some may believe in human supremacy amongst all life on earth, this kind of investigation, one which examines the individual nucleotide bases in DNA, encourages us to acknowledge that even humans share commonalities with odd-toed ungulates. We're part of the animal kingdom. The ‘wheel’ was only modified for humans, not entirely reinvented.

I would like to extend my sincere respect and gratitude to Dr. Keith Garrison, our Genetics professor here at St. Mary's College of California — this assignment was thrilling! Thank you to all members of the Department of Science for your constant encouragement, mentorship, and knowledge. Of course, this publication would not be possible without CWAC and their brilliant Writing Advisers!

How to Win Over Audiences and Influence People

Nicholas Nava

It does not matter whether you find yourself behind a computer, typewriter, or writing desk. Whenever someone sits down to write, especially to write for others, they have a specific purpose in mind. They generally seek to inform, persuade, or entertain their audience, perhaps combining all three. For an individual's academic and professional career, they will find it necessary to persuade effectively whoever they are writing to. Being able to win over others with your writing is mandatory to success in any field. Mark Felton, Amanda Crowell, and Tina Liu stress the importance of persuasive writing in academic literacy in their article "Arguing to Agree." They deem it essential that we have the ability to compose complex and nuanced arguments (318). It is clear that it takes a sincere effort to win over an audience, but there is disagreement over the best way to accomplish that.

There are three means of persuasion for writers, known as ethos, pathos, and

logos. These rhetorical appeals come from the Greek thinker Aristotle. All are meant to build connections to the audience. The website *pathosethoslogos.com* summarizes the three forms of rhetoric. Ethos establishes the credibility of the author, showing the writer or source to be trustworthy, unbiased, and credible. Logos is arguably the most straightforward. It involves using facts, statistics, and the construction of logical arguments to prove a point. Finally, there is pathos, a form of rhetoric solely devoted to making appeals to the audience's emotions. Pathos is often used to generate sympathy, arouse strong feelings, and tug at the heartstrings ("Ethos, Pathos, and Logos").

When used effectively, this three-headed dragon of rhetoric can win over the most stubborn of audiences. The question is then, how should one prioritize the use of ethos, pathos, and logos in their persuasive writing? Given that I have stated the importance of persuasive writing for aca-

democratic literacy, it is reasonable to assume that logos would be the most important out of the three types of rhetoric. However, despite common sense dictating that logic is the key to a logical argument, the other two forms of rhetoric, especially ethos, are more important for convincing an audience of your claim. I will argue that without ethos, the rest of a writer's argument will have no effect on the reader by showing how necessary it is to build credibility.

With all that being said, do not mistake this claim as an opportunity to eschew employing pathos or logos in your argument. Jared Busby, the Content Marketing Manager for OKEx cryptocurrency exchange, stresses that you cannot leave any appeal out. He states, "ethos opens the door, pathos leads them through it, and logic keeps them from walking back out. You need all three" (Busby). This connects to my claim of how mandatory it is to establish credibility. Continuing this metaphor of a house, you need your audience to trust you enough to walk up to the door. Without said trust, no one will take the writer seriously. The element of pathos is almost as important because it shows the reader that this is worth their time. Once your audience is on board (or should we say in the building), the writer must then provide enough logic and reasoning to convince the reader thoroughly of the writer's position. With all three forms of rhetoric, successful persuasion is possible. However, as I have repeatedly typed the three appeals as ethos, pathos, and logos, so will I prove that that is the order in which to prioritize them.

Right off the bat, a writer's credibility is what determines the effectiveness of persuasive writing, argues Yuru Shen from Leshan Normal University. She posits that

it all comes down to perception, or how the audience views the writer or speaker. A common method of establishing credibility is citing special experience, training, credentials, etc. as well as listing a multitude of sources from research (Shen 1512). One could make a connection between this concept and sending in a résumé to a prospective employer. If the extent of the potential hire's education is limited to a high school diploma, the employer will be wary of the person's credentials. However, a résumé showing a degree with honors received from a university immediately sends a firm message to the employer. It tells them that this person has gone through the rigors of a college education and demonstrated the work ethic and intellect necessary for the position. Likewise, if a writer employs multiple credible sources, they give the reader the impression that they have done their homework on the subject.

As it relates to credible sources, my interview with Saint Mary's College Business Librarian Sarah Vital confirmed my research on consulting sources with credentials. An important implication of my topic is that effective persuasive writing is needed to convince one's superiors, such as the higher-ups in an organization. Ms. Vital could relate to this, as ranking below the university's faculty means she must go the extra mile to build credibility. Her fellow librarians understand each other better, as they are in the same profession, working in the same building. However, coworkers from different departments require a greater effort to gain their trust (Vital).

Therefore, this speaks to the challenge that persuasive writing brings. Generally, the audience that a writer is attempting to win over is not their best friend, but rather

a colleague, superior, or even an audience that has never met the writer before. If the writer goes into the process with their audience being unbiased, or even mistrusting of them, then building credibility is all the more important. In the business librarian's case, she told me that the librarians need to "share their credentials more often, to prove that they too are academics, with a master's degree" (Vital). The message here is clear. It falls to the persuader to show the audience that the speaker is actually worth their time. A writer or speaker can claim they are an academic, but, in reference to my point earlier, if all they have to show is a diploma, no professor or other professional will even bother listening to what the person has to say. You can have effective pathos and logos in your argument, but you will be deemed unworthy to be heard.

It may seem shallow to flaunt one's credentials, essentially saying I have a PhD, look at me! However, the certification or degree is more than just a fancy title. It is symbolic of all of the time this individual has spent training or studying in their field. You would not trust someone who had only cursory knowledge of a complex topic. By the same token, we can all agree that you avoid taking medical advice or getting an operation from someone without an "M.D." next to their name. The title signifies that this person has gone through the rigors of medical school, so they are someone who you can turn to. Likewise, when someone can point to credentials in a field, the audience becomes more likely to believe what this person has to argue. On the subject of credentials, it is worth noting that Ms. Vital herself has two master's degrees from San Jose State Universi-

ty, in Library & Information Science and Speech Communication. Now, this being a literacy narrative, consulting a librarian with an advanced degree in library science is an effective way to cite a credible source. In addition, interviewing an academic with a master's in speech communication also makes sense from an ethos perspective, as being able to win over others is an important part of communication. Along those same lines, however, one must avoid misusing ethos in the form of fallacies. According to *Lumen Learning*, one prominent way that people misuse appeals to ethos is through false authority. Although citing the expertise of a source can bolster your case, it can also deflate your argument if their field is completely irrelevant to your topic ("Evaluating Appeals"). There is a reason why I interviewed a librarian about literacy and persuasion. Ms. Vital's years of study and experience in library science and communication made her the perfect candidate to pick her brain. With all due respect, interviewing one of the biology professors would have made no sense. They have an advanced degree in science; however, a discerning audience doesn't just want a source with a high IQ and fancy title.

We see false authorities all the time on television, although it is mainly used to capture the viewer's attention. Some of the most entertaining commercials on TV are those for insurance, which seems ironic because insurance is generally thought of as being boring. It is likely the commercials are made to be funny to pique our interest. For example, you might have seen NBA player Chris Paul over the years portray a spokesman in State Farm commercials. After being entertained by the advertisement, you might think to yourself, *what*

does a professional basketball player know about insurance? And you would be right. In this setting, though, it is not a big deal because the viewers understand that he is not an insurance expert.

For this situation, we can refer back to Jared Busby's comparison of ethos, pathos, and logos. Chris Paul is the celebrity who gets your attention. He has 'opened the door' by merely being a public figure advertising a service. Sarah Vital spoke about this during my interview. She stated, "We live in a world where we like sound bites." She also agreed that shorter messages are steeped in pathos, while longer ones contain more logos (Vital). This relates to my other claim, that pathos can be a more effective tool of persuasion than logos. First impressions are everything for people. If right off the bat, you can communicate to someone that you are trustworthy (ethos) and likeable (pathos), then the audience will gravitate toward you and listen to your logos. They will not stick around to read as you delve into your logical argument if you have not built up credibility or made a positive appeal to their emotions. Since people generally look up to celebrities such as professional athletes, they are more likely to look into the product they are pushing. After laughing at the State Farm commercial and being reassured that the insurance company is 'like a good neighbor,' someone would feel compelled to look into the logos of the argument. In this case, it would refer to the company's insurance rates, coverage, etc.

If using celebrity spokespeople was not effective, corporations would have stopped doing it years ago. However, if the persuasion is in a more serious arena, like with academic writing, you must be cautioned.

If your audience is discerning, then citing a false authority can have very negative consequences for said persuasion. This generally applies to academic writing, for a class or in one's career. If your audience perceives your so-called expert as a charlatan, they will henceforth view you as disingenuous. *Lumen Learning* mentions that bias is a significant aspect of demonstrating false authority, especially when the person has a financial stake in the company ("Evaluating Appeals"). As a hypothetical, consider the commercials where they preface the ad with "real people, not actors." Chevrolet became famous for this statement. The premise is that the individuals being wowed by the car or other product are unbiased, regular people. This is a one-eighty from the celebrity spokesperson route. It is effective because the non-actors give the semblance of relatability to the viewer, *they are just like me, I should value their opinion*. The relatability is disarming, so it helps appeal to the viewer's emotions too. Notice the strong elements of ethos and pathos here. The commercial gives facts about the product, but the logos is not what captures the viewer's attention. However, in this hypothetical, imagine if it was revealed that the 'real people' were in fact employees of the company. Instantly, the advertisement would lose all credibility. Since trustworthiness is a key part of ethos, it can be said that lying to your audience makes any argument of yours implode. The pathos may have been effective, but that goes out the window when the audience knows they have been lied to. Thus, building that credibility, or ethos, becomes the number one priority.

Ethos at its core can be summarized by the questions that Andrea Lunsford poses

in her book *Everything's an Argument: with Readings*. In the chapter "Thinking Rhetorically," she asks the potential writer questions such as, "How do you want to come across to your audience? What can you do to represent yourself in a positive way?" and "How can you demonstrate that you have your audience's best interests at heart?" (Lunsford and Ruskiewicz, 14).

Analyzing the first question, you want to give the reassurance of an expert. If you come across as someone who possesses a great amount of knowledge in the field, you will be able to win over your audience, especially if they themselves are not an expert in that field. Looking at the second question, one must put forth their best effort in composing their persuasive argument, and that includes the small details too. Yuru Shen of Leshan Normal University touches on this in her article about establishing credibility in persuasive writing. Ms. Shen stresses how important it is to revise one's writing for correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling. She goes as far as to say that a writer's credibility will be "severely damaged" if their paper is lacking correctness (Shen 1514). If you want to communicate your message effectively to the audience, then you have to take the time to edit and revise your writing until it is polished and ready to be presented. As I have stated before, a writer's credibility grows when they show that they have spent a lot of time reading, researching, and writing about the topic of their paper. Just as a medical license demonstrates several years of training in a discipline, a clear, error-free paper shows that the writer has spent a significant amount of time studying the topic they are persuading about, and the reader is more likely to buy into it.

The third and final question is interesting because it ties into pathos as well. Having your audience's best interests at heart is an appeal to emotion. Ethos and pathos are not mutually exclusive rhetorical appeals. There is a radio commercial for the jewelry store Shane Company where the company's CEO Tom Shane says the tagline "Now you have a friend in the jewelry business." This is not just an establishment of trust between company and consumer. The use of the word 'friend' implies that Shane Company will look out for you and your best interests, it will keep them "at heart." To reference Jared Busby again, there is something to be said for going beyond "cold, heartless logic," as well as showing that you care about the audience/consumer, so that "people relate to what you are saying on a moral/spiritual/emotional level" (Busby). You are more likely to believe what a friend is telling you over a stranger. There is the element of trust between the two. Just as one friend is likely to support another, an individual becomes more likely to patronize a business that is their 'friend.'

Nevertheless, if you were to tell someone that they were emotional and not logical, it would be construed as an insult. However, we as human beings cannot help but react to things with strong emotions. We may claim to be thinking beings that feel, although even in fields that seem like they would be devoid of feelings (that is to say, taking emotion out of the discussion), pathos still manages to insert itself into the conversation. When you hear the word librarian, what comes to mind? Words, information, and data are fair responses. These things generally fall under the category of logos. A logos argument, after

all, employs “numbers, statistics, findings, and quotes used to support an argument” (“Evaluating Appeals”). It was surprising, then, to hear the business librarian concede that people in academia, such as herself, often speak to the emotions of faculty when persuading (Vital).

At first glance, you might be disappointed to read this information. If that is the case, then take note of what just happened. You took in information and had either a positive or negative reaction to it. This is not shameful; it is human. In academia and the digital age, we would like to think of ourselves as like Spock from Star Trek: devoid of emotion. But to do so would literally be inhuman. We are not computers that process and store information. A persuasive argument has to matter to the audience too. Although it is not ideal to let one’s decisions and conclusions be ruled by feelings, there is no denying the importance it has in persuasion. Otherwise, academia, who pride themselves on being logical and keeping emotion out of discussions, would not make appeals to emotions in their attempts at persuasion.

Saint Mary’s business librarian was not the only academic to acknowledge the role of emotional appeal. Dr. Peter Smagorinsky, educator at the University of Georgia, has noticed that while professors teach their students how to make logical arguments, they are surrounded by people who shout down and humiliate opponents while making claims easily disconfirmed by fact. He notes that even the “nation’s highest offices are presently held by people who have communicated to their followers through shared emotions rather than logic” (Smagorinsky). Common sense would dictate that if you want to convince your

audience, you would stick to logic and reason to make them see your side.

Smagorinsky cites psychologist Jonathan Haidt, noting people first respond through gut reactions then rationalize their feelings with whatever justification they can think of. He acknowledges that this flies in the face of cold cognition, something academics have strived toward since the European Enlightenment and the Scientific Revolution and Age of Reason (Smagorinsky). History shows humans are emotional beings with the capacity for thought and not the other way around, as we would like to believe.

Emotion seems to trump reason in winning over an audience. Although, as the professor analyzes the phenomenon more, he understands why pathos matters so much to the audience. He concludes that cold technicians are not viewed as having the passion to lead, regardless of how logical they seem. At the same time, he reasons that for students to be taught to debate, it would be necessary for them to argue about a topic that they care about (Smagorinsky).

Unlike doing a proof for a math class, proving a point involves getting the reader to care about the topic. This is the ‘so what’ of the argument. If the audience has no emotional stake in your topic of discussion, then they will not be inspired to take up your persuasive argument’s call to action or even support you in your position. Audiences are willing to hear the writer’s logos if they are deemed trustworthy and their topic matters to them. Thus, the pathos is even more important than the logos.

Not only is ethos the most significant rhetorical appeal in theory, but in practice it proves to make the most difference. The

International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management conducted a study on which of the three appeals made the most difference in Airbnb bookings. For ethos, social media profiles could establish their reputation through a super host badge, ID verification, and host reviews. For pathos, Airbnb hosts used emotional or social words to impact guests' decision making. For logos, the hosts would display the price, occupancy, safety features, pictures of the home, and the star rating (Han, et al.).

The results were interesting. Two out of the three ethos aspects (super host badge and host review) had positive impacts. One out of the two pathos parts (social words) were positive. Only 2 out of the 5 logos aspects (photos of the home and star rating) were positive (Han, et al.). It's worth noting that although listed as logos-related parts of the social media pitch, a picture is apt to evoke emotion, and a star rating implies an establishment that you can trust. Thus, the 40% of logos that had a significant impact were not exclusively logical, but imbued with pathos and logos, respectively. The conclusion from the study is that ethos has the greatest impact on persuading the audience — in this case, prospective Airbnb customers. With persuasion, the aim is to make the reader or listener agree with your point. Often, there is another goal: to inspire the audience to perform the call to action. In this experiment, the rhetorical appeal dedicated to credibility led to the highest percentage of Airbnb bookings, with appeals to emotion second and logical arguments third. This real-world example shows that ethos literally sells.

Correspondingly, ethos and pathos find

similar success in the courtroom as in consumerism. Editor in Chief of *Washington University Jurisprudence Review* Krista McCormack analyzes the use of Aristotelian rhetoric in trial cases. She cites how Aristotle recognized that we are more likely to believe 'good men' more readily. She describes how the great thinker Aristotle emphasized the integrity of a persuader, stating that "his character may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion he possesses" (McCormack). If the attorney can form a connection with the audience, they are more likely to believe what they have to say. There are many ways to prove to the jury that they are worth listening to. Everything from the suit they wear, to their status, to the confidence and intelligence with which they speak, can hook in the audience and make them believe what the lawyer is arguing.

Trials are traditionally places where logical argumentation and discourse are the norm. However, by recognizing the importance of an attorney's character and how they display that in the courtroom, it shows that an audience values the trustworthiness of the arguer first and foremost. Lawyers don't always have the best reputation, at least in popular culture. Their job is dedicated to persuading a jury and/or judge, and if they can show this audience that they come from a place of credibility, then their logical argument is worth hearing.

The editor also hits on how pathos can play a significant role in a court's decision too. She states, "Legal decision-making is enriched and refined by the operation of emotions because they direct attention to particular dimensions of a case, or shape decisionmakers' ability to understand the

perspective of, or the stakes of a decision for, a particular party” (McCormack). To echo the point made earlier, it is the job of the lawyer to show to the jury why their decision matters. For example, if they are the prosecuting attorney attempting to convict the defendant of murder, they will show that the victim of the crime was a good person. They would discuss their family, passions, aspirations, and other aspects of their personal life to generate sympathy and compassion from the jury. Likewise, they would do their best to portray the defendant as a monster without a conscience. In doing so, they have made a successful emotional appeal to the audience. Now, it is personal to them. The victim sounds like a loved one of theirs. Setting a precedent by letting a dangerous criminal go free would threaten them and those close to them. If this persuasion proves effective, the lawyer has executed pathos perfectly. Though most trials do not concern something as serious as murder, the connection is clear. The attorney must make the case and its outcome matter to the audience.

A successful persuasive argument needs a combination of ethos, pathos, and logos to convince the audience of your claim. One must not forget to include logos in their academic writing. Implementing data, statistics, and logical reasoning are necessary for your argument to stick in the minds of your audience. That being said, to succeed in persuading the reader of your assertion, ethos and pathos must be prioritized. For people, appeals to emotion tend to have an even stronger effect than appeals to reason. Most of all, proving to an audience that you are credible and believable in your statements lets the reader know right

away whether they can trust what you, the writer, has to say. In future academic and professional writing endeavors, it is important for students and employees to recognize how to prioritize and incorporate the rhetorical appeals to win over peers, professors, and coworkers. Being able to persuade others effectively can be the key to getting what you want from your education and career, as you will convince more and more people to see things your way.

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Peter&id=DOI%3a&site=ftf-live Vital, Sarah. Personal interview. 15 October 2020.

Author’s Note

What started as the all-encompassing research report for my English 108 course became an exploration of the messages that pervade our world, from intimate conversations to mass media advertising. For this paper, I had to find an area related to writing that piqued my academic interest and sparked my creative fire. After all, if you are to write ten pages of argument with ten sources, it had better be something you possess more than a passing fancy for. Thus, I wrote about persuasive writing, something pertinent to my degree. As a 3rd-year Business Administration major concentrating in Marketing, I strive to understand consumers and target markets to extrapolate what messages will get through to them. I have been fascinated with the art of persuasion for a long time, and this report dug deep at what really matters in one’s effort to change minds and sway opinion.

I want to thank Dr. Elisa Findlay for bringing the Spectrum Awards to my attention and recommending that I submit my paper. I would have never been apprised of this opportunity without her nomination in the first place. I would also like to thank Katie Doarn from the Center for Writing Across the Curriculum for fielding my barrage of questions and concerns with grace under fire. The hardworking individuals at CWAC are far from quacks themselves, and her advice allowed me to look at my paper with a magnifying glass and strive for perfection. Lastly, I would like to thank my parents for their encouragement. They

have always believed the sky is the limit for me, and I hope to leave an infinite number of footprints on the Moon for them.

Legal Analysis

UCLA v Under Armour

Aaron Choi & Kate Douglas

Introduction

On January 9th, 2020, the World Health Organization announced that the Coronavirus was going around in Wuhan, China. At that time there were only 59 cases. On January 21st, the Centers for Disease Control announced that in Washington state someone contracted the Coronavirus after returning from Wuhan. The Coronavirus can be transmitted from human to human through the air. Scientists are still not sure of the true origin of the virus—whether it came from the fish market in Wuhan or a lab. On March 11th, the World Health Organization declared COVID 19 a pandemic. On March 19th, Governor Gavin Newsom issued a stay at home order for the entire state of California and was the first state to do so. For months, we were in lockdown and could not go anywhere except for essential businesses such as the grocery store. All other businesses were closed, and the entire world came to a halt. The sports industry had to suspend games

and venues were being emptied. On July 30th, the NBA resumed play in Orlando, Florida in a “bubble” where no fans were allowed and everyone inside the “bubble” had to be tested daily. The NBA was the first major sports league to resume play. “Until play can resume, the NBA faces an estimated \$1.0-1.7 billion dollars in lost ticket revenue, concession sales, media rights, and merchandising for the 2020 season” (Weston, 7). Many businesses including professional sports have struggled to remain afloat during the lockdown and have lost billions of dollars in revenue. “For Under Armour, though, it is not smooth sailing ahead by any means. As the pandemic continues to stunt the economy and consumer spending, the company’s sales are expected to be down as much as 25% this year. During the quarter ended June 30, with company-owned outlets and other stores selling Under Armour products closed, the brand lost \$183 million” (Mirabella, Baltimore Sun). Under Armour has

been dealing with financial trouble due to the pandemic that caused sales to plunge.

In May 2016, UCLA and Under Armour signed the biggest athletic apparel deal in all of college sports history. Under Armour agreed to provide UCLA \$280 million dollars in financial support as well as products. In return, UCLA promised Under Armour an exclusive deal that their student athletes would wear Under Armour branded apparel only along with other perks. However, in June 2020, Under Armour wanted to pull out of the deal because of their financial problems as well as using “the COVID-19 pandemic as a pretext to ‘terminate’ the sponsorship agreement. But neither the governing agreement nor the law allows Under Armour to do so. This action seeks to hold Under Armour to the promises that it made...” (UCLA v Under Armour, 2020). Following years of declining business, Under Armour’s corporate leadership apparently decided that the UCLA deal was over-market and too expensive for a troubled company. Under Armour decided to try to use the COVID-19 pandemic as a cover to get out of paying on a deal that it no longer wanted to be in. It purported to terminate the Agreement, pointing out “the vague direction of COVID-19” (UCLA v Under Armour, 2020). This deal was simply too big for Under Armour and now they are using COVID-19 as an excuse to get out of it. Even though Under Armour was in financial trouble, they could still pay UCLA the \$280 million dollars and the products that they were promised, but some were withheld. “Neither ‘force majeure’ from the COVID-19 pandemic, nor any other circumstance, makes it impossible for Under Armour to perform its obligations.

Under Armour simply has decided that, as a matter of economics, it does not want to do so. As such, UCLA brings this action for damages to hold Under Armour accountable for breaching its commitment to UCLA and to recover the full value of the rights and benefits that UCLA is entitled to under the Agreement” (UCLA v Under Armour, 2020). In June 2020, Under Armour told UCLA that they would use the force majeure clause in their contract to terminate the deal. We contend UCLA will win this lawsuit because the language used in the force majeure clause does not adequately describe the situation at hand. Furthermore, there is evidence that supports UCLA’s claim that the financial struggles of Under Armour are the root cause of the breach of contract.

Laws

There are two main laws that this case goes over: force majeure and breach of contract. “A force majeure, or work stoppage, provision is normally associated with facility or event contracts, but has recently become increasingly common in athletic sponsorship contracts, especially those between a manufacturer and a league or association” (Wong, 415). Under Armour is claiming force majeure against UCLA in this case. “The term force majeure means ‘superior force,’ and, in the context of a professional sports contract, the term refers to unforeseeable natural or human events that are beyond the control of the parties to the contract, and that render performance of the contract impossible” (Wong, 415). Under Armour claims that the COVID 19 pandemic caused an unforeseeable circumstance that no one saw coming hence they are using the force majeure

clause in their contract against UCLA. In the contract it says that, “[n]either Party is liable for any breach of its obligations under this Agreement to the extent that the breach resulted from a Force Majeure Event provided that it: promptly notifies the other Party the nature and cause of the Force Majeure Event and details of how the Party is mitigating its losses in relation to the Force Majeure Event; and [t]akes all reasonable steps to work around, reduce, or mitigate the effects of the Force Majeure Event. If a Force Majeure Event continues for more than one hundred (100) days, either Party may terminate this Agreement with immediate effect by written notice” (UCLA v Under Armour, 2020). Under Armour is trying to use the Coronavirus pandemic as an excuse to get out of their contract with UCLA.

UCLA argues that Under Armour is breaching the contract due to their financial troubles, which is a big factor for them to get out of the contract. “A breach of contract occurs when a party to the contract fails to perform the duties imposed under the contract. The extent of the party’s failure to perform determined the remedy sought by the non-breaching party” (Cotten & Wolohan, 2017). Due to Under Armour’s financial problems prior to the pandemic, the company has been struggling with their debt. The contract states that Under Armour has to pay UCLA \$280 million dollars plus products in order to be the official athletic sponsor for UCLA. “To succeed on a breach of contract claim, the non-breaching party will have to show: (1) there was a valid contract; (2) plaintiff performed as specified by the contract; (3) defendant failed to perform as specified by the contract; and

(4) plaintiff suffered an economic loss as a result of the defendant’s breach of contract” (Cotton & Wolohan, 2017). Under Armour failed to meet certain obligations in the contract. In the lawsuit it says, “In contrast, Under Armour, while performing some of its obligations, did not perform its obligations fully. For example, Under Armour did not comply with the requirement to provide an on-site Under Armour representative. And, as of 2020, Under Armour failed to be in compliance with its retail store obligation” (UCLA v Under Armour, 2020). In November 2019, Under Armour was under investigation by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission and the U.S. Department of Justice for unethical practices regarding their financial reports by making it look better than it actually was. Force majeure and breach of contract are the two laws that are the most relevant to this case.

Cases

Gleeson v. Virginia Midland Railroad Co., 140 U.S. 435 (1891); *Supreme Court of the District of Columbia*

The plaintiff (Gleeson) was a railway postal clerk for the United States Post Office Department. On Sunday the 15th of January 1882, Gleeson was making a run from Washington to Danville, Virginia in his capacity as a railroad postal clerk in the postal car of the defendant’s train. During the course of the run, the train became partially derailed when it reached a landslide at a railway cut. The postal car was one of the cars thrown off the track. The engineer was killed, a fireman was seriously injured, and the plaintiff was thrown violently into a stove and letter box. Due to

the force of the impact, the plaintiff broke three of his ribs and suffered a contusion to the left side of his head. He claims he was permanently impaired by these injuries and was dismissed from his duties due to the changes in his ability to perform his job after the accident. The defense claims the landslide was caused by rainfall which had occurred only a few hours before the train was derailed. They claim the landslide was an act of God caused by the rainfall and that they should not be held liable for negligence because they had cleared the track two hours before the incident. Additionally, the injuries to the plaintiff were sustained when he hit the letter box. They additionally argued the company was not responsible for the letterbox making this a risk associated with his employment. This case was an action for damages brought to the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia. The issue at hand is whether or not the landslide that derailed the train could be considered an act of God and therefore exempt the railway company from any negligence. The court ruled that the rainfall which led to the derauling was not sufficient as to be considered an act of God. Rather, it was an ordinary weather event that should have been foreseeable. Because of the Court's ruling, judgement was reversed and remanded with direction to order a new trial. This case is important to UCLA's claims because it is the standard precedent used in force majeure cases. *Gleeson v. Virginia Midland Railroad Co.* shows how specific one must be when defining an "act of God."

Entzel v. Moritz Sport & Marine., 12 ND (2014); Supreme Court State of North Dakota

Entzel signed a Boat Space Rental Agreement with Moritz effective as of December 16, 2010. Entzel prepaid \$612 dollars for the use of the boat slip, located in Marina Bay in Mandan, from May 15, 2011 – October 1, 2011. In May of 2011, there was an impending flood along the Missouri River shoreline in the city of Mandan. Moritz was contacted by the city and told to take precautionary actions due to this impending flood. On May 26th, 2011, Moritz contacted Entzel and informed her all boats would need to be removed from the Marina due to the impending flood. Moritz never followed up with Entzel after the danger had passed. Entzel claimed that because there was no follow up, she did not know she could use the slip for the remainder of the contract period. However, other customers did return their boats to their rented slips. Entzel sued Moritz in small claims court for breach of contract. The case was bumped up to district court by Moritz because Moritz claimed there was no breach due to the force majeure clause. The district court concluded the fair value of the slip was two thirds of the amount charged. Entzel appealed this decision in the Supreme Court State of North Dakota. The issue at hand was whether or not the force majeure clause in the marina contract exempted Moritz from a breach of contract. The court found that this contract did not guarantee access to the river. Furthermore, the force majeure clause of the contract was clearly written in a way that covered incidents like the city closing the marina due to an impending flood. The Supreme Court ruled that the lower court erroneously interpreted the contract. Therefore, they

reversed the decision to reward any refund to Entzel. This case is relevant to *UCLA v. Under Armour* because it shows how the burden of proof falls on the party that tries to use force majeure as a defense. It also shows how this clause is used in a breach of contract case.

VICI Racing, LLC v. T-Mobile USA, INC., Nos. 13 (2014); United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit

On March 30, 2009, VICI and T-Mobile entered into a sponsorship agreement wherein T-Mobile agreed to sponsor VICI and both parties “desire to promote and maintain their respective corporate images and reputations through participation in the 2009, 2010, and 2011 American LeMans race seasons” (Id. at 887). This agreement ensured VICI would field the agreed upon number of T-Mobile sponsored vehicles per season. Additionally, VICI would make T-Mobile the exclusive wireless supplier for Porsche, Audi, and VW telematics. On July 18, 2009 one of T-Mobile’s sponsored cars sustained significant damage in an accident while racing. August 2, 2009, VICI informed T-Mobile’s president and legal department the car would be unable to race for 45 – 60 days while it underwent repairs. January 5, 2010, VICI sent T-Mobile a notice of default when they did not receive the expected \$7 million payment due under their agreement. In response to this T-Mobile, sent VICI a letter stating the company had breached their contract and therefore they did not owe them the \$7 Million payment. On September 30, 2010 VICI filed a lawsuit in the District of Delaware against T-Mobile seeking \$14 million in damages.

The court ruled in favor of VICI due to the ambiguous language of key sections of the contract and granted them \$7 million in damages. T-Mobile appealed this decision. VICI then filed a cross-appeal seeking an additional \$7 million in damages. The issue at hand was whether or not force majeure was applicable and if that would exempt VICI from a breach of contract. Another issue was whether or not the court erred in awarding VICI \$7 million in damages. The court affirmed the district court’s decision. They stated that although VICI did not meet the contractual obligation to race for the entire 2009 season, the damage to the car was considered force majeure and therefore VICI did not breach their contract. This case is applicable to *UCLA v. Under Armour*, because part of Under Armour’s argument rests upon the fact that UCLA would not be able to play a full season. Despite an incomplete season, the court in the above case still decided T-Mobile had to make the agreed-upon payment.

Analysis

Summary

In 2016, UCLA and Under Armour signed an agreement which granted UCLA at least \$280 million in financial support consisting of monetary payments and equipment for the duration of the fifteen year contract. In return, UCLA agreed students and faculty would exclusively wear and use Under Armour products as well as provide stipulated perks to Under Armour. This was the largest athletic apparel deal sponsorship to date for an American college sports program. This deal was in-line with the company’s strategy at the time, to

attempt to outbid rivals such as Nike and Adidas and become the exclusive sponsor of elite athletic programs such as UCLA. In June of 2020, Under Armour attempted to terminate their contract with UCLA citing force majeure as the cause.

Contract Overview

Per the terms of the contract Under Armour was required to “provide UCLA with financial support totaling at least \$280 million, consisting of: (i) a signing bonus of \$15 million; (ii) rights fees in the total amount of \$135 million; (iii) a minimum total spend of \$15 million on marketing; (iv) \$150,000.00 to upgrade and re-brand UCLA’s bookstore; (v) a creative services fee of \$2 million to re-brand UCLA’s athletic facilities; (vi) a total product allowance of \$112.85 million; and (vii) bonuses based on the meeting of certain additional criteria” (UCLA v Under Armour, 2020). Additionally, they were required to provide an “Annual Product Allowance of \$6.85 million in athletic apparel” (UCLA v Under Armour, 2020). There were deadlines established for when this gear would need to be provided to UCLA to ensure athletes had enough time to become accustomed to the highly specialized equipment. UCLA had only four obligations per the agreement: 1) All coaches, staff and teams would solely wear the clothing and equipment provided by Under Armour whenever they were representing UCLA in any capacity. 2) UCLA was to provide Under Armour with an agreed upon number of ‘best available’ tickets to home games and post season games as well the opportunity to purchase more tickets as needed. 3) UCLA was to showcase signage and advertisements for Under Armour at all com-

petition and practice facilities. 4) UCLA agreed to make all head coaches and the athletic director available for appearances upon Under Armour’s request” (UCLA v Under Armour, 2020).

Case Overview

The core of Under Armour’s defense is that they were unable to provide the equipment and monetary support required by the contract because Covid-19 created a force majeure event. To evaluate the validity of this claim further, we must first analyze the force majeure clause of the aforementioned agreement. This clause states that neither party listed in the agreement will be held liable for failing to fulfill their obligations in the event force majeure occurs so long as they promptly notify the other party, detail how they are going to mitigate the losses caused by the force majeure event, and take reasonable steps to work around the force majeure event. If this event lasts more than one hundred days, either party may decide to terminate the agreement. However, a force majeure event does not change Under Armour’s obligation to deliver supplies per the stipulated schedule, and UCLA has the right to acquire items which are more than thirty days late from an alternative supplier at the cost of Under Armour.

Per this agreement, a force majeure event must meet two criteria (1) it is “is beyond the commercially reasonable control of [Under Armour] (or the reasonable control of UCLA)” and (2) it “renders the performance of this Agreement by the affected Party either impossible or impracticable” (UCLA v Under Armour, 2020). Acceptable causes and events stipulated in the contract include flood, earthquake,

fire, labor actions, work stoppages, natural calamities, national emergencies, declarations of war, riots, civil disturbances, sabotage, explosions, acts of God, or acts of any regulatory or governmental body. It is important to note that nowhere in the list of acceptable causes is there any reference to a pandemic, virus, or other specific medical-based problems. It is also worth noting, UCLA continued to fulfill their contractual obligations through June of 2020, and while Under Armour failed to fulfill all of their obligations to UCLA, they did continue to meet their obligations to other schools with smaller contracts. Given this information, UCLA is claiming Under Armour is using Covid-19 as a means of hiding their financial troubles, which is the true reason they are terminating the contract.

Analysis

The key to a force majeure case is nuance and specificity. “Courts narrowly construe such force majeure provisions. Whether a provision governs a situation, is often a matter of contractual interpretation, factual specifics, and debate” (Weston, p. 11). For an event to fall under the umbrella of force majeure, it must be specifically described as one of the events listed in the contract. Typically, this clause is going to be used in situations that cause physical damage to a venue, such as flood or instances that force a specific event to be canceled. It has been reported that Tennessee specifically uses the word ‘pandemic’ in their force majeure clauses, but this is an exception to the rule. (Wayne Epps Jr.) Most schools, UCLA included, rely on vague terms such as ‘act of God’. This is where the debate falls; can Under

Armour claim the pandemic as a force majeure event given the specific language used in their contract with UCLA? It is highly likely *Gleeson v. Virginia Midland Railroad Co.* will be used as precedent on this specific issue. It is the golden standard for force majeure cases as it helps to establish what can be considered an ‘act of God.’ *Gleeson* was a postal worker who was injured when the train he was on for work came partially off the tracks after a rainstorm caused a landslide. The court ruled the *Virginia Midland Railroad Co.* could not use force majeure as a defense in this instance because the storm was not big enough to constitute an ‘act of God.’

As we stated previously, nowhere in the clause does it specifically use the word pandemic or virus. Additionally, we have identified three other potential issues with Under Armour’s claim. First, UCLA was able to fulfill their portion of the contract. They were also open to renegotiate delivery deadlines giving Under Armour more time to fulfill their obligations. This takes away from any claims of regulatory interference. Second, other similar schools have maintained their sponsorships with big-name companies throughout the pandemic. This makes it less likely that Under Armour can claim they were unable to meet the requirements. Another case that could be used as precedence for this point is *Entzel v. Moritz Sport & Marine*. *Entzel* rented a boat slip from *Moritz* for a period of a few months. During this period, the city the marina was located in shut down the marina due to an impending flood. At that time, all boats had to be removed. *Moritz* never followed up with his tenant when the boat was able to be safely returned and *Entzel* claimed this caused her

not to return her boat to the slip. There are two areas in which this case could overlap with the case we are currently discussing. The court ruled that the contract did not guarantee access to the water and that the force majeure clause was written specifically to cover an instance such as an impending flood. UCLA's contract does not state that they have to wear Under Armour products only in games and their force majeure clause lacks the specificity of the one seen in *Entzel v. Moritz*. Finally, Under Armour has continued to fulfill their contracts with other programs and has only sought to use the force majeure clause in this one particular instance. UCLA has claimed Under Armour is moving to breach the contract not because of force majeure but because of financial issues within the company. The fact that it is only UCLA's contract that is being terminated could lend some legitimacy to that argument.

Over the last few years, Under Armour has had some well documented financial struggles “including \$1.3 billion in leftover merchandise in 2018, shrinking popularity among teens, and a scandal involving executives reportedly expensing trips to strip clubs” (Ciment). To add to their troubles further, it was announced that Under Armour was being investigated by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission and the U.S. Department of Justice. The results of this investigation ultimately caused company founder, Kevin Plank, to step down from his position as chief executive officer. It also provided evidence that during the time Under Armour and UCLA were negotiating their contract, Under Armour had been tampering with their books in a way that was misleading.

“Under Sections VI(B) and VI(C) of the Agreement, Under Armour had a specific, contractual ongoing obligation to provide accurate financial information to UCLA in its financial statements, in order for ‘UCLA to evaluate [Under Armour’s] financial condition and ability to perform under this Agreement’” (*UCLA v Under Armour*, 2020). These facts give validity to the claims of UCLA as well as suggesting there may have been issues with the establishment of the contract in the first place that could entitle them to more damages. It is also worth noting that in 2016, Under Armour was slated to be the official uniform provider for Major League Baseball. They pulled out of that deal at the last minute citing financial troubles as the cause. This suggests the company has a history of pursuing major contracts that they lack the funding to support. UCLA has filed for a trial by jury of all the aforementioned issues. Given the totality of our research and analysis, we are of the opinion that this breach of contract by Under Armour is not excused by a force majeure event. The language used in the force majeure clause is not sufficient for this to be a viable defense. Additionally, there does seem to be a need for further investigation into the financials of Under Armour and the role they carry in the possible dissolution of this contract.

Conclusion

When the World Health Organization called the Coronavirus a pandemic on March 11th, that is when our country started to close. The economy shut down for months due to the stay at home orders that were ordered by the governor. Many non essential businesses had to close such

as sports, bars, retail etc. which forced many of them to shut down their business completely and caused some of them to go bankrupt. Under Armour is one of those retailers that struggled during the pandemic, which caused many of their retail stores to close and only do online sales instead. “Under Armour has seen a massive revenue drop during the Covid-19 pandemic, with American Banking and Market News reporting that analysts predict the company’s sales this fiscal period will be down nearly 54% compared to the previous year.” (Porterfield, Forbes) You may wonder how Under Armour could afford going into a 15 year, \$280 million dollar contract with UCLA in 2016 when they have been struggling financially during the pandemic, which is the main reason why they now want to get out of the deal. However, “This wouldn’t be the first time Under Armour has retreated from a sponsorship deal. In 2016, the sportswear company was slated to supply Major League Baseball’s field jerseys before it backed out, causing the league to go with Nike instead” (Porterfield, Forbes). This is another example of Under Armour getting out of a sponsorship deal, which tells you a lot about the history of what’s been really going on.

In conclusion, we believe that ultimately Under Armour will not win this case because they are relying heavily on a force majeure clause that does not include verbiage that would make it extend to the current pandemic. We believe there is validity in the claims being made by UCLA. Under Armour has failed to meet the requirements of the contract and the contract was too large for them to be able sustain it from the beginning which makes it appear highly likely that they are attempt-

ing to use force majeure as a way to get out of their obligations. There are three management strategies we would suggest Under Armour implement in the future to avoid situations like these from occurring. 1) Under Armour needs to restructure how they go about acquiring major teams. For years Under Armour’s acquisition strategy has been to outbid all of their competition. They simply do not have the consistent revenue stream to support this type of strategy. 2) The terms of the force majeure clause needs to be adjusted moving forward to include a global pandemic. There will most likely be debates that last for years over whether or not the boilerplate force majeure clauses apply to the situation at hand. Most of these clauses focus on physical damage and don’t specifically cover widespread disease. The best way to protect from a situation like this is to be as specific as possible and add in a section that uses terms like pandemic, virus, and widespread medical emergency. 3) Scale back their geographic footprint until they are able to establish a more stable financial foundation. Looking at the company’s financial track record it seems they tried to expand too fast. Scaling down their footprint would allow them to construct viable contracts that they are able to support for the duration of the agreed upon term.

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Authors' Note

Hello, my name is Aaron Choi, and I am a Senior Majoring in Sports Management. My partner is Kate Douglas, who is also a Senior Majoring in Sports Management. This topic is important to us because it is a current and ongoing issue that is incredibly relevant to the COVID 19 Pandemic. We thought it would be appropriate to dig a bit deeper into this topic for our paper. Kate and I are fascinated by the sports industry and how it affects the overall economy. We took KINES 108 Legal and Administrative Issues in the Fall semester with Professor Williams and it was fully online through Zoom. We were both interested in this case between UCLA and Under Armour since we both have a passion for Sports and law. As we began researching more about this case and read many articles, we were shocked to learn how this deal between the two parties fell apart. We didn't know that Under Armour was in financial trouble prior to the pandemic. This made us realize that the pandemic further caused sales at Under Armour to plummet which therefore meant it could no longer afford the financial obligations to UCLA.

Force majeure is a hotly debated topic

in the sports industry at the moment. The first step in the writing process was to get a better understanding of this term and its possible applications. From there we were able to gain a better understanding of the contract in question. We divided the paper into sections so that we could better focus our research efforts. Throughout this process there was a great deal of back and forth discussion between the two of us. Through this discussion, we were able to identify the breach of contract aspect of this case which greatly helped us fortify our argument. We wrote and peer edited our paper until we felt we had constructed a thorough analysis and argument that was ready to be presented to our peers.

We want to thank Professor Williams for guiding us through this paper, our CWAC adviser Nicole who helped edit our essay, and the KINES department for all their hard work and dedication.

Effects of global warming on the evolution of damselfish living in coral reefs and proposed solutions to climate change

AnnaMaria DiGeronimo

Climate change is one of the most pressing matters in our world today and plays an important role in science, politics, and overall society. Solutions to this change have been discussed not only in the United States but across the world as well. The reasoning for this is because climate change is having a major impact on every part of the world, from glaciers to rainforests to oceans. To further analyze the effects climate change can have on the world, it is important to understand what it is and what has caused it. Global climate change is overall an effect of global warming, which has slowly been increasing over time. The warming of the earth's surface is a result of an increase in greenhouse gas emissions, trapping heat in the earth's atmosphere and not allowing it to escape. While the increase of temperature may seem small over time, these small changes can add up to detrimental effects in habitats around the world, a major example being the coral reefs.

Globally, coral reefs have been impacted by climate change which has had a cascading effect on their entire ecosystem. Specifically, coral reefs are classified as complex heterogeneous habitats because they support very diverse ecological communities. They also offer resources to the surrounding communities. Therefore, the impacts of climate change on these reefs can possibly affect the evolution of not only the species living in them, but those dependent on the coral reefs for resources. This highlights an overall question of how climate change can impact the evolution of many species today. Specifically, how climate change of the coral reefs has impacted the interactions of species living there and the surrounding communities. Not only this, but what solutions, if any, should be implemented in order to stop the negative impacts climate change has on the coral reefs.

The first major way that global warming has impacted coral reefs is through habitat

degradation, which was previously studied by Boström-Einarsson et al. in 2014. The researchers of this article studied the effect that habitat degradation has on the competition of coral-dwelling damselfishes. According to this study, coral reefs are greatly affected by climate change, causing an increase in ocean temperatures, leading to coral bleaching. This results in a loss of live corals, which eventually leads to reductions in the complex structure of reef habitats (Boström-Einarsson et al. 2014). This loss of live coral cover is especially a large problem for the reef-dwelling fishes, which rely on this as their main habitat. This directly relates to the overall question because it addresses that coral reefs are degrading due to the warming ocean, which then reduces the amount of habitat for reef fishes to live in. As a result, degradation of habitats can potentially alter resource quality and availability.

Specifically, the authors of this study question if coral degradation could affect the competition between two coral-dwelling damselfish species, *Chrysiptera parasema* and *Dascyllus melanurus*. They reconstructed two experimental reefs, one healthy and one degraded, and observed them over two months. In doing this, they studied how a degraded habitat altered the interspecific competition of coral dwelling damselfishes (Boström-Einarsson et al. 2014). These results draw connections with the overall research question because the authors found that living coral habitats did in fact play a major role in structuring reef fish communities. Specifically, in healthy habitats, *C. parasema* mortality rates were influenced by the dominant competitor, *D. melanurus*. However, in the degraded habitat, *C. parasema* mortality was reduced

and no longer influenced by the competitor (Boström-Einarsson et al. 2014). Therefore, according to this study, climate change can have an impact on the evolution of species by altering their interactions and overall increasing or decreasing mortality rates of non-dominant species.

While Boström-Einarsson et al. show in their study the impacts of habitat degradation, they do acknowledge the difficulty in applying this research to all species. Firstly, this research was done on constructed experimental reefs over a time span of two months. Therefore, the data here represents a “snapshot in time” of the overall effects of habitat degradation on competitive relationships (Boström-Einarsson et al. 2014). The authors address what they observe may not have evolutionary change but may only be temporary patterns in competition. This may suggest a limitation with this study because the time span of the experiment was not long enough to draw conclusions. It would be further beneficial to observe what effects habitat degradation and changes in competition can have on further generations of the damselfish. However, this study was the first to test the interactive effects of coral reef fishes, therefore Boström-Einarsson et al. has provided a foundation for further researchers to build off of. Despite this, the article is still effective in showing that damselfish habitats are being impacted due to global warming, which has greatly reduced the amount of live coral. Specifically, because a 90% reduction in live coral resulted in threefold higher mortality of *C. parasema* (Boström-Einarsson et al. 2014). This has a significant impact on the population of the damselfish species and shows how climate change can clearly lead to local extinction

of these populations if nothing is done and coral reefs completely destroyed.

Degradation of habitats is not the only impact coral reef communities will experience due to climate change. Global warming can also more directly impact these species by altering the atmosphere in which they live. As previously stated, climate change is caused by an increase of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, a major one of those gases being carbon dioxide. As the atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration increases, so does the partial pressure of CO₂ (*p*CO₂) in the oceans. An increase in *p*CO₂ correlates with a decrease in pH, which results in what is known as ocean acidification (Hannan et al. 2020). Climate change has an impact on species in coral reefs not only through habitat degradation but through ocean acidification as well. A study done by Hannan et al. further analyzes how fluctuating *p*CO₂ levels in oceans have affected the physiological performance of reef fishes. This article directly relates to the question of how climate change can affect the evolution of coral reef fish species by first addressing how climate change has caused ocean acidification. Secondly, it shows how this change has a direct impact on the physiological performance of fishes and therefore how they will evolve due to this change. In this study, they exposed two different damselfish species, *Amblyglyphidodon curacao* and *Acanthochromis polyacanthus*, to varying levels of *p*CO₂ and measured their response by observing swimming activity and uptake rates of oxygen. They observed that *A. polyacanthus* required more energy when exposed to varying *p*CO₂ treatments; however, in contrast, *A. curacao* showed no effect (Hannan et al. 2020). Overall the

results show that species can have varying responses to fluctuating *p*CO₂ treatments.

Not only is this study important in supporting the overall question by showing the impacts of climate change on coral reef species, but it also points out an important evolutionary question. Hannan et al. suggest that the life history of certain species has allowed them to evolve better to fluctuating *p*CO₂ conditions. If that species had experienced stable and fluctuating *p*CO₂ throughout their life history, they may be less affected by ocean acidification in their environment. For example, in this specific study, *A. curacao* is better evolved because it did not experience any changes in physiological performance (Hannan et al. 2020). This supports the overall question by showing that different species may possibly evolve to climate change in different ways based on their history. While the authors of this study are successful in setting up an experiment that provides evidence for this, their results may have limitations because they only examined two damselfish species. Similar to Boström-Einarsson et al, both experiments may be difficult to apply on a larger scale to global reefs because they each studied only two individual species for short periods of time. This may seem like a limitation on their research; however, Hannan et al. discuss the major implications of this finding in the future for society. Specifically, this suggests that the response to climate change and paving a way to a solution is not going to be the same for each species involved. This study has major implications moving forward in predicting how coral reef fish species will respond and evolve to ocean acidification. This touches upon the second aspect of the overall research question and what

solutions, if any, should be implemented in order to stop the negative impacts climate change has on the coral reefs. This study suggests that in order to develop impacts in the future, it is critical to consider the history of each species that has had $p\text{CO}_2$ exposure (Hannan et al. 2020). This would allow communities to understand how these species will evolve to the changing conditions and therefore propose solutions that are most effective for specific species.

While it is important to study how global warming can impact individual species in the coral reefs, it does not answer the most important question of climate change: what can be done to stop these negative effects? This highlights the second major question of this paper on what solutions, if any, should be implemented in order to slow down climate change hopefully and as a result, the degradation of coral reefs. If the path humans are currently on continues, it will not be long before coral reefs are completely gone, destroying every member of their diverse ecological communities. Anthony et al. addresses these issues and proposes realistic solutions to help the reefs globally cope with the effects of climate change. According to this paper, these solutions must take into consideration not only new evolutionary changes but also what society wants, in order to achieve what is economically and technically feasible. The first major solution proposed is the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, which is necessary to sustain coral reefs long term (Anthony et al. 2020). Secondly, it suggests that improving conventional management interventions and their governance is another way to build ecosystem resilience. However, this solution alone is not enough

to save the coral reefs. While a solution can be developed, there are major challenges in this process and this article addresses each of these as setting objectives to solve the problem, balancing benefits and risks, and prioritization and tradeoffs (Anthony et al. 2020). Overall, this review is important in addressing questions of what should be implemented in order to save the coral reefs.

This article provides clear evidence to answer the overall research question of what solution can be proposed to slow global warming and the degradation of coral reefs. By combining new and existing interventions with carbon mitigation, a possible solution can be formed as long as the benefits of these exceed the risks to the reefs, people, and economies (Anthony et al. 2020). Therefore, it shows that no single intervention strategy can produce all solutions, but instead it must be a combination of them all. As seen from Boström-Einarsson et al. and Hannan et al., coral reefs are permanently changing due to rising ocean temperatures and pH levels. These changes are impacting not only the damselfish living in the reefs but every other member of this ecologically diverse community. Research has provided evidence that this will have huge evolutionary changes if no solutions are proposed to stop global warming and specifically the degradation of coral reefs. A solution is possible, but as suggested by Anthony et al., it requires a level of coordination across all disciplines that have never been seen before. However, stopping global warming and saving the earth may be the one challenge that will finally bring society together.

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Author's Note

I am AnnaMaria DiGeornimo, a senior Biology major with a minor in Spanish. I wrote this essay for my Theory of Evolution class with Dr. Jabbour in Fall of 2020. I was very grateful to have the opportunity in this class to write an essay on any topic that interested me. I spent many hours looking for an evolutionary topic that would meet the paper's criteria. When I discovered the first article in my essay about habitat degradation on coral reefs, I knew this was the topic I wanted to pursue. This paper is important to me because it highlights a current evolutionary issue whose effects can be seen on our world

today.

I would like to thank my professor Dr. Rebecca Jabbour for guiding me throughout this paper, submitting it to the Spectrum Awards, and for her assistance throughout the whole semester. She was very enthusiastic regarding this topic. I would also like to thank my fellow classmates who were encouraging throughout the process. Lastly, I would like to thank the CWAC staff, especially Louisa Fenichell, for their assistance in the editing of this essay.

One, Two, Three Strikes, You're Out: The Three Requisites for Supplanting Injustice with Justice

Grace Clinton

“Just between you and me, shouldn't the World Bank be encouraging MORE migration of the dirty industries to the LDCs [less developed countries]? I can think of three reasons...” (Bullard 191).

Economist Lawrence Summers apparently had no qualms about sending dirty industries — and all their harmful externalities — to the LDCs in the 1990s. He offered three rationales for such a policy. Each reason made sense and probably seemed logical to the uncritical business minds he presented the memorandum to. Herein lies our problem: injustice can always be rationalized. During Japan's Meiji era for instance, rationalizations of male morale and economic necessity authorized an exploitative public brothel system where women were provided as sex slaves to the “male population as a bonus and an encouragement to [men's] productive activities” (Mushakoji 300). Come WWII, this practice transcended the bounds of the nation and led to the creation, by the Japanese government no less, of ‘Comfort Stations,’ — an exploitative military brothel system rationalized in the name of “military virility” (Mushakoji 300) — in occupied territories. Long after the war

when the discussion of reparations arose, the state offered up rationalizations for why they didn't owe the ‘Comfort Women’ — as they were known — anything. Today, the contemporary global sex industry uses much the same rationalizations — male morale and economic strength — as well as attitudes about women, to authorize its operation.

Another long-standing area where rationalization of injustice runs rampant is the U.S. criminal “justice” system. Arrest and conviction rates as well as capital punishment rates are astronomically higher for black and brown men, yet this blaring discrepancy is rationalized in the name of legality and the “neutral and necessary actions” of state agencies (Bonilla-Silva 116). The so-called “neutral” nature of the law is a favored rationalization of injustice, a convenient framing that prevents scrutiny of blatantly unjust outcomes.

Finally, a third realm in which one can all too easily find rationalization of injus-

tice is in the food industry. Virtually every step of the production line is plagued by the inhumane treatment of workers, be it a toiling, low-paid, mistreated farmworker or a member of a cleaning crew at a meatpacking plant who may just have one of their limbs severed during their shift. The perpetual suffering of these people is often justified and rationalized due to their undocumented status. Having a difficult job is better than having no job at all, the capitalist theory goes, emboldened by the workers' precarious status.

These past and present examples of injustice — women being assaulted in the name of male morale; black men stuck behind bars at disproportionately high rates; millions of undocumented workers facing acute and chronic suffering every day — serve to highlight the most insidious feature of injustice: its ability to assume the form of a rationalization. Inhumane treatment of people, animals, and the planet can always be rationalized in one way or another by cunning, opportunistic, market-oriented, narrow, and straight up evil minds.

So how do we curb this human tendency? How do we get the Lawrence Summers of the world to start taking responsibility for people and the planet of their own accord? It comes down to three fundamental requisites, without which, there exists no grounds for justice. They are as follows: recognition of intrinsic value; equal consideration and respect; and material provisions. The first two ultimately stem from within, while the third exists externally. The path to a just world is ensuring people possess the first two requisites. In time, these people will completely form the decision-making bodies that will see to the

third requisite.

Recognition of intrinsic value is the first nonnegotiable component of justice, one that has not frequented human behavior often enough. Whereas some people learn that humans, animals, and the planet have worth in and of themselves and represent ends and not means (Kant), this is not an underlying assumption that everybody shares. When we consider injustice — gross human rights abuses, the brutal, incessant exploitation of people and the planet, and economic impoverishment — we must consider the role that absence of intrinsic value plays. In 'The Power of Money,' Karl Marx names money as the "existing and active concept of value" (Marx 137). The role of money and the fact that it is synonymous with value does not represent a micro-analysis of injustice. On the contrary: the role of money and the conflation of money with value represents the root source of most of the injustices that plague humankind.

This human constructed idea of money as value is so deep-rooted that one must look to alternate realities, such as utopian literature and films, to find a world that orients itself otherwise. Edward Bellamy's 1888 utopian novel *Looking Backward* presents a world in which a man's title is not contingent on money, but simply on his humanity. In this world, people contribute what they can to society, driven by a "passion for humanity" (Bellamy 148) rather than "coarser motives" (Bellamy 148) such as money. In responding to the narrator's inquiries as to how such a world could work, Dr. Leete — the character hosting the narrator in his home — replies with ease: "the title of every man, woman, and child to the means of existence rests on no

basis less plain, broad, and simple than the fact that they are fellows of one race — members of one human family” (Bellamy 150). Clearly this logic is not so “plain, broad and simple,” seeing as one hundred and thirty three years later a man’s title is far from his humanity. Bellamy’s vision has not been realized because of one thing: money. Money obstructs humanity from prevailing as man’s claim in this world; money is the main course and humanity is on the side. Injustice will continue to be rationalized so long as the simplest safeguard — a claim to humanity, a claim to intrinsic value — is not recognized. As long as Bellamy’s utopia remains a utopia, there will exist cracks through which justice will slip time and time again, for if value is not intrinsic and therefore unwavering, then it must be conditional on the existing and active concept of value: money.

Conditional value creates the conditions for people and the planet to be employed as means and not ends. This notion of conditional value is notably recognized in the works of late theologian James Cone and Dr. Robert D. Bullard, known as the Father of Environmental Justice. In discussing the ecological crisis and the struggle against racism — two of the most pressing existential threats to humanity — Cone and Bullard respectively identify a singular system responsible for both threats. The main hallmark of this system: lack of recognition of intrinsic value. Cone urges people to “link the earth’s crisis with the crisis in the human family” (Cone 201) and identifies a singular “mechanistic and instrumental logic that defines everything and everybody in terms of their contribution to the development and defense of white supremacy” (Cone 195). Indeed, white supremacy

relies on being able to define people and planet as means and not ends. Similarly, Bullard stresses that “to understand the global ecological crisis, it is important to understand that the poisoning (from environmental waste) of African Americans in South Central Los Angeles, from environmental waste, and of Mexicans in border maquiladoras have their roots in the same system of economic exploitation, racial oppression, and devaluation of human life” (Bullard 190). By drawing parallels between the pillaging of people and the planet, Cone and Bullard demonstrate the prevailing exploitative conception of value in the world, a conception which legitimizes and sustains the connected injustices of racism and environmental degradation. There is no reason to think either of these injustices will fade away so long as people and planet are seen as instruments and the accompanying instrumental, capitalistic logic prevails.

The failure to recognize intrinsic value operates on a cultural level as well. For instance, the widespread refusal to recognize the intrinsic value of Indigenous peoples in the U.S. and their many ways of life provides a convenient rationalization/entry point for stripping away their rightfully owned land. In addition to land, Indigenous institutions such as tribal courts tend to be rejected in the U.S. because Indigenous justice is widely seen as illegitimate and/or wrong next to Western ways; as a general rule, whenever something is assessed against Western standards, it loses its capacity to exist in its own right. This has serious implications for entire communities. For instance, leading criminologist Chris Cunneen finds that “[Western] off-the-shelf programmes [of justice] are not

programmes that are organic to Indigenous people and their communities, or their needs, and experiences” (Cuneen 351). Consequently, the result is the continued oppression of Indigenous peoples “through processes of state criminalization” (Cuneen 351), a process more conducive to recidivism (reoffending). While it is clear that failure to recognize Indigenous justice perpetuates crime and does far more harm than good, struggles for Indigenous sovereignty in this area persist today due to lack of recognized cultural intrinsic value.

Another area that highlights lack of cultural intrinsic value is knowledge itself. Who gets to be a great thinker in this world? Whose intellectual work gets respected and honored and circulated just as it is? Whose work is intrinsically valuable? Robert Bernasconi, Professor of Philosophy at Pennsylvania State University, offers a useful framework for answering this question. Bernasconi asserts that there is a ‘double bind’ phenomenon at play in the field of philosophy. This double bind phenomenon sees non-Western philosophy as either assimilated into Western philosophy (known as simply philosophy) or marginalized to the point of exclusion (Mignolo 252). It does not get to stand alone; assessed against Western philosophy, it is either too similar or too different.

So long as the West sets the standards of the world — be it for justice or philosophy — everyone and everything else will not be recognized as possessing intrinsic value. As the examples of Indigenous sovereignty and non-Western philosophy demonstrate, not possessing intrinsic value is only a few short steps away from being discounted altogether. And how then, can we ever have justice?

Finally, with regard to intrinsic value, the issue of reparations is relevant. All too often valid claims to reparations get entangled in economic and other legal arguments that refuse to simply grant reparations on the grounds that people, as people, were hurt and had their most fundamental human rights violated. The only debate surrounding reparations should be what form they should take, not whether they should be granted. To take just one example, when the issue of reparations was raised in Japan in the case of the ‘Comfort Women,’ there was an extensive debate as to whether the state owed the women anything. The state decided they did not owe the women reparations, despite the fact that the women’s torture had been sanctioned by them in the first place. Japan argued that because no state commitments had existed at the time, there were no legal grounds upon which to retroactively compensate the women. Rather than recognize the women as humans with intrinsic value in need of the healing mechanism of reparations, they adopted a “narrow legalistic interpretation” (Mushakoji 302) and rationalized themselves out of doing the right thing. And while the state should have taken responsibility, indeed the most redeeming quality of the extra-state solution — the ‘Asian Women’s Fund,’ a private charity platform that allowed citizens to donate to the victims — was its recognition of victims as people who had been harmed. Here, the women’s only claim was their humanity.

Humankind has dangerously lost sight of intrinsic value and worth when it comes to both the individual and the collective. The result is a world community that sees no stake in preserving the life or well-be-

ing of others unless there is some other motivation present. Without the universal safeguard of intrinsic value, injustice will continue to be rationalized. We cannot control certain inevitabilities in this world - whether it is war, undocumented status, or cultural differences. What we can control is how we value each other. Intrinsic value is the basis for justice, and I have accordingly devoted ample time to it. For true justice to be realized and maintained, however, it must be accompanied by two other requisites: equal respect and consideration, and material provisions.

People can be seen as possessing intrinsic value while still not being extended equal respect and consideration, and where there is no equal respect and consideration, there is no justice. American activist and social worker Jane Addams captures the need for these two requisites — intrinsic value and equal responsibility and consideration — to work in conjunction, noting that when our actions do not align with our moral conceptions, “we suffer from the strain and indecision of believing one hypothesis and acting upon another” (Addams 150). In *Democracy and Social Ethics*, Addams illustrates the all too often paternalistic and hierarchical nature of charity, whereby the charitable agent offers up advice and instructions to the charity recipient but does not answer their immediate needs. The recipients of the ‘charity’ grow outraged “when they see the delay and caution with which relief is given” (Addams 152) and “do not understand why the impulse which drives people to be good to the poor should be so severely supervised” (Addams 152). Even though the charity recipients Addams depicts are seen as intrinsically valuable, they are not

treated as fellow humans who stand on equal footing with the charitable agent. If they were, they would receive immediate aid. If Addams’ charity scenario from 1902 does not find a direct counterpart today, her moral critique of the strict regulation and top-down nature of aid certainly does. Whether it is the inadequacy of U.S. foreign aid to struggling countries or the insulated format of online donations, contemporary benefactors and beneficiaries do not stand on equal footing. Equal respect and consideration necessitates answering immediate needs. For instance, if I donate to San Francisco’s ‘Mayor’s Fund for the Homeless’ but do not offer up my leftovers or whatever money I have in my jacket pocket to visibly struggling individuals I see while out in the city, I have failed to uphold this requisite. The human impulse to help others must supersede man made rules, national interests, bureaucratic tape, calculations and regulations, etc. Indeed this is Addams’ very conclusion, that charity must be less bureaucratic and hierarchical (if it must exist at all) and that socializing virtues entails “a social process” (Addams 156), where we must walk “for many dreary miles beside the lowliest of His creatures...” (Addams 156). Assistance to those who are struggling cannot be calculated and top-down if we are to all be equally respected and considered. Equal respect and consideration — as Addams’ work on charity demonstrates — means we must practice what we preach and see ourselves and others on equal terms, deserving of immediate recognition.

The British military intervention in Sierra Leone in 2000 exemplifies this requisite quite well. Rather than wait for an official sanction to protect the vulner-

able villagers of the town Freetown from vicious rebel attacks, General Sir David Richards “made a remarkable unilateral decision to go beyond his mandate in order to save a civilian population from the overwhelming likelihood of an all-out slaughter” (Giovanni 2). This example of pure humanitarian intervention, unmotivated and unregulated by anything other than the human impulse to help, must serve as a model for governments and individual citizens alike. The very basic premise of the Golden Rule — do unto others as you would have them do unto you — should, in theory, operate on a world stage, on a broader, more expansive scale.

Moving toward equal respect and consideration looks like drafting and passing legislation as if you do not know your position in society. Equal respect and consideration looks like voting for candidates and propositions as if you do not know your position in society. Essentially, equal respect and consideration means temporarily sidelining your identity when it comes to decision making. Philosopher John Rawls offers us just the template to do this: the original position. The original position is a hypothetical situation wherein people “are without information that enables them to tailor principles of justice favorable to their personal circumstances” (Freeman 13). The original position requires that no one know their position in society; everyone is under a “veil of ignorance” and does not know their exact identity. In theory this produces just conditions because — assuming people are rational — no one will ask for conditions which could potentially harm themselves. For instance, if one were not certain they were going to be a man, then calling for women not to have the

right to vote would be an unwise move. If when the veil of ignorance dropped that person found they were a woman, they would not fare so well. Rawls’ original position offers us a just way to approach the world as equals. It is this original position we should place ourselves in every time we make a decision, especially at the polls.

Intrinsically valuing people does not go far enough, as this can be a passive endeavor. The requisite of equal respect and consideration builds on intrinsic value and places everyone on the same level. To ensure this is done, however, we often need concrete mechanisms and explicit safeguards, which leads me to what I see as the third and final requisite of justice.

Civil and human rights activist Ella Baker understood what the philosopher T.H Green understood, “that peace is not the absence of war or struggle, it is the presence of justice” (Baker 109). In her ‘Address at the Hattiesburg Freedom Day Rally,’ Baker passionately proclaimed: “People cannot, pardon me, people cannot be free until there is enough work in the land to give everybody a job.... until we recognize that in this country in a land of great and plenty and great wealth there are millions of people who go to bed hungry every night” (Baker 109). For Baker, *economic* freedom is implicated in the word ‘freedom,’ and not having a job or going to bed hungry is not freedom, let alone justice. Valuing people intrinsically and equally respecting and considering one another necessitates material, worldly accompaniments. In many ways, justice boils down to material provisions. We find that taking responsibility for others is — or rather should be — inherently economic. It is one thing to value people and regard

them equally and another to see to this in a tangible way. After all, justice is not an abstract concept. It is food. It is water. It is resources. It is doctor's visits, financial security, shelter, safety, etc. Such material provisions of justice are important not only on their own merits, but also in how they inform larger dynamics of justice and injustice. Author Barry Estabrook's case study on the horrid farm working conditions in Immokalee Florida underscores this point.

Estabrook begins his illuminative case study, 'Politics of the Plate: The Price of Tomatoes,' with the shocking line: "if you have eaten a tomato this winter, chances are very good that it was picked by a person who lives in virtual slavery" (Estabrook 162). Estabrook is referring to the farming and living conditions in Immokalee Florida, where migrants come to work for the sole purpose of sending money back home to their families. Most - if not all - of the workers soon find themselves stuck in a system of involuntary servitude due to the abysmal, fluctuating, and unregulated wages that are commonplace in undocumented farming communities. Estabrook chronicles the story of one worker who was held captive by an abusive crew boss who purposefully kept the worker in debt so he could not leave. While this worker's story represents the most extreme manifestation, its central hallmarks are common for most of the farmworkers there. As one tomato picker summed it up: "poverty and misery are the perfect recipe for slavery" (Estabrook 164). So not only do the workers live in extreme poverty, with inadequate food, wages, and shelter, but these conditions leave them vulnerable to abuse by crew bosses in an industry that

loves to exploit the undocumented. Here we can see how material provisions are an important requisite for justice. Not only are most material provisions basic human rights - food, water, shelter, stable income, etc. — but they also help safeguard people from precarious conditions where other bigger injustices — in this case twenty-first century slavery — seep in. The food industry represents one industry where state sponsored material protections — wage requirements, health benefits, workers' quarters, and food and water — are warranted, regardless of citizenship status. This — state solutions — is where the answer lies; it cannot be assumed that workers will leave poor conditions, especially where undocumented status is at play. And worker mobility is not solely a question of citizenship: late American worker Kenny Dobbins stayed with meat giant Monfort for sixteen years despite serious bodily and psychological harm because he could not afford to relinquish his job security. Although Kenny's story is not an easy one to share, it is nonetheless crucial that it is circulated, serving as it does as a window into the consequences of material injustice in the U.S.

In his time with Monfort, Kenny Dobbins' accumulated injuries included: a broken leg, a back pierced by a conveyor belt, exposure to hazardous chemicals such as chlorine, deep gashes in his back and face after being injured in a car accident driving a faulty company truck, and a heart attack that a nurse at the meatpacking plant told him was simply a "pulled muscle" (Schlosser 169). In telling Kenny's story, investigative journalist Eric Schlosser concludes: "once strong and powerfully built, he now walks with difficulty, tires easily,

and feels useless, as though his life is over. He is forty-five years old” (Schlosser 170). Kenny’s story is one of injustice because it is one without material provisions. Left with no other way to survive, Kenny stayed with a job that left him virtually incapacitated by the end.

The situations of undocumented farmworkers and blue-collar workers such as Kenny Dobbins are more alike than they are different. Both illustrate an extension of the issue ‘environmental job blackmail,’ which sees workers (primarily workers of color) stuck in jobs hazardous to their health and safety because their only other option is unemployment. This trend persists because material survival is on the line; as Robert Bullard notes: “[these] workers will tell you that unemployment and poverty are also hazardous to one’s health” (Bullard 193).

In the same vein of worker justice — but deserving a category of its own — is food justice. Any meaningful discussion of material injustice must include food. And like money, I do not see this as a micro-analysis of injustice either, as not having access to healthy food represents a very real material threat where survival is on the line. As Jill Dieterle, Professor of Philosophy at Eastern Michigan University notes: “residents of food deserts cannot secure the material preconditions of the right to preserve themselves” (Dieterle 49). And Dieterle does not settle for a narrow definition of preservation of life either, asserting that while “one may be able to provisionally survive on processed, unhealthy food, one could not preserve one’s life over the long term” (Dieterle 49). Mere survival is not justice, and the physical threats generated by lack of access to healthy food absolutely

warrant timely, physical responses (operative word being timely). At present I am not concerned with what specific form this takes but with the absolute necessity of such an endeavor.

Finally, a discussion on material justice warrants consideration of reparations, an unnecessarily controversial subject where time-sensitive and material provisions of justice are necessary. In the case of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission — a restorative justice commission set up to address apartheid era human right violations — reparations took five years to be granted after the commission issued their recommendations. Five years. This is not justice. Mechanisms to ensure reparations are 1) granted and 2) granted in a timely manner are deeply important to any meaningful execution of justice. Whether reparations take the form of financial restitution or a statement issued by the state, they must arrive swiftly. The fact that slavery reparations in the U.S. are still up for debate is a gross delay of material justice.

These examples for the third requisite serve to underscore that justice must be active, time sensitive, unwavering, expansive, and in more cases than not, economic and concrete.

If these three requisites have seemed obvious, or eyebrow raising simplistic, it is because they are. They are meant to be “plain, broad, and simple” (Bellamy 150). I have no interest in complicating what is, in fact, an excruciatingly simple matter; the world has done enough of that already. Indeed, I find when the sun seems to be setting on humanity in more ways than one - the murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor; the contin-

ued persecution of the Rohingya people; the denial of parole for no reason in Bay Area prisons; hungry children unable to eat lunch without a school program in the U.S., to name a few timely examples — an elementary, intellectually accessible path to justice is absolutely warranted. There is not much that cannot be solved/prevented when people, animals, and the planet are valued intrinsically, equally respected and considered, and provided the necessary material means to live, not survive. Disentangling internalized capitalism, raising our kids (especially our boys) better, and shifting to a more socially democratic system where taxes are not scary represent possible means to these ends. While we cannot expect all the dictators, corrupt politicians, sleazy capitalists, and extremists of the world — as well as the more mild cases of the Lawrence Summers' who rationalize sending dirty industries to the LDCs — to read my paper and drop everything, we can always be reminded of the world we are working for. The one where women are not assaulted during war, or ever; where people of all walks of life have the wherewithal to leave hazardous jobs as they please; where kids are laughing and coming up with genius ideas because their stomachs are not growling; where states rationalize themselves into, not out of, humanitarian intervention; where a paper like this one becomes absurd and unnecessary.

This world.

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Author's Note

My name is Grace Clinton and I am a junior Political Science major and Theatre minor, set to graduate in 2022. In Fall of 2020, I was tasked with answering a prompt during my Theories of Justice course concerned with the not-so-small concept of justice itself. After having studied a long string of diverse injustices in the world over the course of the semester, I felt at a complete loss. Justice had started to seem like more of an abstract concept than a tangible reality. So I took a step back, examined all the cases of injustice we had studied, and identified what was missing from each. This led me to a formula of justice, one that is not the most theoretical, but strong in its accessibility and feasibility. As I wrote, I had to quiet my ego, remind myself that the most important thing was conceptualizing a just world, not convoluting such a simple topic with fancy words and theory. Justice can be simple. Indeed, I've decided it must be simple. This essay is my baby, my prescription for the world, and I believe in the path to justice I've laid out wholeheartedly. I would like to thank Patrizia Longo, professor, advisor, friend, and inspiration. She has taught me to question everything I know and not settle for a version of justice that is tamed or limited. She is my intellectual and moral role model and has challenged me to be as

critical and radical of a thinker and writer as I can be. I would also like to thank my friends and family for their support and willingness to entertain and discuss 'radical' notions of justice. Finally I would like to thank my CWAC advisor Loisa Fenichell for her insightful comments and helpful guidance in revising, fine tuning, and continuing to engage with my work.

Smudge

Nataly Berg

*May your hands be cleansed, that they create beautiful things.
May your throat be cleansed, that you might speak rightly when words are
needed. May your eyes be cleansed, that you might see the signs and wonders
of this world. May this person and space be washed clean by the smoke of
these fragrant plants. And may the same smoke carry our prayers spiraling to
the heavens.*

-Author Unknown

Ruda, Palo Santo, Eucalipto, and Copal were some of the herbs my grandmother used to burn in a clay pot while walking corner to corner around the house. As a native of the Peruvian Amazon, my grandmother had different rituals and most of them involved native plants. One morning, as I was doing school work, she entered my bedroom carrying a hot clay pot from which smoke and exquisite smells emanated from it and a medium size towel on her shoulder. It appeared to me that she had a different intention than filling the house with smoke. This time, she said was coming for me. Confused but still curious, I asked what the towel was for. She responded with a gentle smile and seconds of silence. I believed she did not want to scare an eleven year old with so much mystery, so she responded, "It is for clearing your nasal passages and good for your lungs." Then she proceeded to cover my head with the towel, placed my face above the warm pot and asked me to inhale deeply the

smoke produced by all the native plants. Many years later I became aware that my grandma was smudging. This is a method used by native South and North Americans for cleansing the body and mind in healing rituals and prayer ceremonies. However, many people like my child-self live unaware of the significance that smudging has for indigenous communities. This paper will attempt to explain the significance of smudging for indigenous people as well as the responses of those who deny them existence, using the lenses of Social Anthropologists Francesca Mezzenzana, Social Scientist Emile Durkheim, Psychologists William James and the Father of Psychoanalysis Sigmund Freud.

The short documentary "Smudge" narrates the testimonies of indigenous women in a Canadian city who smudge as a way to connect with the spirits of ancestors, nature, and themselves. The first character in the film is Bonita Lawrence, a Native American and university professor who

smudges everyday and everywhere. On her mother's passing anniversary, Bonita goes to the park located near a lake shore. Here, she settles, placing a blanket on the ground. She pulls out a Native American drum and herbs to burn. As she prepares for her ritual, she says that in order to offer prayers, first one must smudge to purify the mind and the heart (Smudge 03:30). Conditions necessary to interact with the sacred spirits of her mother in nature. Thereafter, she began singing and drumming native songs while surrounded by white snow, trees, birds, and people. Even though she describes being at peace, she also expresses concern that her native practice was being misconceived by a society who is unaware, indifferent and disrespectful of what she does. For instance, at work her practice is oftentimes interrupted because others think that this could provoke fire, therefore she smudges in secrecy afraid of getting caught and fired. Similarly at the park, she feared police could be called on her by pedestrians who don't understand what smudging means. These two reactions, from the college and from civilians, make Bonita feel disappointed and unseen because "institutions were not made with smudging in mind (07:03). Her experiences show, on one hand, the unity between culture and identity where smudging functions as the legacy of her ancestors to current and future generations to keep grounded, clean energy, but most importantly to honor and keep alive the tradition that shaped the Native American community. Thus, Bonita's desire to reconnect with her mother's spirit at the park shows that the world of human spirits and those of nature belong to one main source. Then, smudging can be defined as

the bridge between the worlds of death and life, past and present, suffering to honor, disconnection to grounding. In contrast, Bonita's encounters with educational and law enforcement institutions shaped by colonial ideals become active suppressors that threaten her very existence, denigrating Indigenous culture, spirituality, and ways of life.

Bonita's smudging practice and intent to connect with spirits can be explained by Francesca Mezzenzana, who proposes that spiritual conceptions emerge from within the materiality of everyday engagements (Mezzenzana 277) through sensory modalities (275) and corporeal learning (275). This means that spiritual meaning is not something added on top of reality but rather is intrinsic to reality itself (278). In other words, spiritual perceptions should be recognized as real because its practitioners experience it through the senses. Through Mezzenzana's lens, Bonita's daily practice of smudge fits perfectly under her theory. Smudging takes a central place in Bonita's life — she engages in smudging every day at her workplace on campus and other public places. Further, all her senses are activated when the smoke produced by smudging is absorbed by her nasal passages, the drumming melody her ears enjoy is created by hands, and her own voice is produced by bodily vibrations. Through these practices, Bonita creates and experiences reality; she clears channels in her body and mind essential for life, experiences spirituality through her body with natural elements, and offers her wholeness to the higher power of creation. Moreover, it is equally important to point at Bonita's concern about the denial of Indigenous peoples' spirituality in public spaces. Here

Mezzenzana would interpret this reaction as a form of suppression, typical of a society altered by Western colonialism where any practice that does not fit in the categories of religion is not considered a form of knowledge. The devaluation and separation of the body and mental experiencing within its environment becomes a barrier for Indigenous peoples (278). By making this distinction a misconceived interpretation is born, that police, university institutions, and regular observants perceive Bonita as living in a different world and smudging as not real but merely fantastic.

In opposition to Mezzenzana's theory of spiritual perceptions and corporeal learning that recognizes Bonita's experiences as powerful and real, Sigmund Freud offers a perspective shaped by the Enlightenment movement. Under this intellectual movement, he asserts that religious doctrines are an illusion, a production of one's own mental activity, thereby belonging outside the jurisdiction of reason (Freud 28). In other words, religious or spiritual engagements are considered by Freud deceptions of the mind. Furthermore, he claims that religious ideas arise due to the necessity of defending oneself against the crushingly superior force of nature (21). This means that people look to religion as a way to have some control over the unpredictable events of life. If Freud were to be at the park observing Bonita's ritual, he would judge this performance as bizarre and assume Bonita is acting erratic. For him, smudging has no spiritual nor physical significance because he belongs to a movement that values the sovereignty of reason, science, and whiteness. Indigenous rituals are not forms of knowledge but rather beliefs not backed by evidence. Instead,

Freud will interpret Bonita's ceremonial practice at the park as a psychological response to death — the loss of her mother. Most likely he would join others in calling the police on Bonita which confirms the predominance of a Western civilization born in the enlightenment that demotes indigenous traditions to ignorance.

Indigenous woman and artist performer Michaela also asserts that smudging is part of her daily and community life because it provides her with a sense of grounding and connection. She shared that growing up never felt a sense of belonging or safety when attending Catholic churches due to her sexual orientation. Under the Catholic doctrine, she felt judged, excluded, and even demonized. This is why she turned to her ancestral tradition of sweat lodging and smudging, where experiencing became tangible to believe in (02:10). In the documentary, excited Michaela expresses that smudging is, "the earth, the rocks, the moon, the sight, smell and feeling. It is home" (02:40). Michaela feels alive, she smudged everywhere and everyday. Nevertheless, she similarly felt excluded from the art community when one night Michaela and a group of artists showed how smudging became problematic for theatrical spaces. Before a performance, she asked for permission to smudge but her request was denied reasoning that strong smell and potential fire is a constant threat in closed spaces (05:00). In response, the group decided to smudge on the street at the back of the theater. Standing in a circle, they burnt a plant that looked like Cedar and began praying. One said, "I want to give thanks to our ancestors," and another uttered, "I want to thank for being alive today" (05:42).

Emile Durkheim provides insight into Michaela's search for belonging and acceptance in a colonial dominant society. Durkheim affirms that religion, in this case a spiritual practice, is a "system of social beliefs and practices related to sacred things that unite individuals into one single moral community." (Durkheim 44) To put it another way, religious faith has its origin in society, and since society is a synthesis of human consciousness, thereby, religion's object is to unite man and society in the world through the action of faith (Durkheim 432). If Durkheim were to hear Michaela's feelings of rejection towards religion — catholicism in this case — he would empathize with her because religion and its European dogma has not provided a safety container where she is seen and understood. Thus, the refusal for her to smudge in a public space, not only is a rejection to her practice, but of her very existence in the world. For these reasons, Michaela seeks in her ancestral legacy Durkheim's theory of social unification and harmony. Gathering on the street to smudge with friends represents the need to preserve and strengthen the collective and individual feelings of belonging — namely, to a community, a social structure of common beliefs, and ultimately to the power of nature through inhaling and praying. It is through this very action of assembly and worship that they experience bonding and recognition in a cohesive manner.

In the same vein, William James's theory of religious experience provides a new way to interpret Michaela's practice. James claims that experiencing religion is engaging in a personal mystical state of consciousness (James 531), a state of no delusion but one of absolute clearness of

mind (James 538). Not concerned about defining religion, James focused on the effects this had on people. Namely, the carrying of knowledge (James 533), state of indescribable feelings (James 533), and the connection between the individual and the higher universe (James 676). If James were to analyze the effects smudge has on Michaela, he would say that this practice guides her to a new dimension of human experience. One where she does not pretend to be but simply is. James will see that smudging provided insight to Michaela's life because she was able to discover feelings of belonging and a new way of relating with the world. New knowledge that does not require an ideology and a god but herself and the entire creation around her. A realization of oneness with every living thing including smudging. Similar to Bonita, despite being impeded from smudging inside the theater, Michaela's desire to connect with the spirits is essential to her survival, therefore she has to find new ways to keep her source of energy alive by stepping outside. Once again we observe how smudging and Indigenous women are discriminated against, feeling a constant sense of deprivation and oppression as a result of insufficient social knowledge and understanding.

I found compelling that while some perceive smudging and the smoke it produces as uncomfortable and even threatening to life, those who experience it feel it is fundamental for their existence. What Bonita, Michaela, and my grandmother showed me through their lived experiences is that there are other ways of knowing, feeling, perceiving, and living that many of us have yet explored. On the other hand, those feeling suspicious about smudging cannot

completely carry all the blame because we are in many ways products of the enlightenment ideology deeply and invisibly embedded in social constructs we live by. This paper has allowed me to see clearly both sides of the same coin. These personal stories were successfully explained by Francesca Mezzenzana who proposed not separating the external environment from the internal state of mind, inviting us to recognize smudging as a practice ingrained in day-to-day reality. Furthermore, Durkheim did a great job defining the power of smudge beyond individual experience, showing us that spiritual practices serve as a social unifier. Lastly, I proposed Freud, a product of Colonial supremacy to explain the individual, collective, and institutional reactions of society that whether intentionally or unintentionally disallow Indigenous forms of intelligence as truths. Ignoring his point of view would be detrimental and only can lead us to contribute and reinforce the very behavior this paper tried to condemn.

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Author's Note

When I think about my grandmother Luchita, I feel love, protection, nurturement, and mother. I wrote this paper to honor the Indigenous legacy she left in me: her teachings on clean food, medicinal herbs, healing of body and mind, appreciation for the earth, religion and spirituality. She was an Indigenous woman from the Amazon jungle who converted to Christianity. Although their coexistence may seem problematic, she embodied, embraced, and promoted both truths in everything she did. Today, her teachings and voice live within me.

I believe my choice for the documentary "Smudge" happened subconsciously. I was looking for a case on religion to analyze when the title caught my attention. I completely ignored what smudge meant, just like the teachings of my grandma. Once I watched the film, memories of similar experiences emerged to my consciousness but they were not quite clear yet. So, I began calling my cousin who I grew up with in Peru and together we tried to remember all the knowledge she fed into our child minds. What did grandma call the burning of plants and the essences we drank every day? She existed in it: Reality. That is why she never gave them a name.

My deepest gratitude goes to my grandmother Luchita. When I write her spirit is right by my side. It is what helps me feel safe to express, connect authentically with my writing, and empowers my voice. Also, I want to thank my husband Ryan

Berg who unconditionally supported and dedicated many nights helping me with the English language and writing when I just arrived in the United States. To Anthropology professor Anna Corwin who believed in me and nominated this essay to the Spectrum Essay Contest, her meditations at the beginning of each class made me feel safe, seen and connected to my peers. It was a spiritual practice in itself. My heart sees you.

Community Health Program Analysis

Kianna Escalante

Introduction

The community partners that I chose to research were the Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO) and Te Rau Ora. The Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations was established in 1987 and is based in San Leandro, California. AAPCHO is a nonprofit national association that serves medically underserved Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (AANHPI) in the United States. They receive funding from federal and foundation grants and are governed by a national Board of Directors that is made up of members of the Association. AAPCHO used to focus primarily on their partnerships with other organizations, but since their founding, they have grown to be an advocate and voice for underrepresented populations in the United States. Their mission claims, “AAPCHO is dedicated to promoting advocacy, collaboration, and leadership that improves the health status

and access of AAs and NHPs within the United States, its territories, and freely associated states, primarily through [their] member CHCs (community health center)” (Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations, n.d.). Due to the fact that Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders are all minority groups in the United States, they often have much more difficulty trying to have their voices heard. This is where AAPCHO comes in; they help educate their community partners about these specific groups of individuals to make sure that they are being culturally respectful. They also provide training and technical assistance to health communication centers to make sure that there are enough appropriate resources for their employees. In addition, AAPCHO has a team working in Washington DC that is in charge of ensuring that members of Congress are getting culturally accurate resources and statistics about AA and NHPI communities liv-

ing in the United States. The association strives to be “a national leader and critical voice for AA&NHPI-serving health centers and consumers, ensuring that our communities have better access to affordable, high quality, and culturally and linguistically proficient health care” (Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations, n.d.).

Te Rau Matatini is another organization that was established by the Associate Minister of Health, Tariana Turia in March of 2002 in New Zealand. It was later rebranded as Te Rau Ora in 2019. Te Rau Matatini was originally based in Palmerston North and was composed of Maori leaders from the mental health and addiction sector (Te Rau Ora, n.d.). About a decade later, it became a nonprofit nongovernmental organization and now has offices in Auckland, Hamilton, and Wellington. Their primary focus is to strengthen Maori health and wellbeing. Te Rau Matatini later became known as Te Rau Ora because the new name aligned much better with their mission, culture, and belief to strengthen their people (Te Rau Ora, n.d.). Te Rau Ora’s purpose is “to improve Māori Health through leadership, education, research and evaluation, health workforce development and innovation, systemic transformation” and to “strengthen Māori Health through nationally navigated and locally led solutions” (Te Rau Ora, n.d.). Even though Maori are native to New Zealand, they tend to be a group that gets overlooked, especially when it comes to health care. There are often health inequalities between Maori and other individuals living in New Zealand, which is why Te Rau Ora strives to strengthen health workforces, in hopes of increasing Maori individuals’

potential and wellbeing (<https://terauora.com/>).

Epidemiology of Type II Diabetes

According to the CDC, 34.2 million people suffer from diabetes in the United States (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2017). More specifically, some minority groups, such as Asians, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders (NHPIs), have a higher probability of developing type 2 diabetes (Kirtland et al., 2015; Yomogida et al., 2015). There are many factors that may contribute to this issue, such as genetics, a higher prevalence of obesity and sedentary lifestyles, etc. (Kirtland et al., 2015). Even though both of these groups suffer from diabetes, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders are more likely to suffer from obesity, increasing their chances of developing the condition. One reason for this results from Native Hawaiian’s preexisting diets of fish, taro, and yams, yet as the physical demand of farming went down due to colonization, these individuals started to consume more heavily processed foods, leading to higher rates of obesity and diabetes (Hawley & McGarvey, 2015). Even though it is recommended that people consume more fruits and vegetables, they need to be aware that these manufactured products may contain high amounts of sugar and sodium, which when consumed too much, can be detrimental to one’s health (Chepulis et al., 2019).

Contrastingly, in New Zealand in 2019, it was estimated that about 260,000 people suffered from type 2 diabetes, while 100,000 people were undiagnosed. One in four New Zealanders is prediabetic, putting them at risk of developing type 2 diabetes

and cardiovascular diseases (Beaton et al., 2019). Maori make up 15% of the country's population, along with 7% being Pacific Islander, and 10% Asian (Gamble et al., 2017). These groups are most affected by diabetes, yet, according to Beaton et al. (2019), Maori people have a higher chance of developing prediabetes compared to non-Maori, later leading to type 2 diabetes. In addition, Maori are seven times more likely to die from the disease than non-Maori (Farmer et al., 2016). There are major health disparities that exist within the Maori community and they are often neglected when it comes to health care. Health providers tend to disregard Maori culture and do not treat or educate them properly about specific health issues. Many Maori have little knowledge about diabetes as a whole and are unaware of how to prevent or treat it (Farmer et al., 2016). As a result, they are less likely to receive diabetes screening and management (Farmer et al., 2018). According to Farmer et al. (2018), some other barriers that Maori may have in terms of improving their health and preventing type 2 diabetes are economic, social, cultural, and institutional.

Priority Population

The original priority population that AAPCHO used to target were Asian Americans. Yet, a few years ago, they decided to broaden their collaboration and extend it to Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders. Members of AAPCHO have had to learn how to educate themselves about the NHPI community so that they can best serve these individuals. When working with people of varying backgrounds, it is important to be culturally respectful and understand that beliefs of one person may

conflict with another's. However, rather than judging them for their beliefs and stripping them of their culture completely, it is important to implement lifestyle changes that allow them to hold onto traditional practices.

Diabetes is heavily prevalent among ethnic minorities due to biology, and lifestyle behaviors such as lack of physical activity, low household income, cultural and environmental factors, etc. (Guo et al., 2015). Guo et al. (2015) also states that many Asian Americans and Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders face discrimination when it comes to Western medicine and healthcare, which is a contributing factor for their development of type 2 diabetes. Additionally, in 2017, 10.3% of Asians living in the United States suffered from diabetes, whereas only 7.3% of America's white population was affected by the disease (Guo et al., 2015).

Asian Americans and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders can learn a little bit more about AAPCHO by visiting their website. AAPCHO supplies relevant and accurate information for AANHPI individuals. The organization also focuses on nonclinical services for the community, such as language and interpretation. Their desire is that there are community health centers that go beyond just clinical work. Since AAPCHO interacts with members from a variety of backgrounds, it allows individuals from these specific ethnic groups to come together to learn about each other's cultures. The organization provides training and technical assistance to health communication centers, social workers, and ensure that they have culturally appropriate resources available for their members. Individuals a part of the AANHPI community

also gain the confidence to advocate for themselves and others in their community by working with employees of AAPCHO.

Based on the information discovered at AAPCHO, Asian Americans and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders are addressing diabetes by making adjustments to their overall lifestyles and seeking information about how they can help reduce their chances of developing the disease. The programs and partnerships team at AAPCHO created a Pacific Islanders and diabetes prevention group where individuals who are struggling with this illness can learn more about the disease and how to live with it. Members are educated about diabetes and prediabetes, specifically how it develops and what lifestyle changes can be made to help prevent it from escalating. In contrast, Te Rau Ora caters to Maori individuals. As stated before, Maori are seven times more likely to die from diabetes than non-Maori (Farmer et al., 2016). Due to cultural negligence on behalf of healthcare providers, Maori have a lack of knowledge about diabetes and how to prevent it. In addition, when they develop the disease, they are unaware about how to treat it properly. This is why it is important that an organization, such as Te Rau Ora, exists, so that it can help advocate for better treatment of Maori, leading to better health and wellbeing.

The primary way that Maori learn and interact with Te Rau Ora is by visiting their website and learning about what the organization is all about. People who are non-Maori can also visit the website to learn about how to create a workforce that is comfortable for Maori who may have or are currently struggling with addiction. Individuals are provided with tools and

resources about what works best for members of this specific community. Te Rau Ora also supplies people with information about how to promote the needs of Maori through public health and ways to encourage younger generations to enter into the health field. Maori who have a fair amount of knowledge about the culture can help educate and transform how other native New Zealanders are treated in the health sector. The organization also works with Maori youth to educate them on suicide prevention and postvention to enhance their wellbeing. Te Rau Ora provides this group with resources about how they can become advocates and leaders for their community.

Based on the information found on Te Rau Ora's website and the storyteller from Roturua, it is much more useful when health care providers understand health issues that Maori are more susceptible to. That way, they are able to accurately treat this group of people and share their knowledge to educate them about how to improve their health and wellbeing. Te Rau Ora does not particularly focus on educating Maori about diabetes, and instead, educates people about how to deal with Maori who may have suffered from issues such as addiction, depression, and other mental health problems in the past. The organization's website also provides resources for Maori and non-Maori to learn about how to help empower and educate this specific ethnic group in New Zealand. Storytelling is an additional way of educating younger generations about issues that may run in the family and to pass on important information from one generation to the next.

Analysis

As a community, it is important that people help promote and share AAPCHO's mission to serve Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander populations better. One factor that makes AAPCHO's health promotion materials effective is the idea that they work to raise cultural awareness. Individuals from these communities tend to feel very vulnerable and are sometimes afraid to speak up for themselves. This is where AAPCHO comes in; they are a voice for AANHPI communities. Another significant factor that contributes to their effectiveness is that their resources are specifically tailored for each culture. They recognize that their targeted audience encapsulates a variety of different cultures and beliefs and implement this idea into their teaching techniques.

One example of this is that many Filipinos love to dance. These individuals are also prone to developing type 2 diabetes. Therefore, there are instructors that work for AAPCHO that use dance as a way to lose weight. This is important because being overweight or obese puts individuals at a higher risk for developing this specific disease. Using dance as an alternative way to lose weight makes exercise fun and intriguing as opposed to standard methods such as running and weight training. AAPCHO's health promotion material is also effective because they make sure to write the information on their website at a 6th grade level so that more people can comprehend the material. Kristine, the employee from AAPCHO who I did my interview with, gave me an example of a time when there was a woman who admitted that she did not show up to one of AAPCHO's forums about diabetes because

she could not read. One AAPCHO employee took the initiative to help teach this woman how to read and understand the material, which further emphasizes the importance of being compassionate when working with community members.

One way that AAPCHO does marketing is by creating partnerships with other organizations and doing publicity on a variety of social media platforms. They have a development and public affairs team that is responsible for fundraising for the organization. They also make sure that the communication between community partners are aligned and that resources are available for all of its members. By connecting and creating partnerships with other agencies, AAPCHO is able to reach a larger number of people, which is one reason as to why they are sustainable. Another way that AAPCHO does marketing is through their policy and advocacy team. They primarily work in Washington DC and are responsible for making sure that members of Congress are supplied culturally accurate resources. They also help advocate for the Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander community by making sure that bills are passed that protect these individuals. This particular team is also responsible for grassroots training and instilling confidence in the AANHPI community so that they can advocate for themselves.

The health promotion material provided by the Te Rau Ora website is fairly effective. Their homepage immediately shows what their main goal is: to strengthen Maori health and well-being. They also go into detail about the meaning of their logo and how their use of the Mamaku fern symbolizes health and growth, which coincides

with their mission. Viewers can then scroll down the page and find a list of the work that the organization has done in the past related to addiction, public health, suicide prevention and postprevention, mental health, etc.

One thing that I feel that Te Rau Ora should do to improve their effectiveness is to make sure that they have someone who frequently checks their communications email. I tried reaching out to them a few times to schedule an interview with one of their employees, in hopes of learning a little bit more about the organization beyond what is available on their website. However, even after reaching out to the CEO, I still did not receive a response. I am not sure if it was because no one was willing to do an interview with me or if it was because they do not check their communications email often. It is important that they check their email frequently in case someone has a question about the resources that the organization offers or they have a clarifying question that they wish to have answered.

Since I do not live in New Zealand, I had personally never seen or heard about this organization prior to my research. On their website, they have a “contact us” page that provides two numbers, an email to contact their communications team, and a list of the addresses for their Auckland, Hamilton, and Wellington offices. For media contact, people can contact their CEO, Maria Baker, by telephone or email. In addition, visitors of the website can sign up for Te Rau Ora’s newsletter to be informed about upcoming wānanga (teaching and research), and events and pōnui (announcements or advertisements) (Te Rau Ora, n.d.).

Based on the information that I gathered, I would say that Te Rau Ora is sustainable because the organization has been operating for almost two decades. I also think that it is important that they rebranded the name of the organization because they felt that it better represented their overall mission statement. Due to the fact that I was unable to conduct an interview with an employee of the organization, I am not sure as to how they receive funding. I also do not know how many people they reach. In addition to their website, they have information about their organization on Facebook, Instagram, Scoop InfoPages, and Eventbrite. Te Rau Ora’s website includes a lot of the Maori language to cater to their priority population. They also keep their website updated with recent articles about events happening in New Zealand within the Maori community.

AAPCHO and Te Rau Ora use effective health promotion materials to engage the Asian American, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and Maori communities. However, they can make some of their material more effective by tailoring it for younger generations. Lifestyle habits develop at a young age and influence children’s future health related behaviors when they are adults. It is important to educate adolescents about diabetes and other chronic diseases so that they can gain knowledge about these health conditions before it is too late. If they know how they can prevent themselves and others from developing the disease, then they will hopefully take initiative to change their preexisting unhealthy lifestyles.

Conclusion

AAPCHO is very effective in that it works to educate and fight for better access to affordable and high quality health care that is also culturally appropriate for Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander populations. They provide excellent resources to educate people about being culturally aware and respectful, and they truly advocate for better treatment of AANHPIs when it comes to health treatment. The resources and information on their website also allow people of the AANHPI community to learn about diseases that they have a higher risk of developing, such as diabetes and hepatitis B. What stood out to me the most about the organizations is that they have a team that works with members of Congress in Washington, DC.

Since our society is so technologically advanced, it is important that Te Rau Ora uses a variety of social media platforms to try to reach as many people in the Maori community as possible. Te Rau Ora reaches out to this specific group in an effective way because they tailor their organization to inspire Maori to advocate for more personalized and culturally appropriate health treatments. It is also important to note that the organization tries to work with and educate youth in the community about how they can fight for better quality of care for their people. The agency works to transform working environments to better suit Maori so that they feel included and valued. Te Rau Ora's website is in the Maori language in addition to English, making it welcoming and accessible to its targeted community.

Based on the storyteller in Rotorua and the articles that I found, it is evident that storytelling is very important to the Maori

people. Storytellers are primarily elders that are known for being sacred knowledge keepers. Their stories are typically about the collective pain, suffering, and resistance of their people, and by spreading this knowledge, they are helping strengthen the community (Sium & Ritskes, 2013). Sium and Ritskes (2013) also state that Maori's indigenous stories are an important component to their culture and that their culture is directly tied to their land. It is significant that Maori address issues that exist within their community so that they can help combat them together. In terms of health, if younger generations were told that they are at a higher risk of developing a chronic disease due to their ethnic background, and that many other people in their community have been negatively affected by the disease, then this may inspire them to make healthier lifestyle changes. Additionally, when it comes to working with Maori, oral traditions can be a very culturally sensitive way of communicating, especially because this group of individuals are more familiar with receiving information verbally or visually, rather than having it written out for them to read (Farmer et al., 2016).

In the Maori culture, storytelling is a very powerful way to pass on stories to future generations and resist colonial powers. It is used in some other cultures but it is not a technique that is as heavily prevalent as it is in Maori culture. Since the United States is a melting pot of cultures, it is understandable that people of various ethnic groups would want their family history to be passed down to future generations. Oral narratives are used in Native Hawaiian culture through hula, songs, and chanting, as a way of documenting history, beliefs,

and facts. This is very similar to Maori culture, because they also pass down stories through dance, songs, and chants, such as the haka.

AAPCHO and Te Rau Ora are similar in that they both advocate for the priority populations that they work with and work to improve the health and wellbeing of their targeted groups. In addition, another one of their purposes is to strengthen people's knowledge about these specific communities so that they are more culturally respectful when interacting with these individuals, especially in the workplace.

Even though the two organizations share some similarities, there are also a few differences among the two. The primary difference is that AAPCHO's targeted population are Asian Americans and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders, and Te Rau Ora's targeted population are Maori. Te Rau Ora is very passionate about empowering youth, whereas AAPCHO is tailored more for adults. Te Rau Ora works to promote opportunities for younger generations and educates them about issues that are heavily prevalent in the Maori community. AAPCHO also works with individuals who are at a higher level in government, whereas Te Rau Ora works with foundations and other organizations.

The literature that I found stated that Asian Americans and Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders are more likely to develop type 2 diabetes compared to their white counterparts. Based on the interview that I did with Kristine, AAPCHO recognizes this disparity, which is why they advocate for better healthcare for members of these communities. The articles that I found also mentioned how healthcare workers need to be culturally respectful by understanding

that these ethnic groups have very complex values and beliefs and that this needs to be taken into account when treating these individuals (Kaholokula et al., 2018). An idea that came up in the articles and interview is the importance of understanding the needs of the community that are being worked with and making sure that empathy is shown towards individuals. Another key point that Kristine brought up is that society cannot try to lump cultures together because they all have their own unique beliefs and values.

Due to the lack of response from Te Rau Ora, I am unable to compare the literature that I found to an interview with an employee from the organization. Therefore, this paper is primarily focused on the research that I did, Te Rau Ora's website and my trip to New Zealand.

One of the main takeaways that I have from my trip to New Zealand is how important the land is to the Maori. Maori, just like many other Pacific Islander cultures, have a strong connection to the land and it plays a significant role in their daily lives. Our tour guide often stated the following quote: "I am the mountain and the mountain is me. I am the river and the river is me. I am the ocean and the ocean is me." This represents the interconnectedness between the Maori and the land. There is a direct correlation between the two; in order for the Maori to be healthy, their land must be healthy, and in order for the land to be healthy, the Maori must be healthy. They also believe in holistic health, which is made up of four pillars; emotional and mental state, physical health and wellbeing, spirituality, and family (Farmer et al., 2018). All of these elements are taken into consideration when deter-

mining whether or not an individual is truly healthy.

Additionally, it is important to note that the Maori have a collectivist culture which means that rather than focusing on individualistic goals, they look to accomplish the needs and goals of the whole group instead (Farmer et al., 2016). Tribe members have strong bonds with one another, which influences many of the decisions that people make. They work together to make sure that the community's needs are met and are supportive of one another. This is significant to health promotion because this is an important factor to take into account when dealing with this specific population. A benefit of working with a collectivist culture is, for example, that if they were assessed and told that they need to partake in physical activity in order to improve their health, then the whole community would engage in exercise together. They would support and motivate each other rather than just watching one person go through this journey alone.

Contrarily, the United States has more of an individualistic culture, meaning that they tend to focus more on people's individual needs rather than trying to satisfy the goals and needs of an entire group. In addition, health care in the United States is more reactive than proactive. This means that there is more focus on supplying people with the medication that they need in order to help with chronic disease, rather than making lifestyle changes to help prevent them from developing the disease in the first place. People in the United States also do not have the same connection to the land as Maori do. When I was in New Zealand, I was constantly in awe about how clean the environment was over there

compared to how it is in the US. Many people in the US do not seem to care about their environmental impact and act as if there is another Earth that we can go to when this one dies. It was also interesting that New Zealand is much more relaxed in regards to time, whereas in the United States, people are constantly on the go. Overall, I am very grateful that I had the opportunity to go to New Zealand because I feel that I learned a lot about the Maori and their culture. I also found it interesting that I had the opportunity to experience everything firsthand and then got to gain more knowledge about them through the articles that I found for this paper. After having looked at community health organizations in America and New Zealand, I was intrigued that the two had some similarities despite them advocating for different ethnic groups. This further emphasizes the need for better healthcare for minority groups and the necessity for people to do their part in educating themselves about how to be more culturally respectful.

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Author's Note

My name is Kianna Escalante and I graduated from Saint Mary's in May 2020 with a BA in Kinesiology: Health Promotion. I enjoyed writing this paper because it combined the information that I learned in my Community Health class, along with my experiences from my JanTerm trip to New Zealand. Many of my family members have chronic diseases, which led me to pursue a career in this field. I have witnessed the effects that these diseases have on individuals and their families first hand, and it is sad to see the toll that they take on people's bodies. My main goal is to educate others about how they can prevent themselves from developing these chronic illnesses, whether that is through lifestyle changes or diet. My JanTerm class focused on how New Zealanders interact with the land for physical activity, which reminded me that life is more than just academics and work. After the trip, I had a greater appreciation for nature and to this day, I make sure to dedicate a portion of my

schedule to focus on myself, either through self-care or exercise.

First and foremost, I would like to thank Professor Dunn for encouraging me to submit my paper for the Spectrum Award. During my time at Saint Mary's, I had the honor of having Professor Dunn as both an instructor and mentor. Whether I had questions about school or needed life advice, I knew that she would always be there for me. I would also like to express my gratitude to my best friend, Ben Viray, for staying up with me late at night over Zoom to make sure that I turned this assignment in on time. He dealt with my constant complaints about not wanting to work on this paper, but motivated me to eventually get it done. Finally, I would like to give a big thank you to Katie from CWAC for assisting me during this entire editing process. Her constant support and suggestions helped chip away at some of my writing insecurities.

Uncharted Writing: A “Queer” Path to Success

Anika O’Donnell

About midway through the Writer’s Block Jan Term course at Saint Mary’s, we had an all-too-brief section investigating the ways that a person’s social identities affect their writing process. We covered the topics of race and citizenship, and I was intrigued by the extension of the concept. While there were any number of equally interesting intersections I could research, I decided to pursue one that I had a close personal connection to: writing and the LGBT community. I was curious about how being in this community could affect one’s writing, if at all.

To me, it seemed like a natural connection to make, as I have seen a link between gay people and literature throughout history. Both my readings for pleasure and for school have detailed a roster of prolific gay writers: Sappho, Oscar Wilde, Radclyffe Hall, James Baldwin, Audre Lorde, Leslie Feinberg, Tony Kushner, Alison Bechdel, etc. These authors, and countless more, represent a tradition of recording the

multitudes of non-cisgender heterosexual experiences throughout history. In addition to the canon of LGBT literature, the connection between gayness and the written word thrives on today’s online communities; for every piece of fanfiction detailing the secret relationship of two male leads in some franchise, there exists one reader whose relationship to sexuality was changed to some degree. Through years of absorbing LGBT media, this nebulous connection between writing and being gay was forged in my mind—but how was I to prove anything definite for my research?

The first line of the abstract for “Creative Writing Praxis as Queer Becoming” by Dallas John Baker seemed to perfectly address my exact topic. The author, poet, and scholar “examines how writing practice and engagement with textual artefacts (literature) can trigger an ongoing queer becoming” (359). Baker brings together writing and something called “a queer becoming” in a dense analysis primarily

based on the mutability of both concepts. In addition to the author's significant inspiration from the works of Foucault, he also draws heavily from the field of Queer Theory — the study of the ineptness of social categories as a whole. Baker creates a parallel between the lived experience of being queer (lowercase 'q') and Queering texts (uppercase 'Q') in his thesis:

a Queer becoming is conceived as having two aspects. On the one hand, it is a Queer (re)positioning of textual subjectivities in discourse as an intervention into power relations, around sexual and gender identities, that is a practice of liberty. On the other hand, a Queer becoming is a practice and/or process through which queer subjects intervene in their identities or subjectivities and remake themselves; also as a resistant practice, a practice of liberty. (360)

After some decoding of the thick blanket of jargon, I easily see both parts of his core argument in my own experience. The first part can be seen manifest in any number of “queer retellings” of classic stories. By taking what exists in the canon, and “(re)positioning” it in accordance with the lens of Queer Theory, one creates new meaning and content for queer people. Queer minds who read Queer writing are transformed. The nature of Queer Theory (that will be expounded on in the next paragraph) encourages readers to question the structures that they have internalized. This is a feedback loop that benefits all that participate in it, but it namely serves those in the LGBT community. The model of creative writing praxis put forward in Baker's paper is truly all-encompassing

for this subject, serving as an apt base for my investigation of the intersection of the writing process and being gay. Therefore, we will dive deeper into the work, peeling back the layers of analysis for further understanding.

After Baker states his thesis, he goes on to explain the tenets and many facets of Queer Theory, first addressing the terminology itself. He uses the word “queer” with both a lowercase ‘q’ and an uppercase ‘Q,’ reserving different meanings for each. Baker sums up the difference as, “a queer subject is a person who claims belonging to the LGBT communities, whereas Queer subjectivity refers to a specific critical position about the unreliability of identity categories” (361). The latter definition is where Queer Theory springs up. The central axiom of Queer Theory asserts that humans are fluid; thus, any category that is fixed or rigid is fundamentally incompatible with queer identity. By pointing to the ineffectiveness of traditional binaries and social mores to handle the vast range of queer identities, Queer Theorists make an argument about society's norms in other areas. This is how Queer Theory abstracts the societal transgression that centers around the queer community, extending its argument to other areas, such as creative writing. We will use Baker's Queer/queer terminology for the remainder of this paper, setting aside the word's marked history, to avoid confusion.¹

The central part of Queer Theory that relates to writing is its “total abandonment of any notion of a lasting unitary subject or subjectivity in favour of a conception of subjectivity as the momentary effect of discourse; as a complex of processes

(including cognitive ones), practises and affects (feelings) all triggered by texts and/or discourse” (370). This set of principles was developed to describe the queer experience, but it takes on new life as a description of writing. By considering how the process of writing fits into a larger world conversation, Baker brings nuance to his concept of creative writing praxis. This leads to Baker’s next point of logic:

Queer Writing disrupts “the notion that discursive subjectivities appearing within literary texts are representations of the internal, stable identity of the creator.’ Instead, Queer Writing foregrounds the appearance of subjectivities within texts as a deployment or intervention into discourse for a critical or creative purpose. . . . To put it another way, emergent Queer subjectivities can be seen as reflections of Queer Writing and discourse rather than the other way around. In some ways, it is texts, or writing, not identities or subjectivities that have the more stable existence. (367)

Baker highlights that text—once written—is final, but, from the basic assumption of Queer Theory, we know that human beings are fluid. Each reader’s malleable identity is altered by a fixed piece of text. But, there exists a tension between writing and real life. The chief link that connects the cycle of praxis is the actual literature that is produced. Baker asserts “the discursive subjectivities at the heart of queer cultural artefacts (novels, poems, scripts) can be seen as inspiring and facilitating the ongoing becoming of the queer subjectivities of actual individuals” (360). Baker argues that both writing and Queer

Theory engender the productive deconstruction of identity. So, through writing, queer people are engaging in a space where they can deconstruct the subjectivities of the author (or, potentially, their own). This ultimately translates to a reinvention of how a subject perceives identity, in what Baker calls, “a Queer becoming.”

I have experienced this conception of a Queer becoming in my own life as a transgender woman and lesbian. Through the act of freewriting, I was able both to explore and critically reshape my thoughts, feelings, and identity — the exact “practice of liberty” that Baker posits. I rekindled my relationship with the written word in a playwriting course I took in 2018, through freewriting about “trans-ness.” I was encouraged to explore through freewriting the life and struggles of Beth Elliott, a transgender pioneer in the lesbian community of the 1970’s. I was skeptical at first, but through my writing, I developed my understanding of and relationship with my own gender. In a short time though, my work needed to graduate from private freewriting exercises to an actual monologue to showcase. This is where Baker arose in my life, through his quotation of “Writing the Self: Ethical Self-Formation and the Undefined Work of Freedom” by John Ambrosio: “We cannot transform ourselves through a simple act of knowing, through critical reason or reflection alone, but only by risking who we are, by . . . seeking out and testing ourselves in situations that illuminate the contours of our subjectivity, that destabilize our certainties” (371). Keeping my thoughts in secret journals can only do so much. It was one thing to indulge in freewriting for dealing with my own confusing feelings

about gender; it was wholly another thing to make it consumable for an audience of professors and peers. The process from my mind to the page to the Google Doc was risky, but overall, I enjoyed the process! The success of wrangling with my turbulent thoughts in order to present them in that class has given me motivation even today. I have continued this Queer cycle of freewriting and revision, and many of my current theatrical projects are about how I am perceived, my gender, etc.

To a queer person, writing is much more influential than other more conventional spaces because it can be a site of deconstruction and reinvention. This playful space of creation is linked by Baker to the queer experience:

[Reflective writing] is a direct reversal of the dominant model of the writer whose 'genius' produces creative texts that are a direct reflection of that writer's identity. Queer Writing does not frame the creative text as an expression of the internal identity of the author. Instead, the queer (or homoerotic) content of a creative text is seen as a discursive sexual non-normativity mobilised within the text to disrupt heteronormativity rather than as the (autobiographical) reflection of the author's sexuality or identity/subjectivity. (366)

Queer writing is not just writing that deals with queer issues. A bisexual person creates Queer writing just by setting a pen to a page: the work has a Queer structure, even if it isn't queer. This lends itself to the concept of the queer community, where each individual experience can be wildly different, yet is still unified by a queer way of existence. Not to say that every queer person is Queer, but Queer Theory allows

diversity within a singular label.

Throughout Baker's paper, he solely refers to creative writing. Thus, his argument lives in a different world than that of academic work. However, Baker is a multi-disciplinary author, penning poems, plays, and papers like "Creative Writing Praxis as Queer Becoming." Thus, Baker holds the dichotomy of Queer writing in his own work: writing thirty-page scholarly articles, yet ultimately focusing on the creative. Thus, we can easily stretch the ideas he discusses to fit our classroom-based topic. Academia is the quintessential representation of the "fixed, stable and unitary" (362) that Queer Theory disrupts. Therefore, we can then mold the confines of academia to make whichever Queer argument one wants. I, personally, have avoided writing several drab Seminar papers on the comparison of themes in two texts by instead comparing the way the authors make their claims. Looking at language and rationale is far more fascinating in a Queer sense than it is to look at the many different portrayals of a singular Christianity.

Ultimately, the question of the interaction of queer identity and the writing process lies not in what text is produced, but in how it is made. In other words, Queer writing describes the way that people write, rather than what they write about. We understand this by keeping in mind the motivation behind Baker's work, and the basis of Queer Theory as a whole: the lived experience of queer people. The "realization" of a queer becoming is a disrupting moment in one's life. In an ideal world, it simply is one part of a person's identity. Yet in the world we live in today, it is one that carries significant weight. But

beyond it being a disturbance to society, Baker introduces this Queer disruption of the very concept of the self as a parallel to the writing process. While some may hope to find security in their identity by declaring themselves as solidly one sexuality, or as one gender, Queer Theory asserts that all identity is fluid; and thus, so is the effect of the written word. It is a scary thought to let go of one's identity, but it allows us all to dive into a messy world of bricolage—an uncharted creative clutter.

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Endnote

1 I must admit that while Baker's paper was a perfect source to draw from with regards to my argument, the language he used prompted me to pause, as I have spent years struggling with the term "queer." On one hand, I acknowledge that many strongly identify with the word for many reasons, namely as a reclamation of the slur used against the LGBT community. Additionally, the field of Queer Theory is well-established, giving credibility to the word. On the other hand, I know that it is still a slur. Despite leaps and bounds in the acceptance of the LGBT community in recent decades, the fact remains that "queer" is still hatefully thrown at my community worldwide. A much wordier version of this paper exists where I use "part of the

LGBT community" in the place of "queer" in my commentary, as that is more truthful to how I would refer to it in my everyday life. Yet, in the interest of conciseness, and because I draw so heavily on Baker's paper and his dependence on the Queer/queer duality, this version of the paper remains as the "official" version.

Author's Note

The creation of this paper was, evidently, a very personal process. After I had realized that the Jan Term of 2020 would be my last, I sought to squeeze the most I could out of it. JAN-120: *Writer's Block* seemed to fit the bill perfectly, as I have despised writing for my entire life. It always felt that the act of writing came easier to all of my classmates. The very rules and structure of essay-writing seemed so arbitrary to me; is it any surprise I became a math major? *Writer's block* has brought me to tears multiple times throughout my education—a true block of writing, where the complex thoughts and feelings in my head would fight tooth and nail against being put on the page. Over the years, I have found a select few ways to get by (in my paper I talk about freewriting and bending the rules of academia) but I still remain reluctant to write. While the course couldn't change my stripes, it gave me an avenue to reflect on my life as, undeniably, a writer. Through the Queer writing discussed in the paper, I can begin to wrap my head around the fact that actors have read aloud my words, and a paper I wrote has been published!

Naturally, I must thank Professor Elise Miller for offering this course, creating the opportunity for the creation of this paper,

and encouraging me to submit my work to Spectrum. As I mention[ed], the Writer's Block course only covered the effect of race and citizenship on the writing process. This very paper, however, has sparked a conversation of adding the effect of being in the LGBT community to the curriculum! Additionally, I need to thank Professor Lisa-Marie Rollins for offering the theatre course that reintroduced me to freewriting, and subsequently playwriting. Finally, I will thank Tyler Dunne from CWAC, who served as my editor, and helped me polish this paper, bringing it to its final state.

Communication Between Business Analysts and Other Discourse Communities

Lina Rak

Abstract

[This research essay examines the collaboration between business analysts and other professionals in the workplace. Evidence was gathered through articles previously written about the topic as well as through interviews with two business professionals with experience within the field. Through my findings, I have concluded that in order for companies to have the comparative advantage in their field two to three years from now, they need to incorporate collaboration with business analysts into their everyday tasks. Technology and business have developed over the past five years significantly, so it is imperative that companies switch to the Agile method in order to create this idea of shared accountability. Without it, companies see a decrease in productivity and efficiency and an increase in loss of time and money. The goal of this research essay is to inform others of the gap in this topic and hopefully spark motivation to write an academic journal on the topic.]

Introduction

Business analytics is a field in high demand because it is relatively new and growing at a rate that is faster than positions are able to be filled. When researching collaboration between business analysts and other professionals that they communicate with, I did not come across any academic sources. The sources that I managed to find were written about three years ago, mainly by men, and were done so on either a forum that was then published or a business magazine. This then lets me know that there is a gap in the research pertaining to collaboration in the business analytics discourse community. The articles that I did find were able to call out the problem, but the majority did not offer suggestions to fix them. As a result, if there is a lack of research in the area, how are people expected to have a full understanding of the field and excel in it?

Research for this question is important because it will help to close the gap or spark inspiration to close the gap in information surrounding the topic. It will help to better the environment that companies have regarding collaboration between

employees. The question that I am exploring is: How does collaboration operate between business analysts and other discourse communities in a company?

I asked participants the following questions in order to try to obtain the answer to the research question: what their definition was of collaboration between business analysts and others in the discourse community, how they have seen collaboration develop since they started their careers, which company they experienced the best example of collaboration, what weakness they experienced regarding collaboration and finally, what they believed to be the possible solutions to these problems.

Literature Review

Understanding the role

For one to understand business analytics as a discourse community, the reader must first understand the everyday tasks and responsibilities of business analysts. A discourse community is a community that has a shared set of goals and a mechanism of intercommunication amongst its members. It uses its participatory mechanisms to provide information and feedback and one or more genres of communication to further its aims. It has acquired a specific lexis and has a threshold level of members with a suitable degree of relevant content and discursal expertise (“UCF”, 2013). Business analysts outline problems, solutions, and opportunities for a business. They also create detailed business analysis, financial modeling, budgeting and forecasting, and definitions of business requirements which they report back to stakeholders (“Robert Half”, n.d). In the business world, business analysts serve as the link between

users and the project manager. There is overlap between the responsibilities of a business analyst and the other business professionals with whom they collaborate. The common goal that business analysts have is to use data analytics techniques to provide key input for solving business problems. Business analytics is not restricted to one field. In fact, it can be applied to virtually every field in today’s world. For example, there are business analysts in companies such as Nike or Disney, in hospitals, schools, and even restaurants. It is a high-demand field with a wide variety of applications.

Existing communication

Due to the diverse topics and the wide variety of specialists with whom business analysts collaborate, written communication is key. Business analysts use different genres of media in order to collaborate with others to answer a specific problem, ask for advice, discuss emerging trends and new tools in technology, or even better ways to capture the requirements that can expedite problem solving. They may draft an email to a consultant asking if they have any experience solving a specific problem with other companies, use forums to reach out to the community in order to get their problems solved, use Facebook pages or Twitter threads that were created solely for the purpose of solving business analytics problems or utilize email — which is the most common way that business analysts collaborate with others. They provide a quick medium for sending and receiving vital information. In order for others in the discourse community to further solve problems, provide information, or give and receive feedback, conferences, consulting

engagements, video conferencing, and meetings are good sources of communication.

For collaboration to be possible, writing skills are important. Business analysts are not writing to the general public. In fact, business analysts tend to keep details of their issues pretty secret. For example, Nike would not want to release in a forum — open to business analysts around the world — information about a problem that they are having with the Pegasus 37. Someone who works for Adidas may be on that forum and then use that information to their advantage. Therefore, writing and communication are kept within the community. As a result, their writing will include specific lexis that others in the community understand. Lexis is the unique vocabulary, terms, and language that a specific discourse community uses throughout the writing in their genres (Swales, 1990). Various discourse communities such as marketing or business analysts do not necessarily share the same language, thus what makes the communities a discourse community. It is a requirement to understand the specific lexis if you plan on being part of the business analytics discourse community.

Calling out the problem

While researching this topic, I found that there were very few articles on the subject. There were even fewer articles written this past year, and even fewer written by female business analysts. These few things are important when considering why collaboration amongst business analysts and other professionals is so crucial to the seamless transfer of data. One professor “sees the future of analytics as a team ef-

fort, where subject matter experts collaborate in teams with Data Scientists and each team member plays to his or her strengths” (Gentimis, 2016). Business analysts can no longer rely on themselves to get the most efficient results. Each person within the team must play to their strengths in order to produce the most successful results. In fact, “it’s no secret collaboration is key to improving efficiency, productivity, and innovation, which in turn leads to better business decisions” (Sparks, 2017). She then continues to list five reasons why collaboration is so important, which further supports my claim. Even a data scientist within the discourse community points out that there are gaps within the communication that makes collaboration possible with other professionals. If professionals want to collaborate, then there must be an efficient way to do it. One data engineer — Tanguy (2019) — asks, “Wouldn’t it be great if we lived in a frictionless world where data engineers, data analysts and data scientists built a perfect common ground for efficient exchanges? Unfortunately, we’re not quite there yet.” This article was written in the past year, which makes its content more relevant for the problems today. It is made clear by the previous articles that there was a problem three years ago regarding collaboration, and three years later not much has been done to close the remaining gaps.

What — if anything — can be done

Perhaps companies are failing to assemble their teams correctly. According to Bob Violino (2019), “a high-performing analytics team needs to have three basic skills: technical data skills to empower the team, analytical skills to drive the work

itself, and business skills to ensure the right work is being done...very few people have this full set of skills...but a team of people with these three elements can be even more effective.” This is one of the first articles that spells out the skills that are most important for a collaborative team, and it highlights that it takes multiple people for all three skill sets to be met. It is rare to find one person that has all three skills. As a result, it is in the company’s best interest to hire multiple people in order to ensure that multiple perspectives and skills are brought to the table. Another issue with the lack of collaboration is the repetition and methods that end up wasting time and money. Companies should “make everything you do easily reproducible, both for yourself and others” (Hammer, 2017). If everything is easily accessible and in one place, then there is no need to recreate work or spend time transferring the data to another place. This saves the company time and money because the end results are happening much more efficiently and quickly, giving the company more time to move on to something else. Despite pointing out problem sources, only one source thoroughly walks through ways that collaboration between other professionals and business analysts may be improved.

Methodology

For this research, I conducted interviews with two members of the business analytics discourse community. With this method, I was able to get both perspectives. First, I reached out to the people that I planned on interviewing to gain their consent for the project. I decided that interviews would be the best route to take because personal experience is lacking

from the available online sources. A survey does not capture all aspects of collaboration, and observing a company would be extremely hard to get approval for because I would be exposed to too many things. These people have met me before, and that level of familiarity will help to get answers that are much more relaxed and more natural. Once I gained the participant’s consent, I was able to offer them a few options: to answer questions through video call, a telephone call, in person, or through an email chain. Both of my participants chose to meet with me in person. I wanted to be aware of their time and give them a sense of control throughout the process. I was then able to take what each participant said, compare the responses, and to come up with a consensus. Data was recorded through writing. The data that was recorded was qualitative because personal experiences were recorded instead of numbers. The population comes from high-level employees at well-known companies. They have many years of experience, and manage their own teams of people, which makes them aware of what is most successful in terms of collaboration between others and what areas need to be improved.

Protection of Human Rights

I made sure to gain the consent of the participants before starting the interview process. The participants were volunteering their time, so being aware of how long the interview process takes is important since this is time that they are not being paid for. This was put into perspective by one of the participants who charges \$375 per hour for consulting (offering business advice). I essentially received \$900 worth of information. Permission of the partic-

participants was obtained before starting and it was made clear that they could withdraw at any point during the interview. Since I was working with people at big name companies, keeping information that they shared vague was important, so I did not expose any company secrets that may put the employee at risk. Participants were given the option to keep their identity a secret and a copy of the finished product before it was submitted was available for them to review. However, both participants were fine with me sharing their names, companies, and titles.

Findings

Introduction of participants

I conducted interviews with both Gus Weber and Vladimir Rak. Gus Weber was Vice President of Enterprise Data and Analytics at Nike; he has since then moved on to Capital One, a point that will be important later on. Weber did not go to college specifically studying data analytics. This is common for business analytics today, to have employees and people in leadership positions who come from other areas of expertise but have developed and fine-tuned the needed skills to be successful business analysts. He is an example of the employees who come from other fields of expertise before officially becoming a data analyst. Vladimir Rak is Executive Vice President, Chief Technology Officer at Dicks Sporting Goods. He also oversees data and analytics there, but it is not his main role. Rak moved on from Nike as well furthering the evidence for the point that I will make later on. Rak also started his career outside of the business analytics field, however, the overlap of business ana-

lytics into his area of expertise has caused him to become immersed into the field. Both participants have thorough knowledge of the field; however, their everyday roles are different enough that both of their perspectives on the issue are equally interesting and important.

How the Discourse Community Defines Collaboration

Weber (G. Weber, interview, November 27, 2019) defines collaboration between business analysts and other professionals as shared accountability. Collaboration should be seamless. He described this by saying, “you should be able to walk into a room with someone from marketing, finance, and business analytics, and you shouldn’t be able to tell who is who.” Rak also mentioned shared accountability when giving his definition. Because the importance of data analytics has only been made clear within the past five or six years, there is a lot of uncertainty and worry about job security amongst more experienced employees from other fields. In order to combat this, business analysts need to make sure that their approach is non-threatening. Instead of coming across as the center of attention, they need to help the other professionals focus on the time that is most well spent. Rak (V. Rak, interview, December 4, 2019) described this as “bring people up to speed which includes requirements, design and expectations.” There is a lot of distrust in the data since the emergence of AI or artificial intelligence, especially from those who have been in the business for a long time. AI has several different factors that it is able to calculate. It uses this information to tell the analysts what to consider. There is distrust

in this data, because other professionals relied on their own experience and instincts in the past to predict trends; now there is a machine that is doing this for them, and they are worried about losing their positions. Business analysts must take the time to explain the data, where it came from, or what it is saying, in order to gain the trust of other professionals.

How Collaboration Has Developed

Business Analytics only became a well-known, respected field five to six years ago. This is where it is important to note that the business analysts of today came from other fields. This is both a strength and a weakness in that their level of expertise is greater than those who just study business analytics; however, it is also a flaw because the ways that they operate in other fields is not necessarily the best way to operate for business analytics. Weber (G. Weber, interview, November 27, 2019) says that companies “live or die based on whether they adopt or integrate business analytics into their everyday operations.” He thinks that in two to three years, integration of business analytics will be a company’s competitive advantage. Companies that use their business analysts to focus on better products rather than better consumer experiences will be more successful. Weber used Netflix as an example, saying that their emphasis on the importance of business analysts is what has set them apart. They use the business analysts to determine what shows should be released and which should be removed. Their integration of business analysts is what has set them apart from other video streaming platforms; right now they have the competitive advantage in the field. The analysts

along with the other professionals have shared accountability, which has proved to be a key to their success.

Rak described the development of business analytics as the shift from waterfall methodology to agile methodology. Historically, waterfall methodology encouraged a top dog mentality. Marketing — for example — would believe that what they were doing held the company together and would hand off the next step to the next field such as financing. As soon as their job was done, they would wipe their hands clean because now the problem was in the hands of another department. Agile methodology is the current method that is used in companies and it encourages collaboration through a problem. Marketing, finance, and the business analyst would sit down together to work through a problem step by step rather than handing off their finished pieces to one another. The Agile methodology is continuous, which is needed for effective collaboration. Right now, part of the gap in collaboration stems from the fact that businesspeople believe that they should be giving directions to supporting people. Somehow, they think that there is an “I” in “team.” They see the business analysts as order takers rather than people who they work *with*. Rak went back to the same point that Weber made about how most of the experienced business analysts came from different fields, so they come into the business analytics discourse communities with preconceived notions of how things are supposed to be. The problem that companies are facing is that there is no defined methodology. If the team has not collectively defined requirements for a certain project and they have not collectively demoted the said methodology, then

it leads to employees needing to interpret requirements which leads to miscommunication. Oftentimes, the “finished” product is not done to expectations and the project needs to be revised.

According to Rak, business analytics is all about how accessible the data is. In the past, technology people had to be consulted in order for business analysts to access their data. Today, technology has advanced so that business analysts can access what they need with just the click of a button. In the past 5-6 years, there has been significant growth in data. The development of the iPhone brought about the development of apps. At first, business analysts were looking at whether or not the app was being used and that was sufficient enough data. Today, factors such as how often is the app used, for how long, and what competing apps are being used are things that business analysts look at. Even the way that people work has changed. You are starting to see more open and freestyle type of collaboration rather than closed off cubicles. In addition, the way that people sit is different, such as the incorporation of exercise balls. Rak also mentioned that communication vehicles have changed within the past five years. With popularization of texting or apps such as Slack, business analysts are able to collaborate with others at a much faster rate than outdated meetings. However, companies and people are reluctant to change until they hear success stories from others that influence them to make a change.

The Best Characteristics of Collaboration

The words ‘shared accountability’ were repeated over the course of the interview

with Weber. When asked where the best example of collaboration between business analysts and other professionals was experienced, his answer was Disney’s ESPN. Weber shared his experience in 2016, saying that ESPN brought in people from all areas of the company, tossed away old methods, and sat down to start over. After doing this, the engagement went up and the cost of production went down. ESPN saw the importance of embracing analytics and rethinking the business process. In the past, Weber said that business analysts were “bolted on” to the side of the company. Here, ESPN saw the importance of bringing them to the center of the action. The business analysts were no longer sitting in their dark offices waiting for the phone to ring; they were part of the action. Rak recalled that his best interaction with collaboration between business analysts was at Nemours — a healthcare company. He said what made the collaboration so successful is that everyone including the physicians and staff were intrigued and respectful about how things were being run. Rak said that mindset played a huge role here. “When you work for a company that is focused on saving lives, you learn to be more mindful of the work that you do. You are more open minded and less selfish about the work that you are doing. When you work for a company that makes a shoe, there are no lives at stake, it is not imperative to be extremely careful, and you see more selfishness amongst coworkers” (V. Rak, interview, December 4, 2019).

The Observed Weaknesses

Weber says that the biggest weakness for companies is that they do not want to change their process. They are stuck to the

tried and true methods rather than adapting to what the business world of today is requiring. Here is where Nike comes into play. Nike is a relatively young legacy company. The company was started from the ground up by friends and family. The characteristics that were important to them sixty years ago can be seen trickling through the company today. The company is resistant to change because at the moment they are the top sportswear company in the world. If it isn't broken don't fix it... right? Rak (V. Rak, interview, December 4, 2019) described this as a "lack of maturity. If companies don't convert to the agile method, then they are reducing the flow of work being done. Maturity is a measure of how many initiatives are completed without needing to be done. There is only so much that people can be experts at which is why the agile method is so important. However, there are several human factors that can prevent the company from maturing such as the desire to collaborate, or personalities on a team. Not everyone works well with others, and we have all dealt with that difficult person when working on a group project. Therefore, no one will ever be perfectly mature, but there needs to be an effort that is made to change. They are cutting off collaboration." Here's how Weber (G. Weber, interview, November 27, 2019) described it, "the companies that do well all have had a near death experience. Best Buy for example almost had to declare bankruptcy. They saw that they had to make a change drastically different from what they had been doing in the past. Their implementation of business analysts helped to bring them back to life and now they are thriving, Nike on the other hand can fall out of bed multiple times a week

and still be fine. It won't be until the other sportswear companies catch up to them and they have an actual near-death experience that they will be forced to make a change." Four years ago, you saw big name companies drawing big name talent to their companies. Four years later, this talent is moving on to smaller companies. People are starting to see today that the name of the company is not as important as the problem that the company is trying to solve. Therefore, business analysts are moving on to companies that are willing to make changes and embrace the importance of business analysts.

Possible Solutions

When asked what the possible solutions to the existing problem were, Weber stated that he believed that the problem starts from the top down. There is a difference between believing that business analytics should be at the forefront and having the CEO or Chief Executive Officer be bought into the idea and enforcing that there should be shared accountability between business analysts and other professionals. Companies need to know the mechanics of how the investment in business analysts is paying off. Part of this solution is to go back to schooling and start with future employees. Today's curriculum focuses too much on the "today" and "yesterday" and not the "tomorrow." By teaching students the importance of collaboration and the best collaboration methods, companies will then reduce the risk of losing future employees. They are then bringing employees who are well versed in the expectations, rather than drawing from old past experiences. Companies such as Merck and Fidelity are learning that in order to be

successful, they need to hire people from outside of the service which they provide. This means people in finance for Fidelity or people in pharmaceuticals for Merck. They have learned that hiring people such as business analysts — regardless of their last company — will help to improve their efficiency.

Rak, conversely, pinpoints the solution as converting to the agile method. Companies can also create incentive programs in order to encourage teams to work together. Teams get rewards such as promotions or bonuses for completed projects that provide solid results. If the team does not collaborate efficiently, the members could be demoted or lose their chance at a bonus.

Implications and Conclusion

Both participants were more than willing to answer all of my questions thoroughly. I found that even though they both had different day-to-day roles, the answers that they gave overlapped with each other. I found that it was helpful to interview Weber because his explanation on the topic helped to build a platform for some of the more in-depth explanations that Rak gave. This research will affect future research because it will create a starting point for anyone who is interested in producing an academic journal. This research benefits others because it exposes people who are interested in the field or who are in the field already to learn how collaboration between business analysts works and why it is so important to know. With the information that I found through articles and obtained in the interviews, I have learned that collaboration is necessary for the company to run continuously. Without collaboration, there will be repeated efforts

which end up wasting time and money, which holds the company back from advancing in their field.

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- studying Business Analytics. I found it very hard to find any academic sources, which further motivated me to dive deeper into this piece. I was intrigued by the lack of information surrounding the topic and wanted to learn more to see what could be done for the next generation of business analysts. Business analysts have a tricky job in not only understanding and executing their own roles, but also understanding the roles of those from other departments. After writing this paper, I decided to add a second concentration to help me understand another side of business -not just the analytics.

I would like to thank Vladimir Rak and Gus Weber for taking time out of their own busy schedules to give their insights surrounding the issue. They really helped to tie my research together and polish off the piece. I would also like to thank Bianca Guzman -my go-to writing adviser- for guiding me through yet another piece of work. Finally, I would like to thank Professor Sweeney for encouraging me to pursue this difficult topic.

Author's Note

My name is Lina Rak and I am a junior studying Business Administration with a double concentration in Business Analytics and Marketing. When I wrote and conducted this research paper, I was strictly

Encouraging Physical Activity Through Developing Accessible Green Spaces and Public Parks and Recreation Areas to Treat Effects of Depression in Adolescents

Sydney Low

Greetings, San Mateo County Planning and Building Department Planners,

My name is Sydney Low, and I am a San Mateo County resident and current third-year at Saint Mary's College of California in Moraga. I am writing to you regarding the rising prevalence of depression in adolescents, which is influenced not only by sex, family history, socioeconomic status, and physical activity levels, but also by the built environment surrounding an individual. The preservation of mental health is relevant to more than just the Health Department; the impact of future projects on the mental wellbeing of residents, specifically those affected by depression, is something that should be kept in mind. To highlight the magnitude of this issue, according to the National Institute of Mental Health, in 2017, an estimated 3.2 million adolescents in the U.S. experienced at least one major depressive episode. As you are probably aware, depression can

lead to many adverse consequences with suicide being the most severe outcome. Luckily, studies have shown that physical activity can successfully mitigate the effects of depression through various mechanisms. Additionally, individuals seem to benefit more from engaging in outdoor physical activity and exercise. However, living in an urban setting means access to unadulterated nature is limited, prompting a greater need for green spaces to be built and made accessible to all populations, especially to developing adolescents.

The following sections explain (1) why promoting outdoor physical activity in parks and green spaces is integral to addressing the growing rates of depression among adolescents and (2) what role the San Mateo County Planning and Building Department plays in all of this.

Part I. Trends, prevalence, and consequences of depression

Similar to adult depression, adolescent depression is characterised by a loss of interest in life and mood changes affecting behavior and cognition (Pickett, Yardley, & Kendrick, 2012, p. 125; Keyes et al., 2019, p. 987). Adolescents, however, have a tendency to exhibit more self-destructive behaviours, with adolescent suicide rates among girls tripling and increasing among boys from 1999 to 2014 (Paul & Usha, 2020; Keyes et al., 2019, p. 988). Within the United States, and globally, prevalence of depression has increased significantly in recent decades (Orstad et al., 2020, p. 1). It is reported that global prevalence of child and adolescent health disorders is approximately 20%, with depression being the most frequently diagnosed (Brown et al., 2013, p. 195). Aside from its link to suicide, depression in adolescents can lead to “impairment in social functioning, cognitive development, and scholastic achievement” (Brown et al., 2013, p. 196). By continuing to neglect adolescent mental health and underfunding mental healthcare systems, we exacerbate an already fast-progressing problem (Dzhambov, 2018, p. 340; Paul & Usha, 2020).

In a pilot study investigating association between residential green and blue spaces with mental health in Bulgarian university students, Dzhambov (2018) stated that according to a recent national survey, 3% of Bulgarians aged 18 to 29 reported “less than good mental health” (p. 340). Paul & Usha (2020), in their study of prevalence and predictors of depression among adolescents in Kerala, India, found that of the 1057 participants surveyed using the Centre for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale-Revised, 14.19% had depression. The authors, however, noted

that compared to similar studies done in the past, the “prevalence of depression reported by the current study is low”—past studies indicate up to 20% of adolescents suffered from depression. Data drawn from 1991 to 2018 Monitoring the Future yearly cross-sectional surveys recorded depressive symptoms for all adolescent girls and boys (N= 1,260,159) since 2008 as seeing a concerning “sharp increase” (Keyes et al., 2019, p. 992). With the knowledge of consistent increasing rates of depression for all adolescents, now more than ever, we need to formulate a plan of action. To do this, we first must take a look at the influencers of depression.

The causes of adolescent depression cannot be pinpointed to a single origin, rather it is the result of a culmination of many—hypothesized—factors including increased smartphone and social media use, online bullying and harassment, and increased sleep disturbance (Keyes et al., 2019, p. 993). It is well established, however, that insufficient physical activity predisposes an individual to mental illness (Thompson Coon et al., 2011, p. 1762; Liu et al., 2017, p. 223). To promote mental and physical health, the American College of Sports Medicine recommends a minimum of 150-250 min of moderate-to-vigorous intensity physical activity per week (Liu et al., 2017, p.225). Furthermore, the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) and National Service Framework for Mental Health recommend exercise as a treatment for people with depression (Thompson Coon et al., 2011, p. 1771). Physical activity is a proven viable treatment for depression that is less expensive and more accessible than the conventionally prescribed psychotherapy and

pharmaceuticals (Brown et al., 2013, p. 196). It is speculated that physical activity mitigates the effects of depression by way of multiple neurobiological and psychosocial mechanisms causing changes in mood and perceptions of self-worth, respectively (Brown et al., 2013, p. 203).

Part II. Connections between physical activity and depression

According to Rethon et al. (2010), four psychosocial explanations link physical activity and depression: (1) the distraction hypothesis, (2) the mastery hypothesis, (3) increased opportunity for social interaction, and (4) improved self-esteem/self-efficacy (p. 2). The distraction hypothesis suggests physical activity simulates a “time out,” enhancing one’s mood. Physical activity, therefore, provides an opportunity to remove the individual temporarily from their depressed state by having “just something to do,” serving as a distraction from negative thoughts (White, 2008, as cited in Pickett, Yardley, & Kendrick, 2012, p. 126; Craft, 2005, as cited in Pickett, Yardley, & Kendrick, 2012, p. 126). The mastery hypothesis states that completing a task, learning a new skill, improving physical abilities, reaching goals or doing anything to elicit a sense of achievement causes a positive change in mood and increases self-efficacy (Rethon et al., 2010, p.2; Pickett, Yardley, & Kendrick, 2012, p. 127). Physical activity also indirectly affects mood by providing opportunities for social interaction. Leisure-time physical activity in particular is a domain which individuals find to be more enjoyable because it offers more potential for socialization (Pickett, Yardley, & Kendrick, 2012, p. 126). Lastly, low levels of self-efficacy, a person’s

confidence in ability to perform a task, is associated with depression (Bandura, 1997, as cited in Pickett, Yardley, & Kendrick, 2012, p. 127). This means engaging in physical activity can alleviate depression and positively affect self-perception including levels of perceived competence and overall confidence (Rethon et al., 2010, p.2; see also Faulkner & Carless, 2006, as cited in Pickett, Yardley, & Kendrick, 2012, p. 126; White et al., 2000, as cited in Pickett, Yardley, & Kendrick, 2012, p. 126).

An article assessing physical activity interventions and depression in children and adolescents Brown et al. (2010) reported that, by evaluating nine studies measuring depressive symptoms via randomized controlled trials, physical activity showed a small but significant treatment effect and may “play a role in the prevention and treatment of depression in young people.” Rethon et al. (2010) found strong evidence indicating an inverse relationship between physical activity and depressive symptoms. In their study of 2,093 East London students, depressive symptoms were measured and weekly physical activity recorded, revealing that “an increase in physical activity of about 1 hour per week was associated with an 8% decrease in the odds of depressive symptoms in both boys and girls” (p.5). It is common knowledge that engaging in regular physical activity and exercise contribute to overall mental and physical health and well-being. But few know that relatively new evidence has emerged suggesting we also need to consider the type of physical activity we participate in, so as to maximize its benefits. As aforementioned, Pickett, Yardley, & Kendrick (2012) yielded evidence support-

ing leisure-time physical activity over non leisure-time physical activity in their study of 164 participants, of which only 20.7% of the sample met daily recommended physical activity levels. The study detailed leisure-time physical activity as being associated with increased pleasant feeling states including feelings of revitalisation, tranquility, and positive engagement as well as a reduction in unpleasant feelings such as physical exhaustion (pp. 127-130). More recently, studies have been published proposing an association between environmental factors— including physical activity setting and accessibility to parks and recreation centers— and population physical activity levels. This is precisely where, I believe, the San Mateo County Planning and Building Department needs to step in.

Part III. Green space and outdoor physical activity: an action plan

Outdoor, park-based physical activity presents itself as a promising mode of mental health treatment outside the traditional, oftentimes unaffordable, mental health services. Orstad et al. (2020) proposes that nature and the outdoors can help improve physical and mental health by providing spaces to be physically active, opportunities for social interactions, and environments conducive of stress-relief and restoration. Urban parks including green spaces are perfect places for people to engage in active pastimes. Studies have shown that people who live in greener areas or in close proximity to parks are more active and are associated with health outcomes such as lower weight status, lower levels of anxiety and depression, and better quality of life (Andersen et al., 2015; Shanahan et al., 2015a as cited in

Liu et al., 2017, p. 223; also see Orstad et al., 2020, p.2). Dzhambov (2018) stated the enhanced neuroprotective effects caused by a combination of physical activity, social contact, and contact with “nature containing vegetation or bodies of water” work against depression (p. 343). A survey conducted by The State Bureau of China, including 43,629 people from 10 provinces in Beijing, observed that accessible residential greenspaces were equipped with recreational facilities ideal for use by children as well as the elderly and disabled, thereby promoting physical activity through establishing an inviting space. In addition, these parks and facilities are conducive of socialization between neighbors, which might attract some to continue their outdoor activities (Liu et al., 2017, p. 228). Some researchers have gone as far as to assert that chronic exercise in outdoor environments, including nature and green spaces, trumps indoor exercise interventions altogether (Thompson Coon et al., 2011, p. 1762).

In a review of 11 papers measuring effects of physical activity on mental well-being, six studies showed that walking outdoors had a more positive effect on mood compared to walking indoors (Thompson Coon et al., 2011, pp. 1763-1764). Aspects of mood including feelings of revitalization, self-esteem and perceived vitality were measured and recorded to be higher post-outdoor walk while negative feelings such as frustration, confusion, depression and tiredness decreased. Thompson Coon et al. concluded that participating in physical activity in outdoor natural environments had a greater effect on physical and mental well-being. A study conducted by Liu et al. (2017) in Beijing, China

investigated the relationship between urban parks, resident's physical activity levels, and positive mental health after park use. Data extracted from 308 valid questionnaires demonstrated that park users were more active than nonusers in every form of physical activity— moderate physical activity, vigorous physical activity, and leisure walking— except for transport walking (p. 227). More specifically, park-users participated in 34.3 minutes more moderate-to-vigorous physical activity than non-users. Park accessibility and park use was found to be significantly correlated with physical activity levels of residents (p. 229). In addition to this, following park visits, people reported improvements in self-confidence, energy levels, self-perceived health, mood restoration, and relaxation (p. 227). These studies exemplify that the greatest improvements to mental health can be achieved through physical activity in nature environments.

Unfortunately, not everybody has the luxury of living in a nice neighborhood with well-kept and safe parks, urban green spaces, or other outdoor recreation areas. Accessibility issues and safety concerns can deter individuals, adolescents included, from engaging in outdoor physical activity, especially alone. According to Orstad et al. (2020), “park proximity was indirectly associated with fewer days of poor mental health via park-based PA, but only among those not concerned about park crime” (p.1). Because of persisting “socioeconomic inequities in park quantity and quality,” for adolescents coming from low-income communities especially, this poses a real problem (p. 8). Nearly one in four of the 3652 New York residents who completed the 2010-2011 Physical Activity Transit

survey reported concern about crime in the park nearest their home (p. 4). Moreover, those concerned about park crime, those with BMI ≥ 30 , those with depression and those who did not meet moderate-to-physical activity guidelines rarely or never used the park for physical activity (p. 4). Therefore, I advocate the need to “improve walkability, incivilities, and aesthetics” of established parks and to plan for future building of green spaces in urban and residential areas currently void of any (p. 7).

Conclusion

To improve the mental health status of adolescent populations diagnosed with depression or experiencing depressive symptoms, we need to encourage outdoor physical activity by building safe, accessible, and attractive green spaces and public parks in San Mateo County urban and residential areas. Once the green spaces are built, vegetation planted, adequate street lights installed, and trails paved, people can be active in nature as recommended. Next, we can begin implementing programs and offer organized activities for adolescents specifically, that combine environmental education with physical activity to maximize benefits of getting active outdoors. Because “green exercise,” physical activity in green spaces, fortifies our mental and physical health through various mechanisms previously mentioned, I think it imperative to take advantage of its legitimacy as a treatment of depression (Thompson Coon et al., 2011, p. 1762). The question now remains if the San Mateo County Planning and Building Department Planners are up for the challenge in taking the first steps to address the growing mental health crises today's adolescents are

facing in their own community.

Sincerely,
Sydney Low

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Author's Note

In brainstorming a topic to research for Professor Emhoff's Global Impact of Physical Inactivity class, I thought it timely to address the rising prevalence of adolescent depression and physical inactivity as we collectively experience life during a pandemic. Adapting to Covid-19 has prompted us to make drastic changes in our daily routine and overall lifestyle. Because of this, now more than ever, we are stretched so thin that our mental and physical health and well-being have taken their toll. Prioritizing health and well-being has become an afterthought as most of our time, energy, and finances have suddenly been redirected toward creating makeshift remote workplace environments, acquiring proper sanitary supplies, and taking extra precautionary measures to socially distance and self-isolate. While factors dependent on the individual, such as time constraints and lack of motivation, may impact the likelihood of physical activity participation, it is important to recognize that environmental barriers to physical activity are additional deterrents. Engaging in outdoor physical activity and exercise has been shown to improve mental health via eliciting feelings of restoration and relaxation while remediating feelings of depression and tiredness. However, adolescents living in certain residential and urban

areas aren't provided with safe, clean, and accessible outdoor recreation spaces, urban green spaces, or parks to enjoy. In my letter to the San Mateo County Planning and Building Department, I've urged the Planners to consider constructing more urban green spaces and public parks designed to improve mental health status by encouraging physical activity, exercise, and socialization amongst adolescents as a solution to the increasing rates of depression and physical inactivity in the community.

Thank you to Professor Emhoff for allowing me to explore such a relevant topic in this class and for working ceaselessly to create an engaging learning environment during a virtual semester. I was ecstatic to receive your email about wanting to submit my essay for nomination for two reasons: (1) someone, you, who I truly admire, acknowledged my work, and (2) no essay or paper I've ever written has merited distinction before. Thank you again for your support. I look forward to more classes with you in the upcoming semesters.

Women of Different Worlds: How Capitalist-Patriarchy Tears Women Apart

Virginia Barkas

Experience is a tremendously complicated thing. How one understands their “world,” how they define it, and how they act in it are all products of complex processes and histories. Forming an identity, a consciousness, is not simply a matter of race, sex, occupation, and other commonly “definable” qualities. Rather, it is fluid and influenced by the myriads of factors existing before a person was even born. For instance, the existence of a fully functioning capitalist economy is both a concrete economical factor and a more abstract ideological factor. Being born into an environment encompassing this economic system would mean that from their very first moment of their perceived existence, this person will be an impacting part of a system. Their existence is a part of a statistic that encompasses the sales of prenatal vitamins by X drug company. When they reach the prescribed age that counts as “adulthood” (or any other age old enough for one to hold a job), their

existence will be defined by that capitalistic system: the work they are putting into that system in order to keep it running becomes their identity. Are they applying their skills to design a product? Are they keeping a restaurant clean? Are they keeping a specific demographic entertained through performance? Their other main part in the system will continue to be a consumer — they will consume vitamins, clothes, media, et cetera. When identifying differentiating factors such as gender within the members of this capitalistic system, these functions get more complicated — especially because the capitalistic system functions intertwining with a patriarchal system. Depending on one’s “social class” and “gender,” their realistic potentials and expectations to exist within a world involving these two systems differ. Of course, other factors — which could become nearly infinite — such as race influence these differences significantly. In a capitalistic society, the function of a person is tied to their identity.

Patriarchy, because their position is already inferior, further oppresses women within a capitalistic system. Their “function” is more limited to what this “inferior” group is expected to or realistically can achieve (Mojab 10). As women ongoingly attempt to reach equality of the sexes, their differences dampen their efforts by harming each other via their relationships. Distinctions between women (class-based, race-based, or other) prevent them from seeing eye to eye with each other and truly hearing each other, thus solidarity between women does not exist. This lack of solidarity among women, caused by a specific series of expectations that limit what they can do in the world, how they are perceived by others, and are specific to both their “gender” and “social class,” exacerbates conflict between women. This essay will examine the women in Maria Irene Fornes’s play, *Fefu and Her Friends* (premiered in 1977), and Wendy Wasserstein’s *The Heidi Chronicles* (premiered in 1988) as to explore why women behave in this way and attempt to do so in a non-essentializing manner. The specific “world” each woman is born into sets them up with a unique set of experiences which dictates how they relate to each other; Wasserstein’s *The Heidi Chronicles* and Fornes’s *Fefu and Her Friends*, through their females’ relationships, help demonstrate how the capitalist-patriarchal aspects of these worlds reinforce this lack of solidarity between women — preventing them from truly overcoming oppression.

Materialist and Marxist Feminist approaches to understanding capitalist-patriarchal systems are key to defining what is meant by such things as “social class” and “gender” — which will be necessary when

examining women relationships in Fornes’ and Wasserstein’s plays. Marxism on its own attempts to answer the question of why capitalism can be problematic: it creates disparities by having the bourgeoisie profit off of the proletariat by means of the latter’s production (Duffy). Patriarchy is connected to this issue as it can be seen as “a social process for producing and reproducing the gender hierarchy characterized by male domination” — similar to how Marx notes that “every social process of production is, at the same time, a process of reproduction” (Mojab 10). Thus, the patriarchal system of domination and subordination is doubled by a parallel process happening under capitalism. However, Materialist Feminism points out how meaning is unstable, particularly when using these wide terms such as “social” in such all-encompassing ways. “Social” can mean more than one objective thing, just as “gender” does not mean one objective thing. Rather, this theoretical framework rejects the usage of language that is essentialist and recognizes the complexities in the creation of such ideas as “societal experience:” “[Feminist New Materialism’s] common core is a commitment to rethinking matter: the stuff of which humans, nonhumans, and nature are comprised should be understood not as given or passive but instead as dynamic and agentic, contributing both content and form to processes of world formation” (Wingrove). Thus, one must be clear in their meaning in describing “social class” and “gender.” They are both products of their unique moments in history. When I speak of “social class” in this essay, I mean to signify the socio-cultural markers that determine one’s financial privilege in life. Among different social classes, individu-

als face different struggles. For instance, is an individual primarily concerned with working enough hours at their job to make enough money to buy food to live? Or is their primary concern: *are people going to judge me if I say something weird at a Bourgeois party?* My usage of “gender” then is adopted from Simone de Beauvoir’s concept that “gender, cross-culturally, was found to be a learned quality, an acquired characteristic, an assigned status, with qualities that vary independent of biology and an ideology... a social construction. Contemporary industrial society’s version of her is docile, soft, passive, nurturant, vulnerable... domestic...” (MacKinnon 529-530). I use the term “woman” then with the understanding that modern expectations—which encompasses the forty to fifty-year period from these plays’ origins to today—embody these traits in someone who declares herself to be a “woman” (whether she declares so by her own choice or as decided by those around her/them).

Fornes’s non-linear, metatheatrical form makes the audience-spectator relationship more intimate; these struggles of women against capitalistic-patriarchal culture then become especially transparent in an individualistic way rather than in a commodified way. This transparency highlights the importance of women needing to be able to see eye-to-eye with one another to create a sense of solidarity. Rather than following the traditional Aristotlean plot, *Fefu and Her Friends* (set in New England, 1935) is to be performed with the audience divided into four groups during Part II: these groups view the four different scenes of this section simultaneously in different places before returning to the house for the final Part III of the play. The drama fol-

lows a day in the life of a group of women with a range of struggles and experiences. In an interview, Fornes references her desire to set *Fefu* in the 1930’s because it is “Pre-Freudian,” meaning people then would not automatically disbelieve everything that is said, and instead would be more wholly trusting of each other because they are not constantly analyzing those things being said (Marranca, “Interview” 109). This authenticity due to setting is strengthened by the authenticity the form creates for the characters. In staging this play in a simultaneous fashion and inviting audiences out of the house and into a smaller performance space, audience consciousness about the existence of the drama is heightened—the metatheatricality. Professor of Drama, Penny Farfan notes in her feminist investigation of the play’s form, “the simultaneous staging... [provides] spectators with a theatrical experience that corresponds with the characters’ own experience of the intrusion into consciousness of critical feminist insights...spectators drawn deliberately into the world of the play are cast less as Julia’s judges, as Worthen has argued, than as her confidants” (Farfan 448-449). They are aware of themselves in this closer space with the actors, making the experience more intimate. This intimacy becomes the primary focus for audiences in this dramatic work: “In this new theatricality, presence, that is, the act of being, is of greatest importance” (Marranca, *The Real Life* 29). The performance of the actors then is no longer a distant emotional experience—this distance being created through the spatial elements of the proscenium and house. With the spatial distance between the proscenium and

house removed for a significant duration of the play, the experience between spectator and performer then is also no longer so distant, thus the emotional experience between these two parties is more intimate. With more intimacy between the performers and audience, the experience of the characters and their emotions are made more accessible. When the audience sees the performer, they stop just seeing them as their character but are also aware of the actor's existence. The proportion of simultaneous consciousness of the character and consciousness of the actor becomes less in favor of character-consciousness and more toward actor-consciousness. That is, they become more aware of the human in front of them rather than their character. The human experience of the character then becomes more impacting. Scholar Helene Keyssar points out what these human experiences are: "The world that Fornes has created in *Fefu* is one in which not only Julia and Fefu herself, but each of the women struggles with her own voice and brings into the conversation the diverse historical elements of her own linguistic consciousness" (Keyssar 101). This ability for each individual woman to express their own voice is an opportunity for the audience to see how each woman is affected by oppression in their own unique way rather than in the collective-commodified way — a singular audience grouped into one form within the house which is physically and somewhat emotionally removed from the actors and the characters they play. Their performance is personal; it is human. The audience members share a breathing space with the actors as the experiences of these women characters unfold. The audience no longer sees them as a "one": a

singular cast performing their acting job's required work (their 'function') for the capitalist system (which involves theatre patrons paying money to consume dramatic entertainment). They see them instead as individual humans going through and sharing with each audience member in the space the actor-character's unique experience. They are no longer a singular cast of characters performing various emotions, but are instead unique individuals with their own unique identities experiencing these emotions with each of the human individuals in the audience. These identities can be understood metaphorically as being individual "worlds" as literary philosopher María Lugones calls them; Farfan notes how women must travel to these "worlds" of other women in order to identify with them — only in doing so can a woman understand what it is to be them and only then can meaning become clear between the women (Farfan 449-450). These unique identities or "worlds" influence how these women relate to each other. By making these women's identities notably distinct (through the non-linearity and metatheatricity), the lack of solidarity amongst them becomes especially apparent because they are so different, they are no longer a commodification. Seeing them in this broken-up state of personhood, rather than collectively as a cast, their differences are more notable: Fefu's unfeeling attitude toward other women, for example, contrasts strongly against Julia's trauma. These experiences, or "worlds," of Fefu and Julia are a product of their oppressive society.

The Heidi Chronicles highlights how capitalistic culture reinforces patriarchy through differences between women and through class-based expectations. Class

here, rather than being an essentialist way of signifying who a person truly is, works another way — it affects relationships: “class is a relationship, a social relationship of production” and “[commodity,] an embodiment of irreconcilable class antagonisms” (Foley 12). These antagonisms affect individual women relationships in that women of one class are unable to see the “world” of a woman of a different class. Wasserstein’s play follows the teenage and adult life of Heidi Holland between the 1960s and 80s. In Wasserstein’s play, long-time-friends Susan and Heidi’s relationship demonstrates this idea as their relationship becomes strained due to the different occupations they have landed — Heidi is an art historian and Susan is a Hollywood executive — and thus their vastly different “worlds.” Susan is the total embodiment of capitalism when juxtaposed with Heidi. In the New York restaurant scene when Susan visits Heidi from L.A. to request Heidi’s involvement in a T.V. show, Susan comes off as impatient and rude; she cannot connect to Heidi beyond a superficial level. If Susan had not wanted something from Heidi in the first place, Susan’s motivations to see her are debatable: does Susan really want to see her friend and support her by being present or does she simply want something from her? Susan’s behavior seems to suggest the latter. Her speech conveys her short attention span — throwing remark after remark without giving Heidi the chance to think about a response, and she later accuses Heidi of having a “bizarre habit of not finishing sentences” after Susan continually cuts her off (Wasserstein 224). Susan’s cutting Heidi off reinforces this disconnect between women. If Susan were to care

about Heidi truly and support her fellow woman, she would slow down, let Heidi speak, and listen to her actively and with empathy. Instead, she allows Heidi’s suffering to continue and even perpetuates it by her uncaringness and impatience. This impatient nature is a quality and product of a culture in which instant gratification is entitled to the bourgeoisie. Susan, an upper-class (and probably white, given that both her race is never stated and that people of color have less likelihood of having this bourgeois status due to systemic racism) woman who can afford to buy plane tickets, eat at New York restaurants that serve swordfish, and have a personal assistant (who is “so quick”) contrasts strongly against Heidi. Heidi, who never expresses any rude behavior toward the waiters in lower classes than hers and needs to get a grant for just a small art show, is conscious of this bourgeois identity to at least some extent. Heidi then asks Susan, “Do you ever think that what makes you a person is also what keeps you from being a person?” Susan finds “too deep” to respond to. Instead, she says, “I’ve been so many people, I don’t know who I am. And I don’t care” (Wasserstein 224). Heidi understands that it is social forces — these expectations that one must live up to being a certain way of expressing culturally desirable traits — are what end up “making” a person. But also these social expectations prevent a person from being who they truly are without societal influence. Heidi is in her own “world” of consciously bourgeois, whereas Susan’s “world” is slightly higher on the financial level and ignorant of her being this product of capitalistic society. The many people Susan says she has been are simply the many different versions of herself she

has created to meet the many expectations of what an upper or upper-middle class woman ‘should’ be. She has attempted so hard to meet all of these that she has lost sight of her true self — something Heidi is desperately trying to avoid. The class-based expectations placed on these women make the window of possibility for what they can be in their lives narrower since they already have a set of gender expectations to meet enforced by patriarchy. In the next scene, when Heidi gives her “speech” at a women’s luncheon, one can see this awareness of these expectations. She gives a narrative of the very specific events leading up to her speech, namely, her meeting expectations of being an upper-middle class woman who cooks, nurtures, does business, and is clearly highly educated and amongst likewise people. That she does not “eat brown rice” or “wear leather pants” are ways that she is aware that society expects a woman like her to do those things because they signify desired traits such as being educated, fit, rich, and attractive (Wasserstein, 231). Not only are women supposed to be nurturing and attractive according to patriarchal society, but they are also expected to be those things — since in a world of commodification, “normal” is desirable — and to be successful financially. Value for women in this context both necessitates being a mothering-domestic type *and* being a working person contributing to the capitalist system of business and sales. Therefore, as Marxist Feminist theory also points out, capitalism perpetuates patriarchy — women’s expectations are more limited by this socio-cultural-economic system.

These plays demonstrate that capitalist-patriarchal culture oppresses women

through their female characters’ internalization of oppressive ideologies — namely, the societal expectations that judge what women “are” and identify how they should “be.” In *Fefu*, patriarchal notions of women’s “inferiority” manifest in the internalization of the idea that women are naturally revolting. The idea of a woman’s natural bodily state is repeatedly touched upon in this play. It is also important to first note here that the women being represented are all from a “common educational background” (Farfan 443). Their common background, indicating a homogeneous set of women in terms of class, thus is only a limited representation of women experiences. Fornes also does not indicate the racial identity of these characters, so today color conscious casting would be especially necessary to counteract the systemically racist tendency to cast white actors when race is not mentioned in a script; thus, Black women and women of color have no formal representation or mention in this script. *Fefu* depicts only the experiences of some middle-class women who have had enough opportunity to receive a good education. The first direct mention of this feminine bodily state occurs with Emma’s declaration that she is hyper-conscious of people’s genitalia, and that she finds it “odd” that everyone has them, and that she keeps imagining them on everyone she sees. Her belief of genitalia being “odd” implies a kind of discomfort around them, rather than finding them natural. Rather than, in their naturalness and not thinking too much on it, she instead fixates on it because she perceives their non-normalness as standing out to her. Especially in 1930’s America, genitals are quite covered up and not discussed in ‘polite’ conversation. But

to Emma, she sees through these layers of concealment, much like these women's performances reveal the somewhat concealed realities of patriarchy. The default of society is the straightness of the male form: a straightforward life without curvature. Gender is a binary system and women and men are meant to walk their specific paths from birth to death. Bending these rules, just like a woman's body bends naturally, would go against patriarchal-capitalist expectations. Women thus are against this straightforward path symbolically with their physical curvatures. Emma's belief of a natural bodily thing being so non-normal demonstrates some kind of internal tension between what a woman really is, materially, though only partially, made up of — genitals — what is desired — no genitals, or no curvature. These natural things get further attacked, particularly women's body parts, by Julia in the first bedroom scene. She describes how "judges" (and she switches from referring to them with a neutral "they" to the masculine singular "he") are telling her about women — "women's entrails are heavier than anything on earth and to see a woman running creates a disparate and incongruous image in the mind. It's anti aesthetic...they should strike positions that take into account the weight of their entrails...a woman's bottom should be in a cushion, otherwise it's revolting" (Fornes 33-34). An idea is developing here of women being disgusted by their own bodies. Julia's hallucination during one of her "petit mal seizures" here in the stage directions is described as being "luminous" rather than being "mad" — indicating that what she believes she is saying is true, or enlightening (Fornes 33-34). Thus, she is internalizing this notion of a woman's

natural bodily state as being odd, and that it is only possible to be "aesthetic" when it is posed in a certain way, the way being aesthetic according to this male judge. Masculinity then has caused this internal disgust directed from a woman towards her own body, destabilizing her sense of self-worth. This patriarchal oppression via masculine-favoring thought is specific however to this class of woman. Because education is one factor, or social process, by which a woman comes to understand who she "is" in the world and what she should "be," it can be assumed that the education of these women causes them to internalize this belief that their bodies are gross or non-normal.

In *The Heidi Chronicles*, internalized patriarchal notions of women's "inferiority" manifest in Heidi's apparent dissatisfaction with her life, demonstrating how capitalist patriarchal society makes it confusing to women what they desire. Although women have their own desires, these external forces complicate them, making what is "truly" their desire not indeed truly theirs. This idea can be seen in Heidi: her "unhappiness" is not a cause of her failing to meet her goals, but rather her internalized hatred for her life because it failed to meet what society expected it to be. Women of Heidi's social class are expected to be a certain way and do certain things: they are to be successful financially because capitalism determines one's worth by how much they contribute to economic, materialist society and to be domestic and nurturing (essentially, to marry and have babies). In a scene at a restaurant at which Heidi meets Susan after several years of living in different states, Susan references how she perceives that every woman around her

“is either pregnant or just miscarried” and prefaces this statement with “it’s rough” (Wasserstein 223). Susan’s distress at seeing other women have children indicates the pressure she is also under to have a family, although she never allows herself to examine truly why this pressure is making things “rough” for her. Heidi, however, ends up feeling “stranded” (stated in her “speech” at the women’s luncheon) by the end of the play, and her apparent unhappiness (which constitutes this play’s dramatic arc) is not resolved until she has a(n adopted) child (Wasserstein 232). Thus, both women feel pressured by the expectation of having children, and they cannot relieve this discomfort totally until they give into it. Others often assume Heidi is not okay and do not give her an opportunity to speak for herself. For instance, when introduced to her first women’s circle in 1970, Heidi expresses that she would rather keep some things personal (i.e., her decision whether or not to shave her legs) but the other women interpret her request for privacy as her being unwilling to share and that she is “obsessed with an asshole”—casting her in a negative light in the eyes of these seventies feminists. Throughout the play she is silenced by others, especially by Scoop (the “asshole”) and Peter (during an interview that was supposed to be about women in art but instead he spoke nearly the entire time). Heidi’s true feelings about herself and what she cares about are never truly conveyed to those prescribing expectations onto and making assumptions about her. From the beginning of the play, it is clear Heidi identifies herself as an art historian. What others do not see — because they impose these capitalist-patriarchal based expectations onto her — is that

she is just fine with this identity. Literary writer Cortney Cronberg points out how Heidi’s seemingly unapparent personality most comes through when she is talking about her admired female artists of history, noting how a parallel exists between these women artists and Heidi herself — that they are both achieving success in a male dominated profession: “In her lectures on forgotten female artists, Heidi sees beyond the mere form of the paintings and sees the paintings as expressions of the artists’ souls. Heidi understands and appreciates how an artist speaks to the viewer through a painting” (Cronberg 128). Heidi is happy enough with her identity as an art historian, it is only that those around her (due to the formerly described social forces) expecting that, because she is a middle-class white woman, she should want other things out of her life such as having a family, eating “brown rice,” and “wear[ing] leather pants” (Wasserstein 231) — essentially to be an “attractive” (according to this specific context of beauty standards) working mom.

These women, given their internalized oppressive beliefs, trap each other in this cycle of oppression by not hearing one another, preventing the solidarity needed to overcome this oppression from forming amongst women. At the beginning of Fornes’s play, Fefu states her belief that “women are loathsome” (Fornes 7). Given that women’s internalized oppression sets them up to believe they are naturally less “worthy” than men and are not valuable unless their existence encompasses an unrealistic set of expectations all at once, their differences in being able to execute these expectations set them up to not see eye to eye with one another. Heidi is quite

literally not heard by others because they cut her off. A similar phenomenon occurs in *Fefu* to Julia, especially in her hallucination scene in which she references ‘the judges’ (with “they” and “him” pronouns). Keyssar notes how “Julia is paralyzed from too much knowledge, and she fears that Fefu is approaching the same state...But Julia is also threatened by the knowledge that ‘they’ who control insist that ‘the human being is of the masculine gender,’ and she suffers because she can neither believe nor resist that dictum” (Keyssar 101). This knowledge Julia possesses is the devastating truth of male power over women. Julia speaks of her horrible experience while the women around her seem totally uncaring and insensitive of her suffering. This insensitivity reinforces women’s oppression because they are each stuck in their own status of suffering while their fellow sisters leave them there. A more supportive community of women here would have to include the other women (e.g., Paula and Fefu) to truly listen to and empathize with Julia, who is also suffering. Julia mentions, “I think of death all the time,” and then goes into a morbid description about her (seemingly obsessive) understanding of death, only to have Paula chip in afterward about preparing coffee; the other women present respond to Paula as if Julia and her depression are not there at all (Fornes 52). The stage directions even note Paula’s “good spirits” when delivering these casual statements (Fornes 53). Julia’s own trauma — her wound or disability — is similarly comparable to others not believing a woman when she says she has been raped. There exists a lack of solidarity between women that would allow them to hear and acknowledge each other’s suffering.

Instead, each woman is so caught up in her own “world” (that is formed from oppressive social forces) that their differences block their perceptions of sameness. Given that the women of Fornes’ and Wasserstein’s plays used as examples here are also representing only a limited population of women (women of the middle to upper class, possibly only white women too given their class in this context) differences of class, race, and other major traditional markers of identity (which its definition itself is a product of a capitalistic society) are exacerbated. With even more different “worlds” (i.e., women of different “races” and “classes”) this challenge of women being able to see eye-to-eye is made greater. Because these sets of capitalist-patriarchal expectations are so deeply a part of the formation of a woman’s “world” (and are to any of those who are perceptive to women), over time these internalizations of this societal system create the belief that the ideologies creating these expectations are indeed fundamentally true. These ideologies are that a woman is inherently less valuable than a working man, and that she is especially less valuable if she is not both a working woman and a domestic mother in a way that supports a capitalist-patriarchal system. A woman then believes that she must adhere to this set of ideals or else she is unworthy or is not “worthy” in that she is not what a woman “should” be. This concept also works the other way around: a woman — from her upbringing — may have internalized a certain set of beliefs about how a woman (particularly of her class, and especially of the same race) should be, which in turn go to create for herself her own set of expectations of “who” she should be in her life. These

conflicting expectations end up creating a cycle that traps women in their oppression. She is a product of the ideologies present at her upbringing. She is forced to create beliefs within herself (that come into existence because of external social systems) that a series of capitalistic patriarchal-based expectations dictate, instead of dictating for herself what her own beliefs are independently from these unfair and oppressive expectations. The result is what Fefu describes as “loathsome”: women’s eyesight narrows to focus on the things that will help themselves “succeed” (in achieving these expectations) rather than committing to a common goal of understanding, supporting, and uplifting one another. Women, as evidenced by the successes of feminism, have certainly attempted to expose these oppressive systems as to expand their field of focus. In doing so, they simultaneously try to understand each other’s “worlds” and wisely look past them in hopes to uplift one another from their oppressed states. However, much work is still to be done.

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Author's Note

I really never expected to be completing my Writing in the Disciplines Independent Study course from home last spring, but life never seems to stop throwing curveballs at you, does it? This paper definitely hit differently for me because of the pandemic. Removed from my community for my very last semester, this paper was one of my most sacred connections to being back at school. Yes, it was challenging, but it also was stimulating, exciting, and freeing. I want to give a big and heartfelt thank

you to my outstanding professor, Frank Murray, who stepped in (out of retirement I might add) when things took an unprecedented turn last spring. Frank, you have been a most meaningful and positive mentor throughout my time at Saint Mary's and I thank you here for your thoughtful, honest, and compassionate support. You pushed me further as a writer while modeling what true compassion looks like not just as an educator, but as a fellow human being. This essay was made possible through your excellent mentorship. I also want to thank my fellow writer, artist, and friend, Katie Gubler. Katie, thank you for being such a great and thoughtful discussion partner, an incredibly helpful peer reviewer, and an amazing friend. Finally, I extend my thank you's to my CWAC advisor and classmate Bianca Guzman for her excellent advising; I also thank my other very thoughtful and hardworking professor Rebecca Engle. Thank you all for your support. This was my very last essay I wrote at St. Mary's and it means so much to me. Now that I am graduated, I find myself especially grateful for the time I spent immersed in academia. With this essay, I truly got to dig deeper into some of the questions and frustrations gnawing at my core regarding sexism and other social inequalities, namely: capitalism. I had a lot of fun critiquing it in this essay. I got the chance to lose myself in materialist theory and further explore the ideas that had interested me throughout my academic career (and which still do). It was freeing to put forth radical ideas unapologetically and with the utmost care for their construction. This essay was a challenge for me in many ways, one of them being the theory. As a writer, it's easy for me to lose myself

in the myriads of ideas and thoughts that pop up into my mind, sometimes weaving a very tangled web. Diving into a more abstract theory I knew would not only call for big mental challenges and new considerations of how I use language, but also for how I would weave these complex ideas together into a coherent research essay. I am so grateful for this challenge that strengthened me as a writer and critical thinker. I hope that it may serve to further validate other people's, especially womxn's experiences, and to push us all to continue questioning and beating down the status quo as to achieve true equality and equity. Thank you sincerely for your readership.

Ser Mitotiani: *Ancestral Memories of Movement*

Maya Diaz-Villalta

Stumbling through the darkness, captivated by drumming and colors and the vibrancy of movement, I found myself in a Danza Azteca ceremonial circle at the age of four. It was at a ceremony for Dia de los Muertos at St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery in Sacramento, CA on Miwok land. This ceremony is recorded as the first community celebration for Dia de los Muertos in California, first taking place in 1974, according to Diane Hoyt-Goldstein's *Day of the Dead: A Mexican-American Celebration* (1994). This children's book tells the story of two sisters, Ximena and Azucena Cid, as they prepare for the ceremony. Azucena is now an adult; following her parents' work for this ceremony, she continues to play a major role in Sacramento's Day of the Dead planning. My own experience has been similar, though while I'd been exposed to Danza Azteca earlier on, I wasn't born into dance as some people are. I brought this dance practice to my family. They participated in the Day of the Dead

celebration every year, but not as dancers. As a cautious toddler, dance was one of the few reasons I'd ever leave my parents' arms. So by four years old, Danza Azteca called me from their arms and into the circle — it spoke to my soul and breathed life into me in a new way. In retrospect, this reflects my real response to the call of my ancestors who were very present at this ceremony. Since then, I continue to breathe life into this dance style and have it breathe life into me. I have a reciprocal or symbiotic relationship with this dance form, its traditions and its movements.

I was born on Miwok land in South Sacramento, California in 2002. I am a first born child. My cultural heritage is Indigenous. I am Xicane. My people are native to the North American continent. I am P'urhepecha, Xinca, Cacaopera, and Pipil, along with a mixture of European ancestry. I am ethnically Mexica, meaning I connect with other Mexica people through shared cultural practices as the

Mexica people strived to create a sense of Indigenous Mexican nationalism, one that predates colonialism. I speak Spanish, English, and ceremonial amounts of Nahuatl. Additionally, I learned to speak Portuguese on a trip to Brazil. I am a queer person. I am someone who prays. I maintain Indigenous spiritual practices including sweat lodges, temazcales and sunrise ceremonies. I was also baptized and raised in the Roman Catholic Apostolic Church. These practices don't feel in conflict. I am an able-bodied dancer. I am a college student. I am middle class, raised by parents who were raised in poverty. I'm quiet but never silent. I'm very determined, a trait passed from my paternal grandfather. It inspires a struggle for perfection since I want to prove that I am right. These are only some of the things that make up my identity. They impact how I interact with the world and how I function in the dance world.

I am the first generation from an immigrant father and second generation from my mother's side. My mother's maternal side of the family are all from the Mexican state of Guanajuato, between the lake regions of the Cuitzeo and Yuriria. They were mostly ranchers. This is the land of the P'urhepecha people. Neighboring tribes are the Otomi and Chichimeca bands who migrated from north through to more southern and eastern areas. In Mexico, tribes are referred to as pueblos Indígenas. Bands of people often refer to themselves using geographic markers. These are used instead of surnames. My family's community of Purepecha people are from Cupareo which means "the crossroads" and Cuitzeo, "place of containers for water." Both areas are territorially P'urhepecha and move across the government state

lines, into the state of Michoacan. In this way, the government state borders divide Indigenous people who share lakes and rivers that run between Guanajuato and Michoacan. There are also Otomi peoples who settled in this area so it is likely I have some Otomi ancestry as well. P'urhepechas are well known for the Danza del Viejito. The dance includes representations of each of the four directions and is how the people prayed and gave thanks for a good harvest. The Viejito is old to represent the oldest God.

My mother's paternal side is all from Aguilia, Michoacan. Aguilia is within P'urhepecha territory of pueblos Indígenas in Michoacan. This side of the family maintains that they are primarily Basque but it is clear that they are also P'urhepecha. We do carry the Basque surname Garibay. They were tradesmen. My great uncle Ricardo Garibay maintains that my mother's great, great grandmother's family were wealthy Basque immigrants. The story goes that their money was stolen by Emiliano Zapata during Mexican Revolution. This story seems unlikely for a number of reasons. First, the waves of Basques into this area happening before 1910, the year of the Mexican Revolution, included mostly poorer Basque people who came to aid the Spanish as laborers and as economic migrants. The second wave of Basque immigrants to this area who were wealthy came during the 1930s during the Spanish Civil War. Secondly, there are continuous Indigenous cultural practices that are maintained by this side of the family, including plant medicine making and performing "limpias," ritual cleansings. Still, they only feel comfortable claiming their Basque ancestry. In Mexico, where

Indigenous people are marginalized and racial categories place Indigeneity in subordinate categories, this practice of changing the family narrative is common and a survival strategy. P'urhepecha and Basque are both language isolates. My mother's family on both sides came to the United States around 1972 seeking better economic prospects and have continued to live in Redwood City, California, unceded land of the Lamchin, Costanoan Ohlone people. My parents moved to Sierra Miwok land in South Sacramento nearest Wilton Rancheria in 2000.

My father's family is from throughout El Salvador. From this family I carry Indigenous ancestry as well. My father's maternal side is from Ahuachapan. This is Nawat, closely related to Nahuatl, for "The place of trees." This area was first inhabited by Mayan groups in the 5th century. However, in the 15th century, the area was overtaken by Izalcos, bands of the Pipil people. Atiquizaya, where my great grandmother is from, is a Xinca area. Like the P'urhepecha people, the Xinca spoke a language isolate and are not descendants of the early Maya groups although there are Xinca people across the border in Guatemala as well. My great grandfather is from the Pipil village of Juayua, Sonsonate. Both of these places are home to waterfalls. Her family baked and sold tortillas and bread. My father's paternal side is from Delicias de Concepcion, Morazan, El Salvador. My great grandfather is Cacaopera, and my great grandmother is mestiza as it is said that one of her parents was Spanish rather than Cacaopera. Cacaopera people lost their language, which is part of the Misumalpan language family, believed to belong to the larger

group of Hokan languages from far North. The Cacaopera territory is surrounded by the lands of the Lenca people, and it was said to have been targeted because of gold found along the Rio Torola. My ancestors were peasants who kept small family farms to feed their children. Both of my grandparents moved to Soyapango, San Salvador, Pipil territory, in the early 1970s. Colonialism, genocide, and state violence have systematically terrorized and diminished Indigenous groups throughout El Salvador into the 1990s, including the 1981 El Mozote massacre of an Indigenous village near by my grandfather's hometown of Delicias. Nevertheless, I honor my Indigenous ancestry. My grandparents met and had my father and his siblings. They fled the civil war and came to unceded Lamchin, Costanoan Ohlone land in Redwood City, California in 1990. This is where my parents met. Due to being in a state of survival for generations, none of my family danced, although El Salvador is known for Xuc, a folk dance from Cojutepeque, Cuscatlan. Cumbia is very prominent as well, although it is Colombian in origin. Cultural repression during the war targeted artists so dance has been unable to flourish.

Beginning at the age of four, my main movement practice is Danza Azteca. It is a pre-colonial movement grounded in the ceremonial practices and cosmology of Anahuac (Marti & Kurath 1965). This dance tradition is Mexica and Otomí-Chichimeca in origin. I most closely align with what is called "concherismo" — described as dance practices that are "the result of an accommodation between Spanish/Christian authorities and Native Americans of Mexico" (Vento 1994, 59).

Concherismo is often associated with my family's home state of Guanajuato, where San Miguel de Allende is home to large Otomi-Chichimeca conchero ceremonies through the care of the Oliva family who honor el Señor De Los Afligidos, which sits near a sacred tree of the Otomi. Jennie Luna elaborates on Danza's pre-colonial roots, noting in her article "La Tradicion Conchera: Historical Process of Danza and Catholicism," that "Spaniards massacred the unarmed *danzantes* using swords, cannons and guns," cut the arms of drummers and prohibited traditional ceremonies (Luna 2013, 48). These acts of terror caused both genocide and cultural repression. In order to continue traditional worship, Indigenous traditions were hidden and revived through syncretic performance that appeased Spaniards in order to protect traditions. In this way, a precolonial figure such as Ehecatl, guardian of the wind, becomes the Santo Niño de Atocha, for example. Ceremonies to the four directions transformed into ceremonies of the Santa Cruz, acting out "penitencias" where carrying crosses up hills to wait are actually sacred ancestral sites of prayer with geographic and cosmological significance.

In *Dancing Across Borders: Danza y Bailes Mexicanos*, the authors argue that contemporary Danza is a continuation of a tradition that predates the Spanish inquisition, explaining that "despite the broad variation in names and in hybrid characterizations, danza is almost always associated with or reflects "lo indio" or "indigeneity" (Najera-Ramirez 2009, xiv). Luna explains how the indigeneity has been preserved in Danza, and that there is "distinctly indigenous in its footwork and movements, with European accommodations being minor,

such as the adaptation of certain instruments" (2013, 51). It is Indigenous movement. She goes on, noting that "much of the literature claims that Danza originates after the Spanish in 1521 after the arrival of the Spanish, but, clearly, the dance itself predates Spanish contact, as noted in the codices and other documentation" (2013, 50). In *Rituals of Kindness*, Mario Aguilar explains that contrary to popular beliefs that Danza is a mestizo creation, "Mex-coahuani heritage is not a battle between forgotten, oppressed indigenous cultures versus European imperialistic culture that has been rammed down the throat of powerless natives" (Aguilar 2009, 81), but is instead, a living culture.

Danza Azteca has a rich and long history. My own dance lineage is complex and multifaceted. While I have done other styles of dance, Danza Azteca remains my primary practice. I will begin with my direct teacher and his lineage, which I will refer to as my instructive lineage. My danza teacher was Jesse "Chuy" Ortiz Ocelotl. He began Grupo Quetzalcoatl with the support of Angelberta Cobb and the teachings of Florencio Yescas during the 1970s, and was one of the first circles in California. Florencio Yescas is credited with bringing Danza Azteca to the United States. Yescas was a dancer from the Zocalo who focused on performance and cultural dance, although later in life, he was given the formal rank of Capitan de Danza. Ortiz Ocelotl married Macuilxochitl Cruz Chavez, a student of Andres Segura in Mexico, and Pedro Rodriguez once in the United States. Andres Segura, General of the Mesa de La Virgen de Dolores, is credited with bringing Concherismo to the United States. His primary teacher was

Miguel Alvarado. He was also a modern dancer and dance teacher during the 1960s. Video of him preserved in the Museum of Anthropology of Mexico's documentary "El Es Dios" shows influences from Jose Limon and Doris Humphrey including their use of weight, fall and recovery. After watching Limon's work again, Indigenous influences are noticeable in Limon's work, even though he largely rejected Indigeneity and focused on his Spanish influence, his use of circular formation and some footwork reflect someone who has grown up seeing Danza. While Segura did not mix his Indigenous and modern dance forms, he demanded discipline, structure and precision in both settings. This is evidenced in groups that carry forward his lineage, such as Danza Xitlalli in San Francisco.

Once married, Ortiz Ocelotl changed the name of the group to Danza Azteca Quetzalcoatl-Citlalli to show the connection with Cruz Chavez's own group, Danza Xitlalli. This circle functions under the Mesa of el Santo Nino de Atocha, the Catholic name for Ehecatl, Lord of Wind. Xitlalli is also the name of the couple's daughter. As a danza teacher, Ortiz Ocelotl focused on encouraging dancers to make a connection with dances and on proper execution of footwork. This was oppositional to his wife, who focuses on form first, emphasizing sequence and structure, influenced by Segura. In Danza this is called "marking." Xitlalli dancers are known for "marking" carefully. Their marriage ended and led Cruz Chavez to focus on the ceremony of Danza, while Ortiz Ocelotl focused on Danza as a cultural practice and infused first nation elements into his teachings. He was a sundancer, sweat lodge leader and frequently participated in ceremonies

with California natives. I have danced at pow wows, California Big Times, and roundhouses because of his mission to build pan-Indigenous solidarity. From his influence, Cruz Chavez's circle participates in some of these settings as well.

Danza circles are often passed on to the children of the dance teachers. In this case, upon his death, Xitlalli, their daughter, became the "heredera" of Quetzalcoatl-Citlalli, causing friction and fracturing because of her long absence from ceremonial life. Our family remained in the circle for four years after his death. We were then called to take on a ceremony for El Señor Santiago for our local community. Our family dance circle is called Danza Azteca Xiuhtecuhtli, which means "Lord of the New Fire," because his Catholic counterpart is El Señor Santiago. This imagen visits Sacramento from Nextipac, Zapopan, Jalisco. Additionally, my parents chose this name to connect with Danza Huehuateotl. Huehuateotl is "Lord of the Old Fire," and their teachings come from my ancestral homelands in Guanajuato. Dance teachers Rene and Chofis Poblano live in Whittier, CA, but return to Guanajuato to complete ceremonial obligations there. Chofis' father, Don Martin, is in his upper nineties and still dancing, not uncommon in Mexico. Their instructive lineage comes from General Rafael Sanchez. Guanajuato is one of three areas that forms a trinity between ceremonial dance zones. The others are Querétaro and Ciudad de México. Dancers from these areas were said to have formed an alliance in Sangremal, Queretaro to agree on terms for preserving Indigenous traditions. In this way, Don Martin is part of my ancestral dance lineage.

Other influences on my dance style have resulted from my ceremonial lineage in Zapopan, Jalisco. Since our family is tied to Zapopan through the *imagen* of Santiago, we have to maintain connections with dancers from this area. Cristina Mariscal, born in Jalisco, now lives in the East Bay. She learned with the Ruiz family and Placencias in Zapopan, Jalisco. Likewise, we spend time with the Ayala family who have groups in Jalisco and California. They also came from the Placencias, a family who began teaching Danza in Zapopan, Jalisco after bringing the tradition from Mexico City. All of these families venerate the Virgin of Zapopan. In addition to these influences, there are many dancers who form my community lineage, meaning they are dancers with different instructive or ceremonial lineages than me. However, I spend a lot of time with these people, and they have influenced my movement practice. These include groups from the Mesa del Señor de Chalma under Generala Rosa Amaya, Mesa del Señor de Sacromonte under Gabriel Hernandez Ramos and various cultural groups under Jose Islas, a cultural teacher from Mexico City. Danza has grown exponentially since Yescas and Segura first began teaching in the United States. As people have immigrated from Mexico, they have brought other lineages, teachings and dances.

During this semester, the artist whose work most related to my own experience was Marisol Cristina Betancourt, of Cuban descent, a dance teacher at the Latin Ballet of Virginia. Betancourt moved to Cuba when she was eighteen to connect with her Afrocuban roots and to study at Danza Contemporanea de Cuba. Betancourt explained that the Yoruba people

brought their tradition to Cuba during the Slave trade in which one million Africans were brought to Cuba from the sixteenth to nineteenth century by Cuban Spaniards (Betancourt, 11 Sep 2020). The Yoruba dances are sacred and are done in Santeria ceremonies. The religion of Yoruba is Santeria. The dance is used to call the Orishas down (11 Sep 2020). This directly parallels Danza Azteca that practices the ceremonial veneration of ancestral deities. The Orisha dance uses bata drums, which are three drums played by either one or three people. There is singing that accompanies each dance. Likewise, drums and song are used in Danza. Growing up in the Yoruba tradition, people learn the various songs and beats that are unique and recognizable to each Orisha. The songs are a call and response in which the audience sings the chorus while the person embodying the Orisha dances. A number of dances in my style also call for the embodiment of a deity. For example, the dance Tezcatlipoca asks the dancer to embody this deity, known as the smoking mirror. As Tezcatlipoca is missing a foot, dancers have to act as though one foot is missing. Some blindfold themselves since Tezcatlipoca is also the deity of introspective work.

Betancourt explained that there are seven Orishas needed for prayer in the Yoruba tradition. The Orishas include but are not limited to Elegua, Ogun, Oshun, Yemaya, Oya, Obatala, Chango, Babalua, and Ochosi. The first six are consistent across Santeria practices, though the seventh Orisha differs from person to person. Betancourt included Babalua and Ochosi as options for the seventh, so this paper will discuss those. Elegua is the trickster

Orisha, depicted as a child or an old man (11). He is the owner of all the roads and opens and closes paths for people and acts as a messenger between humans and Orishas (11). Ogun uses a machete to clear pathways and is paired with Elegua (11). He is usually in green and black but is occasionally seen in just green (11). Ogun uses a grass skirt and is said to give human tools and technology; he is a producer (11). Ochosi is a hunter Orisha who scouts the forest to be cleared by Elegua and Ogun and is associated with justice and is friends with Obatala (11). Betancourt expressed that within her dance, it is important to have a deep understanding of the Orishas as they are the purpose for the dances.

Oshun is a very popular Orisha in Yoruba tradition (11). She is seductive and is the Orisha of love, fertility, and art (11). She wears yellow and dances with a fan and a mirror; she likes honey, pumpkin, and champagne (11). She is both loved and feared, and is said to have a terrible temper (11). In her dance, she uses a lot of motions that depict her rubbing honey or pouring water on herself (11). Oshun is also the mother of rivers. The dance embodying Oshun reminded me of a spring ceremony in Danza Azteca where Xochiquetzal, a deity of fertility, is embodied through decorative body painting and attaching flowers to the head and body. Yemaya is the Mother of all the Orishas (11). She wears blue, white, and silver and is the mother of all oceans (11). Yemaya is also syncretically equivalent to the Virgin Mary (Betancourt, 17 Nov 2020). There is a traditional story where three men, an African, a Spaniard, and a Native are fishing together in a boat and it is storming very badly. Yemaya appears in the water

and saves the fishermen (17). In this way, Yemaya saves all these people. In Danza Azteca, the syncretic veneration of the Virgin of Guadalupe and Tonantzin Coatlicue works in the same way, providing a story that binds colonizers and oppressed peoples.

Oya is the only female warrior and carries a machete and a horse tail. She swings the tail around as she is the ruler of winds, tornados, and hurricanes. She also wears a skirt with nine colors that represent the wind, and she turns a lot in her dance. In addition, she is the mother of all cemeteries. Cemeteries in Cuba often have pictures of Oya, as she protects the cemeteries from bad spirits. Chango is the warrior of lightning and is the syncretic equivalent to Santa Barbara (17). People pray to Chango for protection when there's lightning and thunderstorms. He is the deity of passion. Obatala is the father of all the Orishas and wears all white. Being the oldest Orisha, he is the Creator of mankind. Peaceful and compassionate, he provides wisdom and clarity to those who pray to him. Babalua is the Orisha of healing and disease. He has scars on his arms and legs and is syncretically parallel to San Lazaro. According to Betancourt, many people pray to him for healing. In his dance, he drags on the floor on his forearms and knees and wears brown, black, and purple.

People are often born into Santeria in Nigeria, Cuba, and even Miami, Florida. Santeros become initiated into the Santeria through a ceremony called "mano de orula" (11). Likewise, many people are born into Danza, as my sisters were, but like me, Betancourt was not born into Santeria or dance; it was something she sought out to

learn more about herself. Each participant in Santeria needs to choose a *madrina* and a *padrino* and then the *babala*, or priest, gives the participant a green and yellow bracelet to wear and the participant spends seven days dressed in all white, alone in a room. After seven days, they dress in white, have white sheets, and sometimes a white head covering for a full year. It is a ceremony to be reborn into Santeria tradition. A few months in, the *babala* does prayer over your hair. Betancourt notes how it is a closed practice, so not all the details are known. You used to have to be a *santero* to dance the sacred dances, notes Betancourt, “but now, you just need to be spiritual” and be able to “do representations of the Orishas” (11), she explains. She explains that an initiated member can say “*tengo santo hecho*” meaning they are made into a *santo*. She notes that she is not initiated into the religion, and that she’s “not saying that I am that Orisha, but a representation of an Orisha” (11). Being a representation of an Orisha is not the same as embodying the Orishas directly, and involves different songs and clothing. Embodying the Orisha is different from representing the Orisha. However, many times in *Danza* people are really embodying rather than representing deities. For example, certain dancers will go through a process to take on and embody *Xilonen*, the young corn deity. They have a year of preparation and a year where they are *Xilonen*. At the end of the year of embodiment, they help the next *Xilonen* into this role. However, a new participant would not be allowed to do this; people need permission and are often asked directly by elders to prepare.

Betancourt notes that many deities have

Catholic equivalents in order to hide their practices from the Catholics in Cuba, in the same way Mexica deities are hidden behind Catholic saints. Betancourt expresses that Santeria has been corrupted and revolved around money. She notes that waist beads, for example, have been used as a fashion trend and she notes that this is not good: “if you call the *santos* they will come” (17). For this reason, it is important to understand the meaning behind Yoruba clothing and regalia. Betancourt explains that when people embody an Orisha, they are “calling them to earth, singing and dancing. *Santos* will come to you” (17) and the movement of the “*Santo* takes over you and you feel their presence” (17). Betancourt details that the company she works for represents the Orishas as they are but not traditionally embodied because working from a cultural methodology versus a religion one, “they [company dancers] just don’t know” how to embody in the same way (17). Betancourt shares that there are gatherings in the Yoruba tradition called *tambores* that mark the end of the year of initiation. People born into the tradition initiate their kids at a young age, but others also join for other personal reasons (17). In *Danza*, most traditional or ceremonial circles will also require new dancers to earn regalia or use *trajes de manta* for at least a year before using feathers or a fancier style of regalia.

As this paper has demonstrated, my family lineage, dance lineage, and even the connections I made between Afro-Cuban dance and my own dance history are all an integral parts of my identity; they influence who I am today. The rich and complex tradition and history of *Danza* is one that I have learned since I was a

young child where I listened to cosmology and historical stories told to me by elders during *palabra*. *Palabra* is the period after dancing where people “return” the ceremonial duty they’ve held during the ceremony by sharing their words and receiving a cleansing. *Danza* has affected who I am today and how I approach academia. Even as a freshman in college, there were parts of history I knew to be inaccurate in history books due to my ethnic background and growing up hearing about history from my community of elders. Since *Danza* is a living Indigenous practice, it asks me to participate fully in my cultural traditions and carry myself as a prayer dancer. I am in a unique position where I am privileged enough to be able to dance and engage with my Indigenous culture in a way that was not possible for many in my family. This is due to the resiliency and determination of my ancestors — my grandparents and parents who I always carry with me spiritually.

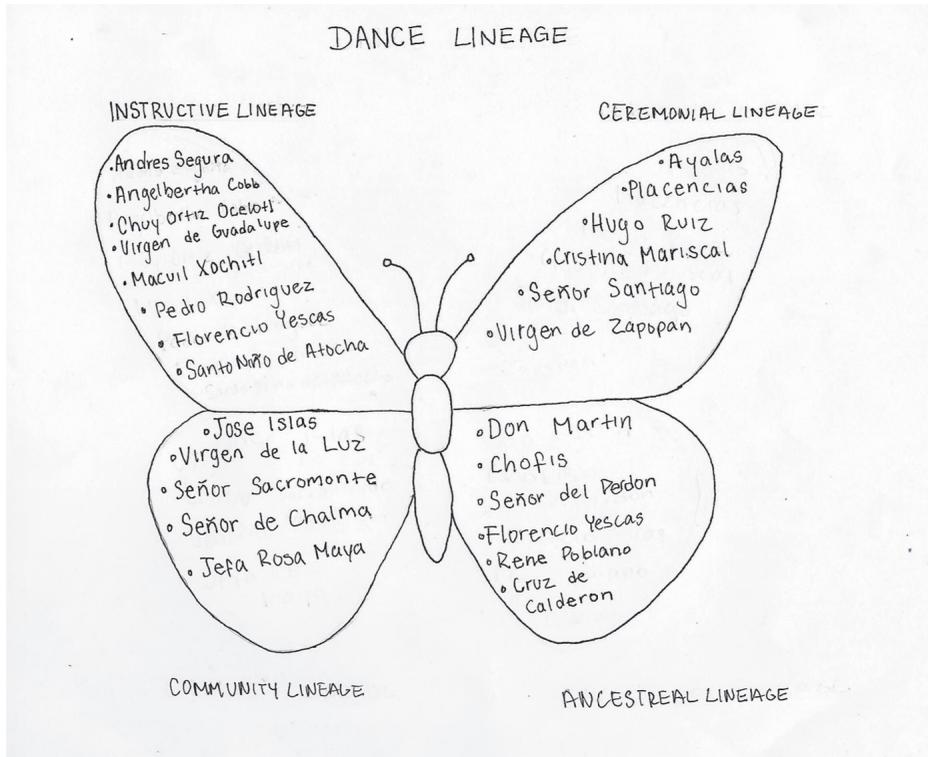
I have been extremely fortunate to have parents who homeschooled me up until college. This allowed me to focus on dance and work in learning around dance and ceremony. Except for my asthma, I’ve always been able to dance and accommodate rigorous dance schedules such as not sleeping for a couple nights and dancing for hours on end over the weekends. Rather than go to school, I was able to sleep in on Mondays up until college. This provided me an extremely unique education and allowed me to progress in *Danza*. I’m also fortunate to be able to afford a private college education where I am continuing my dance education as well as expanding it to include other movement patterns. Having such extensive training in nonwest-

ern styles of dance has given me the ability to approach new styles of dance, even if I struggle with mastery of movement itself. Dance is a practice where I feel at home. I am also able to approach topics and dance styles with curiosity and a unique analytical perspective rooted in my Indigeneity. The dedication I carry and drive to move forward are due to *Danza*, my family history and dance lineage.

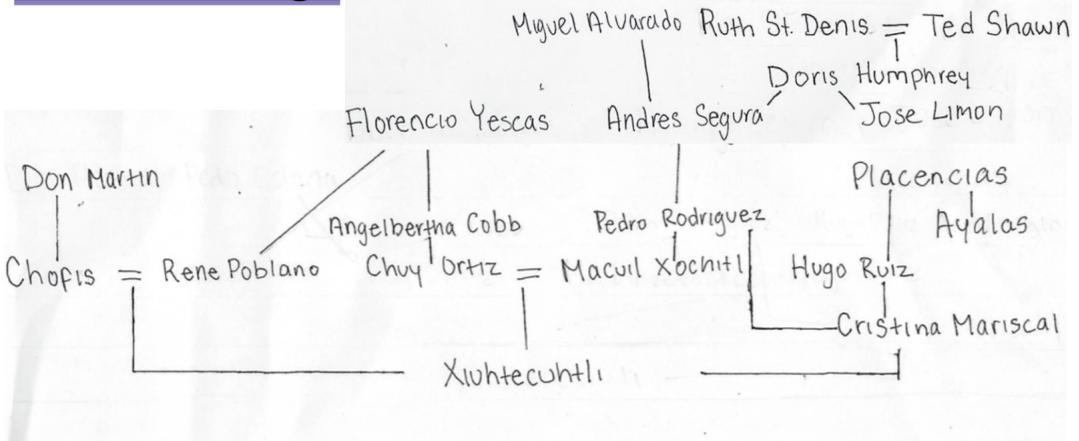
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Appendix



Dance Lineage





Jesse “Chuy” Ortiz, Ocelotl, Angelbertha Cobb, 2013



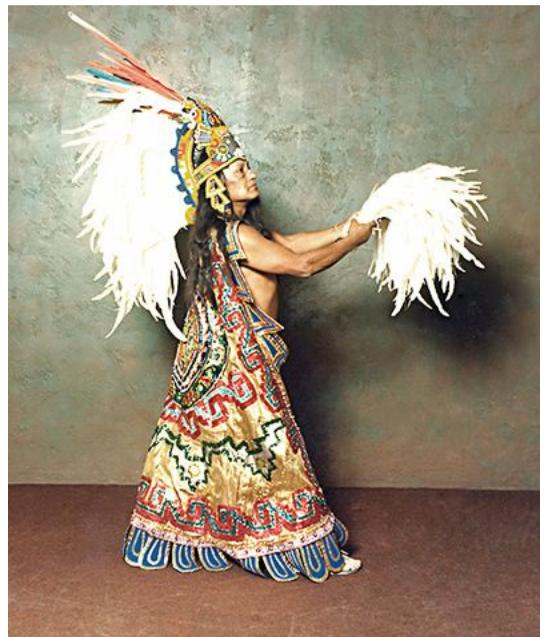
Maya Diaz-Villata, Pedro Rodriguez, General of the Mesa of Sto. Nino de Atocha, 2016



Capitana, Macuilxochitl Cruz Chavez, Grupo
Xitlalli, Maya Diaz-Villalta 2014



General Andres Segura



Capitan Florecio Yescas



Capitán Hugo Ruiz (left), Cristina Mariscal (upper far right), ceremonial lineage in Zapopan, Jalisco



Capitán Juan Ayala, Zapopan, Jalisco



Generala de la Mesa del Sr. de Chalma, CDMX,
Rosa Amaya



General del Sr. Sacromonte,
Gabriel Hernandez Ramos



Maestro Jaime Ayala, at a velacion in Los Angeles, with Maya Diaz-Villalta

AfroCuban Santeria Dance and Parallels



“Being” Xilonen - Maya Diaz-Villalta 2015, Adela Diaz-Villalta 2020

AfroCuban Santeria Dance and Parallels



Maya Diaz-Villalta, Adela Diaz-Villalta
2015, Adela Diaz-Villalta, “Xilonen”
and Maya Diaz-Villalta “Xochiquetzal”

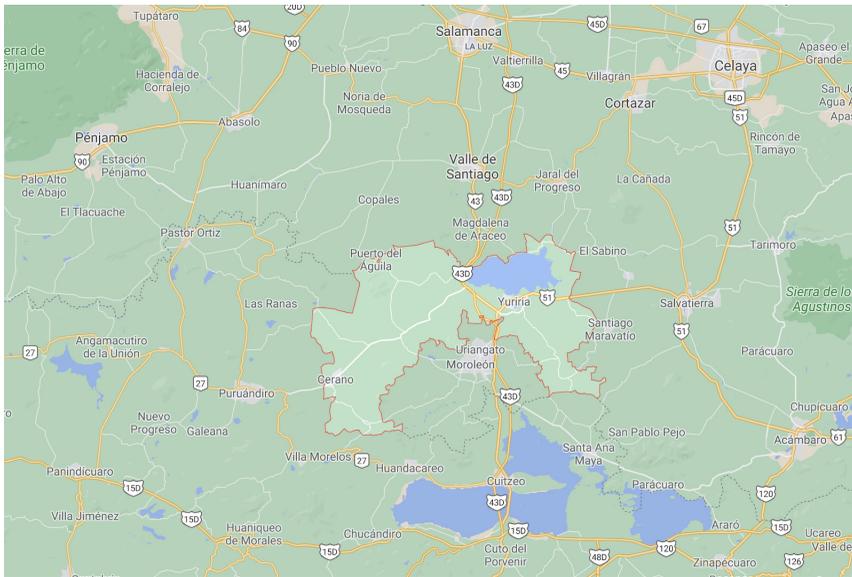
AfroCuban Santeria Dance and Parallels



Mario Alvarado, padrino for Xochiquetzal, and Maya
Diaz-Villalta beginning their year of embodiment in 2019



Maya Diaz-Villalta, age 6, 2008 at a cultural celebration in Sacramento, CA



Yurriria and Cuitzeo Lakes, Cupareo is north east



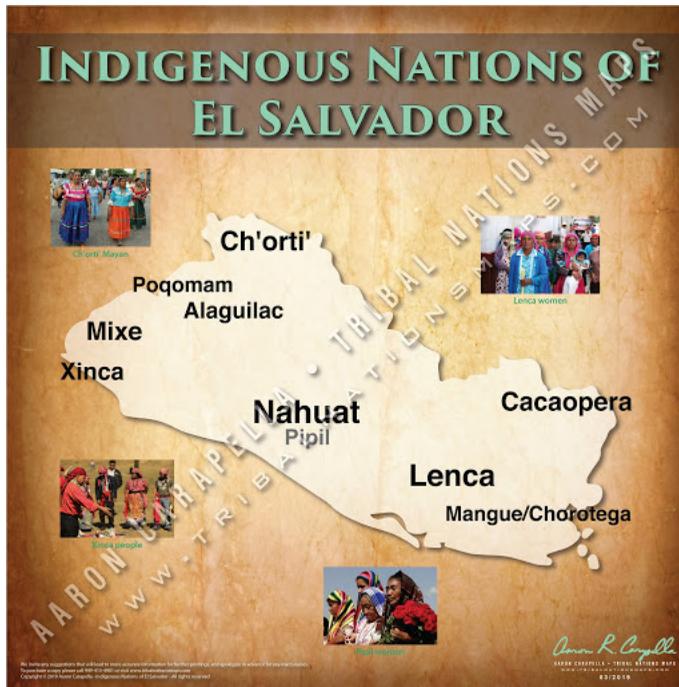
Chuy Ortiz Ocelotl, Pedro Rodriguez, Manolo Sanchez, Mario Aguilar, Florencio Yescas in 1983



General Rafael Sanchez, instructive lineage of Don Martin in Guanajuato



Rene and Chofis Poblano of Danza Huehuetotl



Map of Indigenous peoples in El Salvador

Author's Note

My name is Maya Chicueyi Ocelotl Diaz-Villalta. I am a third year at Saint Mary's double majoring in Anthropology: Archaeology and Dance: Choreography and Performance. Thank you to Prof. Rosana Barragan for giving me the opportunity to explore my ancestral and dance lineages. Thank you to my parents Jacqueline Diaz and Wilbert Villalta for providing amazing opportunities for me and nurturing my creativity and curiosity as a dancer and as a person. I would like to thank my professor, advisor, and director of the SMC undergraduate dance program, CatherineMarie Davalos, for encouraging me to work with my Indigenous dance lineage and for offering support. Thank you to Danza Azteca Xiuhtecuhtli, my first dance teacher "Chuy" Jesse Ortiz Ocelotl, and my amazing danza community. Lastly, I would like to thank my ancestors and my grandparents Jose Geronimo Villalta and Flor de Maria Escobar de Villalta for paving the way for me to be able to study and explore what I love.

Women in Sports: Coronavirus Journals

Written for Professor Bonnie J. Morris' Kinesiology 106 course by,

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Courtney Pritchard

Madison Roethler

Emily Sprigings

Piper Westrom

Preamble

It's been my privilege to teach Kinesiology 106, Women in Sports, as visiting faculty at Saint Mary's. What you are about to read is a compilation featuring the best of my students' class journals from spring 2020. Suddenly separated by the pandemic, we had to adapt rapidly to online lectures and writing for the rest of the semester. Then I hit upon the idea of asking my group of twenty-three to write about how they saw women's sports and athletic identity being affected by the new culture of quarantine, job loss, and working from home. Many wrote eloquently about the interruption of wages for already poorly-paid female competitors and how the postponement of the summer Olympic Games might impact older athletes or those trying to start a family between global matches. Impressed, I sent our class project to the National Women's History Museum, which was actively collecting pandemic journals, and now these student writings will also appear in my forthcoming women's sports memoir *Whats' the Score?*

In a difficult semester, seeing my class produce thoughtful work that spoke to abrupt social changes gave me hope and pride, and helped empower us all.

Bonnie J. Morris, Ph.D.

3/24

Any athlete can tell you the dangers of quitting. Stopping once makes it much harder to return, and if these athletes had to leave for 6-7 months in order to find paying jobs, they would hardly be in any condition to return to the sport.

All sports have been postponed until further noted. My older sister Tracey and father are head coaches for the girls varsity softball team at the high school in my home town, Rancho Cotate... My parents coached a women's Slow-pitch softball travel team (Rohnert Park Pirates.) By the age of twelve, I had the fortunate opportunity to visit close to seventy-five percent of the states in the country. Essentially, raised on the softball diamond...My heart goes out to all the afflicted. From the nationally affected to the internationally distressed.

3/26

Will more women than men get laid off? Will any? And who decides what team gets a financial cut? It would be interesting to see if women's teams take a cut before men's teams do.

3/27

Science, particularly biology, is utilized to support gender norms because it is seen as objective. However, science is not objective. We like to believe that science and culture are separate things, but they collide because there's cultural bias in science.

As someone who worked in college athletics until COVID-19 put me out of a job, I am particularly interested in what is unfolding in terms of college athletic ability, in the wake of the cancellation of the spring athletic semester...For example, the Saint Mary's softball team had a whopping 28 games left on the slate, just over half the season. My point is that female athletes, particularly softball, seem to be talked about disproportionately less in the wake of the NCAA's decision.

For athletes such as USWNT star Alex Morgan, who timed her pregnancy so that she would be capable of competing in the 2020 games, plans that were dependent on the birth of her child have now dramatically shifted. Not only will she be giving birth to her child during the largest pandemic since the Spanish flu, she will be forced to get her body back in shape during that same time period...I think this entire situation will redefine the resilien-

cy and strength of not just women, but of all people who have the capacity to balance the different facets of life.

3/28

Will everything just go back to normal? Will women have the fight and motivation to continue doing the sport they love?

Women in sports are also facing financial concerns. With the already smaller paycheck in contrast to their male counterparts, the postponements and cancellations only add to the uncertainty of their paychecks.

[Summer ID camps] not only help young women from all over the state come experience what it would be like to be a part of the [St. Mary's] Gaels soccer team, it also helps us raise money for team expenses for the following season. But in light of this pandemic we are no longer going to hold the camps this year.

I have found myself thinking about the other effects this pandemic will have on women, all of which could go in different directions....For some women, this can be motivating. On social media, I have seen many women using quarantine as a time for self-care. This has involved working out more at home, getting more sleep, eating better, and taking time to partake in fun activities...For example, through Instagram and Snapchat, there is a trend of encouraging others to push-up, squat, and dance tasks.

3/29

Before the pandemic women would get paid less, and even receive less from sponsors, which is a problem in itself. Of course male athletes will be affected by the lack of pay, but women already struggle.

The extra financial padding that NBA players have to support themselves during the suspension of their season due to the Coronavirus ultimately secures their spot in the sports world...Men in the NBA can survive without being paid for a few months, but the players in the WNBA, on the other hand, are not as prepared...

Not only has the virus impacted [professional women's basketball player in Italy] Isabelle Harrison's ability to get food, but the salary she typically receives throughout a season is

also not guaranteed. She paid over \$1,000 for a one-way ticket back home to Texas... Since professional female athletes' paychecks and sponsor deals are typically smaller than men's, any expenses could begin putting her in a financial hole.

One day, athletes were competing normally, the next, they were forced to accept the new reality presented to them without sport. Athletes, families, and fans across the world rely on sports for entertainment, as a physical escape, and even as a sense of identity. This unpredictable pandemic has left many individuals with questions about their eligibility, scholarships, and even recruitment for high school athletes.

My younger sister had just had tryouts for high school lacrosse right before this quarantine, and made varsity as a freshman. Throughout this shelter in place, she has voiced her frustration about how her hard work was for "nothing." She and so many young women are inside, unable to practice the skills required for their sport.

I saw these, all over the media, for days: "Men's March Madness," "NBA," "MLB Opening Day," ...I even heard about the men's state basketball championship being cancelled at my old high school. What do all of these have in common? They all revolve around the male athlete.

Women have a different impact from the pandemic because of certain professional athletes who recently had a baby, but immediately went back to training for the Olympics following their births... The Olympics being postponed also impacts the new women who were planning on making their Olympic career debut this coming year, and now they will have to wait to prove themselves until 2021.

The coronavirus breakout has seeped into Americans' minds to the point that it is impossible to escape from it... However, politicians are taking advantage of this by shifting focus onto the virus while they work on passing bills that would negatively impact marginalized populations. In the past few weeks, the Justice Department has been getting involved in a Connecticut court case regarding transgender athletes.

Family planning is such a huge topic for female Olympic athletes, as there are a guaranteed four years between each Olympiad. Now, with this postponement, any such planning for these women is pushed back, and what if they are reaching the end of their reproductive years? Do these women retire from sport into an entirely new phase of their lives, motherhood, or do they continue with their athletic identity for just another year?

3/31

I would imagine that just about all “scandals” within the professional sports world will take a back-burner position due to the impact of the pandemic. Energy maintenance is required to fight the still existing injustices, whether the conversation is on gender pay-gap highlighted largely by the US Soccer WNT or the Houston Astros sign-stealing scandal.

4/1

With the current state of the Covid-19 pandemic all professional sports are suspended, but less publicized is the cancellation of all youth sports across the country... While this measure is certainly necessary, I am scared of what its repercussions will be.

4/2

During World War II, people used sports as a way to escape the reality of the world they were living in. But now we can't even do that... The Coronavirus isn't allowing us to have an escape from the constant bad news that we hear on TV.

4/4

Since 16 is the age to become eligible to participate in the Olympics, many young women who could not make the cut due to their birthdates would not have been able to be Olympians. Now that the games are being held in the summer of 2021, Sophia Butler who turns 16 on the sixth of June this year is technically able to be a part of the U.S. team. But is this morally right for the athletes that were already set to be part of the team for this summer?

4/5

We often see the exploitation of the body in various forms as the body is objectified. Athletes are to produce results from competing, but when they temporarily cannot compete, they cannot meet society's standards. There is a struggle between the pursuit of national glory and human safety during this pandemic. I can see some similarities with Doping for Gold...

Like every other Olympic athlete, the [USWNT] national team was ready to go to the

Olympics, but now that they have been postponed, they have to wait passionately. Because the Olympics were set back a year, soccer player Carli Lloyd has also postponed her retirement to play in the Olympics one last time.

The NCAA instituted a “dead period” where college coaches around the country can’t sign any players or take any recruiting visits right now until April 30th, and who knows if that’s subject to change. How is this going to affect high school teams and college teams after this pandemic is over?

Why are women put under more pressure to excel? I have been a student athlete all my life, even here at SMC, and while all student athletes work exceptionally hard, I have absolutely observed that female athletes make it a priority (or maybe more so a stressor) to be as perfect as they can. Is this pressure residual sexism from the 1950s?

The growth of financial instability that most professional female sports experience due to the Coronavirus also leads to a decrease of world recognition. For example, women’s softball was supposed to debut in the 2020 Olympic Games for the first time since 2008...The Olympic Games serve to show respect and recognition from the entire world, which could ultimately be put on hold for women in the National Pro Fastpitch League (NPF.)

Without oversexualization in female sport coverage during the enforcement of the shelter in place law, will women return to the sport world with less media attention, fan attendance, and recognition than before/ My hope for the current and future generations of female athletes is to recognize the value of their physical appearance, yet refuse to be oppressed or manipulated by sport media companies in response to the disruption of female sports after this pandemic.

I did not even think about the athletes that either have to wait to retire, or retire without getting to compete one last time...Now Carli Lloyd has to train harder than ever to be able to play at the ultimate level in a year from now. Carli would not go down without one more shot at a gold medal.

Just focusing on Saint Mary’s, it is inevitable that the senior male athletes would secure that additional year of eligibility because they have a chance to get drafted into professional play; however, it could be a more difficult decision for senior female athletes because there is not a “next step” in softball following their collegiate career-other than the USA National team.

With shelter in place, those with eating disorders are at higher risk of relapsing or experiencing an increase in the severity of their disorder. Stress from the pandemic can also worsen this. The lockdown has caused a shortage of mental health treatments available... Staying at home and being exposed to food constantly poses a threat to those who binge, and due to limits on physical exercise, one may be motivated to increase their dietary restriction. I wanted to strengthen this connection specifically to women in sport. Sports, in general, have been a cause of eating disorders in the past, as women want to have the “right body” for sports based on looks [with judges] such as gymnastics, ice skating, cheerleading, etc.

With the huge strides that have been made over the last several years for eliminating the sports gap, will the pandemic set all of these progressions back? I raise this question because women seem to be returning to their traditional roles...they are forced to be back in the kitchen, being the caregiver and the loving wife. This isn't to say that they were not doing this before the pandemic with their athletic identity, but with that identity out of the picture for now, I wonder if this pandemic will put a hold on the evolution of women in sport...Every time I have ventured out to the grocery store, I see that the shelves are all out of flour, sugar, and most other baking ingredients. If women now have the time to embrace their historic roles as women, is the present societal norm of the athletic, career driven modern woman going to revert to a “traditional” woman?

4/12

It makes me so proud to see a fellow Orinda Matador [Sabrina Ionescu] setting records in women's basketball and creating an amazing legacy the world will never forget. Sabrina not only had a triple-double, but became the first player, man or woman, to reach 2,000 points, 1,000 assists and 1,000 rebounds in NCAA play. She made history.

A recent nationwide poll by Seton hall reported that 72% of Americans will not attend a live sporting event until there is a COVID-19 vaccine and they have personally attained it... To see that most people would put the vaccine before their favorite sport gives me hope that more people are taking this pandemic seriously.

I can imagine the frustration of those with great athletic potential coming from low socioeconomic status backgrounds. There is no level playing field any more. Training centers are closed and access to the same quality equipment or facilities has vanished. Thus, does wealth equate to more success for an athlete at this time? What about age? Can some

younger athletes utilize this extra year and beat out their older, more seasoned counterparts?

4/14

Publishers all share the same message; women's sports financially survive a pandemic. But if both men's and women's games do not have fans attending, where is the money coming from for men's sports?...The vast majority of NFL and other men's sports income is not from fan attendance but from those who tune in. These television contracts provide billions in annual revenue, to pay the multi-million dollar salaries of players and coaches. Inherent biological differences aside, there has been a desire to keep women out of harm's way throughout American history (and the history of most countries.) Despite this, 91% of American nurses are women. In this pandemic, it is largely women who are dealing with the disease. But god forbid these same women play baseball: that's far too dangerous. In times of war and turmoil, it is quite surprising that things we would normally scold, we then permit, such as letting women stand in the crossfire...

4/16

Some (women athletes) may not make enough to support themselves or their families, and that could risk their needing to have two jobs, which puts them even more at risk for getting the virus themselves—and passing it on to their families.

It's hard not to take the pandemic personally...it was easy to overlook the fact that March was Women's History Month. However, it just stands out to me as an acute shame that women had their moment stolen and will likely not get it back. My point is there may not be a space for women to express their disappointments about not receiving the recognition that all the amazing female athletes deserve for their efforts in championing women's equality.

4/17

This state of contemplation can put people in a position to either worsen or better their mental health, which is something that hasn't really been talked about that often during this.

4/18

It is clear that due to many Americans getting laid off, families are bringing less and less money into their households. Because of this it has been predicted that when sports open up again parents are less likely to put money into sports for their child to play due to limited funds...My concerns stems from the idea that this possible financial crisis within youth sports could cause an unhealthy divide within class and gender.

In addition to improving health, CBD is able to give the money that women's sports needs. Projections made in "State of Legal Cannabis Markets" report that cannabis sales are expected to exceed \$40 billion worldwide by 2024. This money could towards sponsoring women's sports leagues and give them media coverage that they deserve.

Men's athletics will pick up right where they left off, but there is lots of uncertainty for women's athletics. It is not that females will not be allowed to compete, but whether or not they will have the fans, money, media exposure, etc...The strides female athletes have made in the past few years, especially in 2019, could be reversed when things return to "normalcy."

One of the first articles that I saw with some insight was from soccer club FC Barcelona. Every player will be taking a 50-75% pay cut for the club to pay the rest of the staff behind the scenes of the soccer field. This also includes their women's soccer, which can be considered a separate organization itself. But when it comes to leagues like the NWSL, there isn't much light as to how the respected organization plans to continue operation.

4/19

Although the younger population is not as at risk of contracting the virus as other populations. The reduced opportunities for physical activity due to the Coronavirus shelter in place has the potential to dramatically impact the overall health and well-being of young people. Research shows that when kids are not in school, they carry out less healthy habits—less physical activity, less healthy diet choices, more screen time...

This generation has the power to diminish myths about lesbians in sport, by educating themselves on homophobia, and teaching their athletic daughters to not feel intimidated by the stereotype put on female athletes—which ultimately aims to detain women by controlling how they choose to perform their athletic abilities.

While online workouts may be feasible for a shorter quarantine, many are worried about when California will allow gyms to reopen. I have been keeping in touch with some friends who have had their spring seasons cut short due to campus closure. Interestingly, half of them are actually enjoying their cancelled season, and many are struggling to stay motivated to stay in shape. I found this shocking, as prior to campus closure many of these female athletes were very excited for their season to begin and to get back into shape.

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The recent debate for gender equity internationally promoted the development and support of women's sports before the emergence of Coronavirus. However, the pandemic has had adverse effects on women's sports—the sector is not equipped to handle the current recess in the sports world. More so, women's sports will suffer as many sports organizations have suspended the contracts of women players, whereas men's teams only receive pay cuts.

Celebrities are posting their home exercise programs and how they are maintaining their bodies without much equipment. With this increased usage of social media, how does this affect our perception of a perfect body? Shouldn't we all be getting in shape now? Are we all going to look like “her” at the end of this quarantine?

4/22

Zoom does not give the feeling of doing the exercise in person. And in some cases, Zoom class isn't an option for the instructors or the people who participate in the class. It is hard for people in this current time to come across a stationery bike to set up in their homes, one, being too expensive and two, most retailers have little to none in stock. Both parties are suffering during this time of isolation.

4/24

I've seen all over the media how the Coronavirus has been especially affecting the African American community. Not only is this harming the community physically, but it could also cause unwarranted racism in sports. Harm against Asian Americans has spiked since the beginning of the virus. We have to remember that the virus is not an excuse to be racist.

Some will claim that the pandemic is the reason so many people watched this year's WNBA draft. This goes back to what I said in my last journal entry—that women and their accomplishments will disproportionately be undervalued given the current circumstances.

4/26

Around the world, there are empty fields and arenas losing millions of dollars with tournaments being cancelled or postponed. Thousands of youth leagues are on hold with many sponsors hit by the economic slowdown and the hope of nervous parents looking for refunds... These parents are key in any question of a recovery.

Coronavirus has exaggerated many of the stereotypes that women have been fighting so long to reverse. The gender gap may not seem at the top of the list of priorities during this pandemic, but it is one of the many long term impacts that Coronavirus will have on society. The virus has exponentially increased the need for care not only in hospitals but also in the household.

What Sabrina Ionescu has been able to accomplish throughout her college years and now moving to the WNBA is incredible... The anticipation for her to make her debut in New York was something that I'm sure she wished Kobe could have been here to witness. However, now due to the Coronavirus, her debut will be postponed. With Sabrina coming into the league, her popularity would have increased the amount of revenue for the major networks that show her games, as well as overall buzz surrounding the WNBA. The WNBA has never received the same kind of attention as the NBA, and this quarantine could leave some WNBA players struggling financially.

It seems as if the world is on a feuded foot race to see who will rise in power after the pandemic in regards to sport, medical practices, and economy. Will wealthy American athletes fall behind without their usual training facilities, equipment, and athletic trainers? Will less privileged countries use this worldwide setback as an advantage?

The Olympic Channel now airs reruns of Olympic performances, but I have noticed while many Olympic men have a variety of rerun sports, I have mostly only seen reruns of figure skating, gymnastics, and track for the female Olympic athletes. Little to no attention has been shown to female Olympic victors in sports such as weightlifting, swimming, and field events, where women have achieved numerous athletic victories. ESPN shows reruns

of historical athletic performances in the NFL, NBA, MLB, and AHL, yet the U.S. Women's Soccer team, which had TREMENDOUS success last summer, rarely have their accomplishments highlighted.

Before COVID-19, inequality based on sex was significant to every aspect of life, yet despite this, women's sports were doing extremely well in 2019. Many professional sports leagues were gaining momentum, with sponsorships and investments growing...With so many people keeping an eye on women's sports last year, what will happen after 2020? The focus in most media has been on men's sports and how they will be affected.

A while back, Nike decided to suspend any financial penalty for pregnant athletes for the next year, because of all the complaints and allegations. This is a big deal, because many female athletes struggle with juggling their career and pregnancy...I can only wonder if the same policy will be upheld throughout the next year. Will the pandemic erase this policy?

There have been cases of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse of women players by their coaches and male players. Many of the cases have never resolved, and the affected sportswomen have not received justice for the pain inflicted. The Covid-19 pandemic increases the existing inequalities experienced by women players. Women may face threats to their safety and liberty, as they could be confined at home with their abusers.

A trend I've noticed throughout the history of sports is the constant message that athletes need to "prove" their gender, though it manifests differently for men and women.

I honestly didn't know that female trans athletes had it so much worse than males. I thought the rationale of why people are more negative to transwomen was interesting; society still finds a way to be biased and sexist to women and especially to women athletes. They unfortunately are just another target.

This week, I learned a new phrase: Zoom fatigue. It is strange to think that if one were to mention that phrase a few months ago in the U.S., most people would be quite confused.... Although it is a blessing to be able to dance at all during these times, I find myself upset during Zoom dance classes. Zoom eliminated the ability to read the energy of the room and feed off it...In dance, there is emotional and physical energy released. The laughs, the hugs, the connection is so important. Over Zoom, though, that depth of connection is lost...

I wonder, 10 years from now, where the children of today will be. What will sports look like? Will there be a “lost” generation of athletes, given that no one is practicing or playing right now? Will there be a group of fresh, young athletes to compete for spots on national or professional teams, like today, or will the pandemic stunt the development of this group of athletes, putting them behind? I have more questions than answers.

4/28

The past weeks have shown the resiliency of sports, and the unwillingness for people to let go of what they love...I am optimistic now. Considering the activity female athletes have when there is no sports, I can't wait for next year when all rescheduled events come rushing together for a few months of jam packed sports.

5/1

As of last week, the French Prime Minister canceled the remainder of professional football (soccer) season. The Prime Minister is encouraging other European nations to follow. Whatever implications this has for U.S. sports, it's going to be hard to find a specific tie to come back—when leagues like the NWSL could even start their season is uncertain.

5/2

With nationwide closure of sports, many fans are already anticipating the return of games, but only if venues and teams follow strict social distancing guidelines. I am curious to see how the attendance at women's sports compares from pre-Covid 19 to post-Covid 19, as women's sports already see a drastic difference in attendance.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 76% of health care jobs are occupied by women. To go along with this, 85% of nursing and home health aid jobs are held by women. These women are sacrificing their own health and time with their families. What happens if a nurse/doctor is a single mom? What if their kids need help being home-schooled during this time? How are they keeping their kids active without youth sports leagues?

5/3

Some of the uncertainties going forward: when the events do return, will sponsors remain? Will younger prospects fall away from those sports out of economic necessity? Will

fans go support their teams after this?

How will we detach the stigma surrounding Asian countries moving forward, especially when it comes to manufacturing? Will companies go out of business? Will we see less “Made in China”? –It will also be interesting to see if the brands which do switch manufacturing companies because of racism lose popularity as a whole, because of their ignorance.

Companies such as Nike, Adidas, and Under Armour manufacture their products globally in China, Brazil, India, etc. Extra precautions will have to be taken when sending out products, causing a delay, and ultimately increasing the demand for foreign manufactured products—especially for athletes who still hope to continue their season in fall.

When it was first introduced, the bikini shocked its audience because it was seen as scandalous. In a way, it was akin to a bomb that shook the fashion world, to the point of changing its landscape. Nevertheless, marketers named their products after American war achievements, as if to invoke a sense of pride in consumers. Whenever they use the product, they would be reminded of the immense power America wields.

A group of soccer moms are buying and giving meals to frontline workers. These moms connected on the sidelines of their children’s games, and used that bond to start something amazing—donating 1700 meals to police officers, firefighters, and other workers who are helping during the pandemic. A pub down the street was about to close, and the owner is one of the soccer moms herself—It just shows how sports not only bring the players close together, but the moms behind the scenes as well.

Although there are thousands of free online workouts available for people to do at home, women specifically may not have enough time or energy to participate in them. Since the beginning of the pandemic, it was predicted that women would suffer more than men. Part of this is because women are the majority of healthcare workers, and, because school is closed, mothers have to take on more childcare.

Judge R. Gary Klauser recently dismissed the USWNT’s claim that female athletes face pay discrimination based on the fact they are women. However, he did allow the claims regarding lesser travel accommodation and team staffing to move forward to trial. The “equal pay” claim was the heart and soul of this argument. These women are fighting not just for themselves, but for equality for all women subject to wage discrimination. So what is next

for the USWNT after this sudden end to a years-long fight?

The most important argument from the original case has now been thrown out. Now, whatever win that the women's team can garner from this battle will be heralded as an actual win as opposed to a consolation victory. The women's soccer team doesn't care at the end of the day about getting the same hotel accommodations as the men's teams. The point is, the men's team, which consistently has proven to be a worse team which loses far more often and has a horrible international presence when it comes to big tournaments, will continue to get paid more money than the women for less than mediocre work.

5/7

I hope that when all this is over we can learn from this. I hope we can learn how this affected our internal misogyny (will women be paid less and do we fix that in the future?) I also hope that not only women, but everyone, takes this as an opportunity to show they can overcome any hardship, and that they can bring that knowledge into their training.

5/9

Athletes around the world have been able to demonstrate their resiliency throughout this pandemic, especially women athletes who have had to continuously prove themselves, whether training for hours in their makeshift gyms or doing what society expects them to do, which is carry out their "jobs" within the household.

5/10

I believe that if gyms opened up now that women would have a better chance in the fall with their upcoming sports teams, and I think they will be more successful. What if gyms were open but you would have to sign up for a specific time, and you would stay six feet apart from one another, and only a certain amount of people could go in and out?

Many people believe that they [the U.S. women's soccer team] "chose the wrong time to fight for equal pay" and "those women should be grateful to even compete." How ironic is it that women have been told to wait for decades. Finally, when a powerful group of female athletes make national history, bringing in more revenue than the U.S. men's national team, and ultimately gathering the courage to fight for equal pay for themselves and generations to come, they are told again to wait, it's not the right time to fight.

While it is hard to look on a positive note, there are some positive trends. The WNBA draft was held virtually on April 17th and drew its highest television audience in 16 years. Some experts explain this is due to many sports fanatics being hungry for any coverage of live sports during the shelter in place. [But] increased desire for sport can drive revenue and finally give women's sports the revenue they deserve.

Athletes perform for a living, and with the inability to do so now, it may be hard for some of them to continue to live comfortably. If female athletes did not have a contract to begin with, how are they supposed to be supporting themselves and/or family during this time of the unknown?

The current pandemic will present existential threats to women's sports if policies are not enforced to protect the industry. Women's sports sector is characterized by low salaries, minimal opportunities, imbalanced sponsorship deals, unestablished professional leagues, aspects that make it more susceptible to the adverse impact of the pandemic.

If a female athlete is given attention, it mostly focuses on her role as a caretaker or mother during the quarantine, as if trying to separate her identity as an athlete from being a mother and suggesting they are "different" people. In contrast, male athletes are questioned about the impact the pandemic has on their exercising routines.

I have never seen more people walking around, running, biking, and even rollerblading in my neighborhood and in Sacramento in general...I believe I saw more women enjoying their outdoor activities. This is truly a hard time for the women who are in sports, especially those who need to be stronger and whose workout sessions usually include a lot of resistance training in the weight room.

I think if we were all together in class our discussion on this subject would have been amazing. However, I was stuck in my kitchen reading the email. And I think many people are in the same situations, being at home, not being able to show their emotions of this court case (the U.S. National Women's Soccer Team and their claim for unequal pay.) But this pandemic has fortified us in our homes and the reactions to this verdict, in my opinion, have not been as significant as they would have been if we were not in the middle of an outbreak.

It is so sad to read that still in 2020, we are having these conflicts regarding equal pay for

women,--it really frustrates me to see us still having to fight for what's right.

The internet has both torn people apart and brought people together during this crisis. Zoom fatigue and controversy have been prevalent. Although we are going through a pandemic, we still have the power to speak out about social justice and fight for the rights of those who are being discriminated against. With many decisions being made during the pandemic regarding women, like the wage discrimination case of U.S. women's soccer, it makes me wonder who things would turn out differently if these decisions were also greatly protested and not overshadowed by this pandemic.

To me, the return of sport seems to be a distant thought, given there are so many other essentials that must return first. However, as a female athlete myself, I am tired of all this speculation...I keep wondering if next season will be the best season yet just because we are fortunate to get this long break, allowing our bodies to essentially reset for once. It also allows our minds to withdraw from all the sports talk we are so used to being caught up in.

When it comes to women's sports and advocacy for women in sports, their battles and their voices will be drowned out on the grounds that other battles are more important. While this may be true, it doesn't have to serve as an excuse to silence women who are calling for equality and equity in sports.

Anthropomorphism in *Through a Window*

Ariel Mandegarian

One of the most important concepts discussed in the Seminar program's excerpt of Jane Goodall's *Through a Window* is the anthropomorphization of chimpanzees. Anthropomorphism is the ascription of human characteristics to non-human beings, similar to personification but used to represent more literal concepts. Rather than being used in figurative language to make abstract concepts more relatable, this approach describes how the subject genuinely behaves in humanistic ways. Goodall explores the development of her thoughts regarding the significant similarities and differences between chimpanzees and humans as she learns through observation and collaboration. Over the course of her career, her experience and the opinions of the scientific community cause shifts in her viewpoint, and she ultimately embraces a more balanced perspective. Goodall concludes that the natural human tendency to project our characteristics onto other species, like chimpanzees, leads to a false

sense of understanding of the animals we interact with, but the repression of such tendency leads to an equally misguided viewpoint.

Goodall begins the story by reflecting on her early experiences with chimpanzees, noting their prominent similarities to humans in their characteristics and behaviors, and using language typically attributed to humans in reference to this non-human species. An example Goodall brings forth that encapsulates her original attitude towards anthropomorphism is in her early practice of using gender pronouns for chimpanzees. In her first publication, she used "he" and "she" pronouns as opposed to terms like "it" and "which" that are standard in scientific writing: "the paper when finally published did confer upon the chimpanzees the dignity of their appropriate genders and properly upgraded them from the status of mere 'things' to essential Being-ness" (59). The key connections between chimpanzees and humans

that Goodall makes note of include their overall biological similarity to us in terms of genetics, their capacity to learn complex ideas and solve complex problems, their ability to communicate through sign language, and their expression of a variety of emotions that seem to resemble human feelings. These commonalities make Goodall instinctively think and speak of chimpanzees very similarly as she would of humans.

Goodall describes the hesitation within the scientific community to make deep connections between humans and chimpanzees that demonstrates an opposing attitude to her inclinations towards anthropomorphism. She explains that humans' efforts to connect and empathize with other species tend to fall short because of our inherent inability to understand the experiences of beings with any significant variance from ourselves. Goodall notes some of the scientific and social consequences that come with closely comparing other species to our own. For instance, she brings the widespread use of animal testing into question, as she investigates the moral implications of experimenting on animals that demonstrate similar feelings and behaviors to humans. Goodall highlights the incongruity of using chimpanzees as a replacement for humans in studies because of their anatomical comparability, while purposely disregarding the similarities that would make these practices inhumane and difficult to justify: "It is... convenient to believe that the creature you are using, while it may react in disturbingly human-like ways, is, in fact, merely a mindless, and above all, unfeeling, 'dumb' animal" (57). She also recognizes, however, that the inferred

similarities beyond confirmed biological knowledge are difficult to prove, and that there is a reason beyond excuse-making to think about chimpanzees in a less human light. The uncertainty of whether or not chimpanzees have the same capacity for emotion and personality as humans does leave room for questions, and this hesitation is observable throughout Goodall's piece. She describes how she made adjustments to the way she thinks about and refers to the chimpanzees throughout her career, while also holding onto her key anthropomorphic ideas, wishing to prove to the scientific community that the anthropomorphization of chimpanzees has a noteworthy level of validity. Despite her desire to challenge the scientific consensus, Goodall also recognizes the dangers of anthropomorphic tendencies as she becomes further immersed in her studies. Goodall learns through her observations that there are important distinctions that need to be made between the two species in order to have an informed perspective. The most significant example of this shift comes from observing the chimpanzees in war, from which she concludes that the motives and behaviors of humans and chimpanzees in these circumstances are quite different: "although the basic aggressive patterns of the chimpanzees are remarkably similar to some of our own, their comprehension of the suffering they inflict on their victims is very different from ours" (86). Goodall reveals a clear distinction in the mindset between the two species in war, stating that only humans are capable of inflicting pain on others purposefully for its own sake and that chimpanzees do not share the same beliefs as their human observers on the gravity of their violent actions. She had

previously argued for the value of anthropomorphization, but after this observation, she switches gears to demonstrate that it can be dangerous to think of humans and chimpanzees in the same way. Goodall's piece is dynamic in that she allows herself to integrate this important aspect of an opposing viewpoint with her own perspective in order to enrich her understanding.

Overall, Goodall demonstrates both the positive and negative aspects of anthropomorphism, especially in regards to the chimpanzees in her studies. Her analyses show that fully basing one's view on this topic in either emotion or pure logic comes at the expense of an accurate understanding. Goodall's argument in *Through a Window* attempts to reach a middle ground based on both biology and empathy but ultimately leaves the issue open-ended. She focuses more on her observations and inclinations rather than clearly stating what her mindset was at every point in her study, which allows the reader to deduce their understanding of her perspective and form their own opinion. Goodall's insightful description of the development of her thinking brings an important, informed perspective on the controversy and stigma surrounding anthropomorphism in the scientific community.

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Author's Note

Writing is undoubtedly my favorite form of self-expression, and I enjoyed every step of creating and refining this essay. There is a strong connection between the computer keyboard and the usually unreachable parts of my brain that I have yet to understand. It is inexplicably beautiful and makes writing come naturally to me, for which I am so grateful. Brainstorming and outlining usually takes me the most time, as it did with this piece. After I sit with the ideas, I snap into the writing state of mind where I become more focused and meticulous than ever, suddenly an unstoppable word machine.

As a second-year student majoring in psychology and minoring in biology, the inner workings of the minds of humans and animals have always been an interest of mine. Reading Goodall's fascinating piece in my first Seminar course inspired a flood of analytical ideas in my brain, which flowed out through my fingertips and onto the page. Discovering all the ways that chimpanzees can exhibit human-like behaviors, especially their recognizable use of American Sign Language, opened my mind to new ideas and broadened my understanding of anthropomorphic qualities in other species. Analyzing Goodall's work through my understanding of her words and her influences allowed me to get directly involved with my interests in a physical way.

I would like to thank my first-year Seminar instructor, Professor Lénárt-Cheng, for believing in my work and nominating me for this award. Your feedback and encouragement in and outside the classroom have been invaluable to me. I would also like to thank Sophie Nethery from CWAC for

helping perfect the revision process with me. Finally, thank you to my parents for the endless support throughout the years in my academic life that guided me to love writing.

The Role of the Majority

Thaddeus Nazareno

In “Crito,” Plato records a conversation between Socrates and Crito shortly before Socrates’ execution. Throughout the passage, Socrates and Crito are critical towards the majority and its role in government. Conversely, Thucydides records a speech meant to honor fallen soldiers by praising the democracy that the soldiers died for in “Pericles’ Funeral Oration.” These fictional letters explore the role of the majority in democracy and the validity of its power through the eyes of Plato and Thucydides. Presently, the division of power between a general population and a centralized government continues to be a disputed topic.

Thucydides,

It has become evident to me that the majority is not always reliable. As Socrates poses, “Why should we care so much for what the majority think? The most reasonable people, to whom one should pay more attention, will believe that things were done as they were done.”¹ Our trust

should not be put in the majority, but rather in the people who know what they are talking about. When seeking truth and fact, one should seek reason over emotion. Too often is the majority’s opinion fueled by pride and emotion. Why should we put our trust in a majority when experts can use reason to determine what is true and right? Even the experts, the most reasonable people, will recognize that things done out of the majority will not always be done out of reason, “If we do not follow [the experts’] directions, we shall harm and corrupt that part of ourselves that is improved by just actions and destroyed by unjust actions.”² The majority can threaten the very democracy you idealize, Thucydides. A just society has no room for tyranny, including the possible tyranny of the majority. Acting out of pride or emotion may very well harm us all, as a whole and as individuals. It corrodes the morality that is the root of justice in our society. I

1 (Plato 2)

2 (Plato 5)

trust that you can recognize this threat and adjust your views appropriately.

Kind Regards,

Plato

Plato,

You concern yourself too much with the worst possible outcomes. Do you have no trust in your own people? I have faith that our system of government is just, “Our constitution is called a democracy because power is not of a minority, but of the whole people.”³ Ultimately, we make decisions that represent Athenians as a whole. Should the power reside in a minority, as you suggest, our people would lose trust in our government. We can credit our superior government not only to our constitution, but also to Athens’ superior citizens. No capable man is kept in political obscurity, for “[...] even those who are mostly occupied in his own business are extremely well informed on general politics.”⁴ The citizens of Athens deserve more credit than you give them. We are indeed prideful at times, but I assure you that each individual seeks reason. The affairs of the state trickle down and affect the lives of each citizen. It is within each citizen’s best interest to act within reason, so why should they choose to act otherwise?

As for those who you call the most reasonable people, “[...] what matters is not class, but the ability which the man possesses.”⁵ These experts are to act in the people’s best interest, and are put in their positions to do so. The responsibility they hold is given and entrusted in them by the people. With-

3 (Thucydides 14)

4 (Thucydides 15)

5 (Thucydides 15)

out the people, they are powerless. These experts are elected into office because their views and opinions align with that of the majority. I assure you that the distribution of power is just, and you are simply being paranoid. I do not believe my views need adjustment, but perhaps yours may.

Sincerely,

Thucydides

Thucydides,

You make some fair assertions, but I pose this question: should the citizens of Athens be trusted with the power that comes with democracy, even if all citizens are familiar with the workings of public affairs? Because, “The majority could inflict the greatest evils, for they would then be capable of the greatest good, and that would be fine, but now they cannot do either.”⁶ The power of the people is capable of both extremes. It is neither good nor bad, or perhaps it is both good and bad. These conflicting states do not foster progress nor productivity. You, yourself, stated that a government is just when the power is held by the people as a whole. Is it fair to say that a majority opinion represents the people as a whole when, by its definition, the majority excludes unpopular opinions? You say experts are only experts because of the people’s trust, but the people “[...] cannot make a man either wise or foolish, but they inflict things haphazardly.”⁷ These experts’ merits are not rooted in which way their views are aligned, but in the quality of the knowledge they possess. Take the circumstances of Socrates’

6 (Plato 6)

7 (Plato 6)

execution as an example: the public can be polluted by pride and ignorance in the moment and only later realize the harm it has done. It is the pride and ignorance of each individual that brings injustice to our community. Having a mass of people support ignorant views does not make those views any more valid if they are not based in reason. It is undeniable that our society gives its power to the people, but at what risk? We may have contradicting views, but I assure you that my points were observed within reason and absent of paranoia.

May we agree to disagree,

Plato

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Author's Note

I wrote these letters for my Seminar class during the 2020 US presidential election. I am a second year 3+2 Engineering major, so writing a fictional letter between two authors was admittedly out of my academic comfort zone. *Crito* and Pericles' *Funeral Oration* particularly stood out to me because I felt the two texts reflect opinions that remain relevant to this day. The events and extremely partisan nature of the 2020 election as well as the presidential election that preceded it made me question the majority's role in democracy. Plato and

Thucydides portray two opposing views on these struggles with democracy. Thucydides records a very proud point of view whereas Plato records a critical point of view towards the government. The issues about the majority were fresh in my mind from the election and *Crito* and *Pericles' Funeral Oration* allowed me to explore those issues in a different context.

I would like to extend a thank you to the Seminar staff, the CWAC staff, and all judges. I especially would like to thank my writing adviser, Sophie, as well as my Seminar 002 professor, Margaret Pagaduan, for the help and support they provided me through this process.

A Tale of Feminine Strength and Masculine Weakness

Gayatri Nagnoor

Synopsis: Rolandine, a woman who has lived a pitiful life under the harsh hands of the French court, finally meets a man who loves her whole self. They marry in secret and devote themselves to one another. However, their relationship is discovered and she is sentenced to live in the deep woods at her father's castle; her only escape is renouncing her husband. Though she takes solace in her husband's letters, she learns that he is unfaithful to her. With a broken heart, she attempts to reconcile her promise to her husband with her pained emotions. Across the English Channel, a ruthless coup is occurring in the Scottish court and King Duncan is slain! Macbeth takes the throne with his cunning wife pulling the strings. However, those betrayed by Macbeth rise again and a battle ensues. Macbeth falls and his wife is heard to have taken her own life. Little do they know, the lady has escaped!

Rolandine continued her stroll down the halls of her current prison. Many may say that a castle is hardly a prison but the vir-

tuous Rolandine would disagree. However, this was a prison of her own making. Her father would welcome her as his own again if she denounced her marriage to the only person who made her feel cherished. Such a request merely strengthened Rolandine's resolve to stay true to her husband.

The woman's eyes roamed the grounds of the castle, which was situated in the thick woods of northern France. Something caught her eye. Stumbling up to the castle gates was a figure, shielded against the sun with a ragged cloak. Rolandine's eyes widened in surprise as she watched the mystery person be greeted by the guards stationed at the gate. To her shock, the figure was allowed in and escorted toward the castle. The heartsick woman's hopes lit anew.

Rolandine quickly made her way towards the lower levels of the castle, entering the main hall just as the mystery figure was brought in. "Lady Rolandine, this person is requesting assistance and shelter

for the night. What say you?" The guards questioned her.

"Why, of course! Please have someone prepare a room for our guest immediately." She proceeded to thank the guards for their quick actions and took the mystery figure from their hands, excusing them so she could speak with their guest in private. Turning toward this new person, Rolandine was surprised to see the hood of the cloak was lowered, revealing a stunning woman with fair skin and dark locks of hair.

"My lady, might I ask your name?" Rolandine asked politely, secretly in awe of the beauty in front of her eyes, briefly putting aside the sadness she felt at her withering hopes of seeing her husband. In somewhat broken French with an unfamiliar lilt to her accent, the woman replied, "If I may, I would wish to remain anonymous, Lady Rolandine. Though, I suppose you could call me Lady M." Rolandine gave her a nod, accepting Lady M's conditions.

"You are welcome to stay as long as you please, Lady M. Let us sit while your room is being prepared." She led them to a sitting room that was adjacent to the main hall. As they got settled into the cushioned chairs, Lady M discreetly observed her host. Outwardly she saw a simple woman, who to many may seem unburdened and straightforward. However, Lady M's keen eyes picked up on an invisible weight settled upon the slender shoulders of the woman in front of her.

"So, Lady M. Tell me your tale. How did you arrive at this place?" Rolandine questioned with a kind smile, hoping to put her guest at ease.

Lady M proceeded to tell her tale, her

story of murder, intrigue, anxiety, and terror flowed from her lips with little hesitation; though she did make sure to keep names vague and locations secret. One would think a woman with a past filled with such moral transgressions would keep them to herself. However, living in anonymity and finally arriving at a place where she can rest, Lady M felt free to let out the many things weighing her down. "In the end, for fear of my life, I staged my suicide and escaped the country. I have been running for so long now, I have no idea how many days it has been. I had to beg my way onto a ship heading to France, and that's how I happened to stumble upon your castle." So, she finished her tale.

All the while, Rolandine had stayed silent in her seat, taking in all the details with rapt attention. She had never heard a story like this before, although now she could begin to understand the mysterious Lady M before her. Though this woman had contributed to horrid things, the conviction and strength necessary to pursue her goal with such determination was incredible to consider.

"Now that I have laid bare my past actions, allow me to ask you as well, my lady. I have also observed a tension in your features you hold so carefully serene. What burdens you?" Lady M inquired. Rolandine merely let out a sigh.

"Lady M, what can I say? I have been held here because I refuse to leave the love of the only person who has given me purpose in my life." She proceeded to explain her situation with her husband and all those around her who want her to leave the fruitless marriage. "Though my heart is filled with nothing but love for this man, I have recently learned that in fleeing to

Germany to escape the French court, my husband has been seen wooing a rather wealthy woman. I am torn.”

“My, my Lady Rolandine. Your story saddens even my own black heart. Why do you stay with this man whose presence in your life has merely added to your misery?” Lady M shook her head in pity.

Closing her eyes, Rolandine spoke from the heart. “My devotion will not become lacking because his devotion has subsided. I made a promise I intend to fulfill; it is all I have to keep me from falling to my knees in anguish.”

Lady M’s eyes widened at the resolute strength of the woman before her. “But Lady Rolandine, this man has forsaken you to be locked up in this castle! When my husband could not handle the, albeit gruesome, tasks assigned to him, I took them upon myself to complete. I could not allow my feminine composition to hold me back from acting. You, my Lady Rolandine, have all the power in this situation! Take back what is rightfully yours, your freedom! Hear me, leave this bastard whose inherent weakness has caused you pain and anguish! My husband’s own weakness led the crown to fall from his unworthy head. I can guarantee you, he did not think twice about my ‘death,’ the same way your bastard has yet to even think of the beauty he left locked up!” Lady M’s impassioned plea took Rolandine by surprise.

The two women, though opposite in virtue, were similar in fortitude. Both viewed the tenacity of the woman in front of them with growing respect.

With yet another kind smile gracing her face and unshed tears sparkling in her eyes, Rolandine responded, her voice heavy with

emotion; “Lady M, your passionate words are like balm on my tattered heart. To hear someone, who does not know me and has no reason to care for me, speak so honestly about my circumstances makes me feel immense gratitude. Do not think that what you have said is in vain; I am considering your words deeply, for I felt them in my heart. I agree, my freedom is mine and mine alone. My husband has not kept the promise we made to each other in God’s house. He who should be by my side as I have been beside his and your own husband who should be beside you now, have both forsaken us. I must consider my next actions carefully...” The conflicted woman’s voice trailed off as she heard a bell ringing in the distance.

Her eyes lit up in recognition. “Ah yes, Lady M. The chiming of the bell has signaled that your room is ready. Let me lead you there and I will make sure dinner is prepared soon. You must be hungry.” Lady M nodded and whilst they stood to exit, the two women glanced at each other. As their eyes connected, an understanding was formed. A mutual decision was silently made never to allow the frailty of men to overwhelm the strength they contained within themselves.

An Analysis of “A Tale of Feminine Strength and Masculine Weakness”

The characters Rolandine from *The Hep-tameron* by Marguerite d’Angoulême and Lady Macbeth from William Shakespeare’s play *Macbeth*, seem like opposites at first glance. Upon further reflection, it becomes obvious why these two women could be determined as similar. Both possess a not-so-subtle stubborn streak when it comes to making their minds known; however,

alongside that we see their perseverance when working through the troublesome situations they face. Rolandine and Lady Macbeth have an inherent strength that is displayed when the men in their lives fall victim to their own weak minds.

What I have written here is essentially a Seminar department approved crossover fanfiction, to be completely honest. Creating a story within an already completed work and introducing a well-established character from an unrelated storyline is the definition of this type of literature. I thoroughly enjoyed writing this piece and exploring the characters of Rolandine and Lady Macbeth more closely. To come up with this idea, I considered a variety of aspects regarding the women's personalities as well as the formatting of the original works. Luckily, both Shakespeare and d'Angoulême were vague when it came to certain portions of their respective tales, allowing me sufficient creative liberties while crafting my piece.

I chose to set my narrative at the point when Rolandine is being held in her father's forest castle because this situation is the direct result of her strong resolve in staying true to her husband, known only as "the bastard" (d'Angoulême, 31). By not renouncing her marriage to the bastard, she is suffering the consequences dealt by her father to be trapped far from all she's ever known. Even after being told "that the bastard was deeply in love with a German lady, and that it was said she was very rich, and that he wished to marry her" (d'Angoulême, 31), Rolandine leaned on her inner strength and continued to stay loyal to her husband. I then decided to have Lady Macbeth emerge suddenly out of the woods because having a mystery figure

appear would serve to give Rolandine hope that her husband had returned to her. The figure was obviously not him; although this seems like a cruel punishment to put a character through, this event served to display her admirable trait of never giving up. It also plays a double role of presenting Lady Macbeth as once again, in this case unwittingly, performing an act of mercilessness. This time the harsh act was of my planning and not the scheming of any fictional character.

These two women were the first in my mind when it came to writing this story because I understood both of them to be exceptionally strong in the context of their respective situations. Though they are on opposite ends of the 'virtuosity' scale, with Lady Macbeth taunting her hesitant husband into assassinating the King of Scotland, and Rolandine remaining strong throughout her suffering for her ultimately unfaithful husband, the courage and willpower necessary to remain committed to their personal goals is admirable. Lady Macbeth references the point in the play when she has to complete the task that Macbeth himself lacked the nerve to do:

MACBETH. I'll go no more./I am afraid to think what I have done;/Look on't again I dare not.

LADY MACBETH. Infirm of purpose!/Give me the daggers. (Shakespeare, 2.2.53-56)

Mainstream media often perpetuates the common stereotype that men are more inclined to do what it takes to "get the job done." This scene reminds us that women too can be portrayed in the same light. More often than not, women are seen as meek or without the courage necessary

to perform acts that are seen as difficult or requiring a man's skills. Lady Macbeth pushes those stereotypes away; she proves that a woman can do what is typically within a man's expectations of himself to complete. At the same time, she is bringing into focus the lack of willpower displayed by Macbeth in returning the daggers to the scene of King Duncan's murder. Again, this defies the common stereotype that men are capable of anything, thus setting the stage for Lady Macbeth to step up and commandeer the dominant and leading position in their relationship.

Throughout *The Heptameron*, the subjects of cheating and infidelity are openly and frequently discussed. Rolandine's story was the most painful for me due to the way it addressed the unfaithfulness of her partner, the bastard: "the few letters he did write were so cold and so different from those she formerly received from him, that she felt assured some new amour had deprived her of her husband's heart..." (d'Angoulême, 31). The letters they exchanged were a key part of their relationship; therefore, to lose the only thing that kept them connected would have been a destabilizing occurrence. Despite this event and while dealing with her complex emotions, Rolandine was able to persevere and continue dedicatedly loving her husband, even after discovering his transgressions. To me, this choice Rolandine made ensured her standing on the moral high ground and is nothing short of commendable. We are once again reminded of how the man in this story disappointed the woman when she needed him the most, displaying his true nature as a greedy, weak-willed bastard.

It is important to note that although these women displayed their strength

quite successfully, both had their shortcomings. Notably, Lady Macbeth was convincing her husband to murder the king of a country, which is definitely not a moral action. Additionally, to any modern person reading Rolandine's story, like me, her dedication to her husband was both a strength and a weakness. She can easily be seen as remarkably stubborn and unwilling to compromise, especially after finding out her husband had broken his promise and allowed his avarice to overcome him. This is one of the main reasons I had Rolandine begin to consider leaving the bastard for his misdeeds after Lady Macbeth's fervent outburst. Rolandine and Lady Macbeth may have their faults, but their drive to achieve what they believe is necessary shines brightly in their respective stories.

"A Tale of Feminine Strength and Masculine Weakness" was written as an example of what it means to be a strong woman. Rolandine and Lady Macbeth demonstrated that women are equally strong or even stronger than men when it comes to dedication and effort. These two female characters, on nearly willpower alone, managed to upstage their respective husbands and uproot the stereotypes attached to women. Not only was Lady Macbeth more intriguing of a character compared to her husband, whom the play is titled after, but she was significantly more complex. Rolandine, who I initially pitied, quickly grew to be one of the most memorable characters I have ever read, receiving my full-hearted admiration. Both women consistently defy expectations when it comes to proving their worth and their fortitude. Neither Macbeth nor the bastard could ever replicate the resolve and tenacity these women displayed.

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Author's Note

As a third-year accounting major, one of the main avenues I have to engage in creative writing pieces like "A Tale of Feminine Strength and Masculine Weakness" is through Seminar. Outside of class, I thoroughly enjoy reading and writing, so being able to apply a creative side of myself in an academic setting felt very rewarding. Growing up with an older brother, I have always strived to prove myself to be worthy of standing at his level because by virtue of being the oldest and a man, he'll always have an innate advantage. Nevertheless, my parents always encouraged us to do the same things and never limited me because I am a woman. So, when I read Rolandine and Lady Macbeth's stories, I felt compelled to give voice to the unequal standards I witnessed between men and women.

I began my writing process by understanding why I felt these two women were similar, when they seem so different. After reconciling that, I was able to move forward and write a creative piece that allowed me to show the two women acknowledging each other's strengths and comparing their differences. There was a significant amount of brainstorm-

ing required to determine how the story should proceed, and I tried to avoid filler plot points in order to focus on the dialogue between Lady M and Rolandine. By the end, I was satisfied with the flow of the piece and even felt some regret that I couldn't continue it further. I did, however, leave the conclusion of the story open-ended enough for the audience to decide how they wanted the story to end.

I would like to thank Professor Emily Klein, who has been my Seminar professor for two semesters and encouraged me to submit this piece for consideration. Without her support I would not have this opportunity. I'd like to thank Sara Ma-mesh from CWAC for helping me revise and finalize my paper. Her insight was vital to my editing decisions. I'd like to thank my family for always being supportive of my writing ambitions and raising me with strong values. Lastly, I'd like to thank my Seminar classmates for engaging in such thoughtful discussions; it allowed me to widen my understanding of these two powerful women.

My Self-Reflection of Seminar 103/146

Katherine Mertel

In my past self-reflection essays, I have mentioned my growth in confidence when it came to participating in seminar and school. In high school, I barely participated due to the fear of embarrassment. I was so afraid of being incorrect that I would compromise my learning abilities. However, it being three years later, I realize I am not the same student today. This past semester, I decided to challenge myself by taking a different Seminar course that explores the topics of American Diversity and Common Good. I believe that this was the perfect year to challenge my way of thinking considering that 2020 has already had a spark for social change and new ideas. In Seminar 146, our readings were centered around the Latinidad diaspora compared to Western Traditions in the regular Seminar 103 class. Although our course had different readings, we were still able to accomplish the learning outcomes the seminar program wishes upon their students. The three outcomes were advancing

in areas of shared inquiry; critical thinking; and written and oral communication.

Last year in Seminar 102, I mentioned my development in the first dimension of the “Shared Inquiry” learning outcome. I grew in the understanding of probing questions about the text when I led my first seminar class ever. After accomplishing this learning outcome, I shifted my focus to the idea of “engaging in reflective listening and inclusive, respectful conversation” for this year’s seminar. There have been countless conversations on the ideas of stereotypes and racial hierarchy. These conversations perfectly tie in with the learning outcome of American Diversity, the explanation of how social categories and structures of power may affect the human person. One of the texts we focused on was *The Miner’s Canary* written by Gerald Torres and Lani Guinier. In the first chapter of the text, we see an example of race and how it can be stereotyped on a daily basis. We follow the short story of Niko,

Guinier's black son, and his walk home from school, "...he noticed that sometimes white people crossed to the other side as he approached...he was not sure what to do, if anything" (Guinier, Torres 26). This excerpt of the text was definitely a conversation starter for the class. The ideas of stereotyping others and believing in higher standards of power were common themes not only in the text but in real life. These real life concepts led some of my classmates into sharing personal examples of how these racial themes have affected their lives, just like Niko's in the text. It was important for me to grasp the idea of being a respectful and reflective listener in this hard-hitting conversation. It's always hard to be vulnerable and share personal stories to your classmates, and by listening in an understanding and engaged attitude, my classmates knew that they were being heard for their ideas and that what they said mattered. Not only did this discussion of personal examples of stereotypes intentionally follow the Shared Inquiry learning outcomes, but it also managed to follow the learning outcomes of American Diversity.

Another Seminar learning outcome that I have grown in this past semester is my "Critical Thinking" ability. Last year, I focused and improved on the dimension of evaluating evidence in order to draw conclusions from the text. However, this year I chose to enhance my ability to "distinguish multiple senses of a text" in the literal and non-literal sense. I had many opportunities to practice this learning outcome in the assigned readings. The reading that left the biggest impact on my experience in the "Critical Thinking" dimension was the reading *La Prieta* written by Gloria

Anzaldúa. Her work was our first assigned reading at the beginning of the semester. In *La Prieta*, the readers were indulged in Anzaldúa's childhood growing up. At the beginning, Anzaldúa explains her hesitation when she's writing this piece of work. She states, "I am terrified of making my mother the villain in my life rather than showing how she has been a victim" (Anzaldúa 221). Analyzing the text, we are able to get the literal meaning of what Anzaldúa is saying about her mother; she is scared of her being perceived as a bad person. However, if we dive deeper in the text and in a non-literal sense, the readers can see that her mother was perceived as a villain without the realization that she was only a victim of systemic racism. Her mother tried her best to make Anzaldúa fit in and seem less authentic than she actually was. This wasn't the actions of a villain; it was the actions of a victim who has been taught to disregard all authenticity that made you seem less than the oppressors. By unpacking the text in a non-literal sense, I was able to learn more metaphorically what Anzaldúa was trying to say about racism and how it can be systemic. This example of my growth in the dimension of "Critical Thinking" also reminds me of how this conversation contributed to the learning outcomes of "Common Good." One of the outcomes of "Common Good" is to reflect on ways human beings can find fulfillment in communities. Anzaldúa commonly writes about self-fulfillment in her community. Like stated in *La Prieta*, growing up was difficult for her since innocence and adolescence left her at a very young age. Despite this fact, Anzaldúa preached how she continuously found fulfillment in her Latinidad commu-

nity as an adult. She writes for her readers who may also feel lost in their communities.

Finally, the last seminar learning outcome that I've also gained more practice and experience in is the aspect of "Written and Oral Communication." This semester, I became more competent in the second dimension where my communication, both oral and written, was more effective given the consideration of my audience. Like I stated before, my seminar readings this semester were directed around current modern day issues that may be sensitive to people, including myself. Having the constant reminder of who my audience is, my classmates, and how they felt towards the text helped me effectively communicate with them based on these hard, sensitive topics. For example, the last reading we were assigned was the book *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter* written by Erika Sánchez. During the conversations guided by this book, I gained the skill to have an effective conversation around it knowing that the book had sensitive content that some of my classmates were not comfortable with. I realized that just because a book may have some delicate topics doesn't mean we can't have a conversation about it. There are other effective topics presented in the book that we can build a conversation upon. I knew my classmates were my audience and I knew which topics were going to be the most effective to start a conversation. For example, in the text we focused on Julia, the main character, and her relationship with her teachers versus her friends. As I learned how to communicate with my classmates effectively, I was also able to achieve some of the learning outcomes presented in "Common Good"

and "American Diversity." In Sánchez's book, *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter*, Julia states, "His hands are on his hips, and he looks as though he wants to bash my skull. Before he says anything else, I shove my stuff into my backpack and run out the door. I can't deal with this today" (60). Conversations around the relationship between Julia and her teacher followed the dimensional learning outcomes of social problems and power in teenagers' lives. We have had countless conversations around the analysis of Julia's common social problems that she, and most teens, face with their teachers. There is an element of social order and power between Julia and her teacher that makes her feel small compared to her teacher. Overall, in the conversations around Sánchez's book we have touched on a lot of the seminar program's inspired learning outcomes.

Looking back on all the seminar courses I have taken so far, I've realized that I've learned a lot over the years. To think that I never used to participate in school due to irrational fears is something I'll never understand. It was not until I reached Saint Mary's College and the Seminar Program that I've realized how much one can learn from participating and contributing in the classroom. There are some things that professors can teach you, but there is a whole other pathway to knowledge that one misses when they don't participate. By participating, I've learned that I retain information better compared to when I don't. I'm so proud of challenging myself into taking a different seminar class that led me to more difficult conversations. I've learned lessons in this class that will not only help me in my future seminar classes but in life.

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ored and humbled to have this opportunity to share my ideas with the world.

Author's Note

Being a third-year college student in the year of 2020 made me want to expand my horizons by taking courses that were not typically in my schedule as a Business Major and Dance Minor. This past fall, I took Professor Davalos' Seminar 146 class titled "Common Good: Latinidad Remix." In this class we looked at race, bias, and differences through the lens of different writers of the Latinidad diaspora. The year of 2020 sparked for social change with a pandemic and a presidential election. It was important for me to be able to talk about important issues and bring them to light of change and acceptance. I would like to personally thank Professor Davalos for pushing me to dig deeper in myself and for inspiring me with all these different readings about social justice. I would also like to thank my family and friends for always encouraging me to express my true inner thoughts and feelings. I would not be where I am today without them. I am hon-

The Existential Pursuit of Meaning

Ada Fraser

The philosophical pursuit of meaning was a common thread explored in many of the literary works of the 19th century. By helping establish the foundation for existentialism, authors Fyodor Dostoyevsky and Friedrich Nietzsche are considered to be two prominent and influential figures in this exploration. Central to existentialism is the belief that every individual is a free agent who has the power to create and derive meaning in life; however, existentialist thinkers often diverge on where and how this meaning is ultimately found. One explanation, outlined in the epistemological theory of rationalism, states that the essential truth of something (e.g. meaning) can be defined and found through reason alone. Rationalism was a prominent concern for both authors; they viewed its philosophy as erroneous, fundamentally incapable of answering the complexities of existential concepts. Dostoyevsky and Nietzsche both expressed their opposition to rationalism in their respective works—

Notes from the Underground, *Beyond Good and Evil*, and *The Gay Science*. As a system of thinking that relies exclusively on reason and logic, rationalism is inherently unable to account for the illogical nature of humankind and therefore fails to explain the fundamental questions of existence accurately.

Nietzsche's work can be understood as a response to the inadequacy of rationalist explanations regarding the various facets of the human experience. One of these explanations is in response to the concept of morality. Nietzsche argues that explaining morality from the perspective of science and reason creates an interpretation that is both fallacious and antiquated. Furthermore, it is axiomatic that as a complex and intricate system of values, morality cannot be universally defined. Morality does not exist in terms of fact, instead it exists in the interpretation of that fact (Nietzsche 1). In its most authentic understanding, morality is a uniquely conditional concept,

influenced by circumstances like culture, religion, politics, and time—its meaning cannot be explained or measured in the reductive terms of rationalism. Morality is a living concept; it evolves as new theories arise for the basis of what constitutes societal value. Historically, the value of one's behavior was determined by its consequences—an *ex post facto* judgment where the behavior itself was seen as insignificant (Nietzsche 2). Currently, the interpretation of value is derived from the source of one's action, where its origin is construed as and equated with intention (Nietzsche 2). The application of a superficial human facet like intention, as means to substantiate morality, is an inadequate methodology. This perspective fails to grasp fully the scope of a concept that is unequivocally relative to a myriad of influences. To determine value in terms of what is consciously apparent is to neglect and obscure the true determinants of value—that which is unconscious.

Recognizing a kind of hiatus in the progression of humanity, Nietzsche proposes the need for an evolution in the current social consciousness, "But today—shouldn't we have reached the necessity of once more resolving on a reversal and a fundamental shift in values, owing to another self-examination of man, another growth in profundity?" (Nietzsche 2). In order to ameliorate the current understanding of morality, to surpass the insufficient explanations provided by rationalist ideology, humanity must establish a greater philosophy—one that institutes a new system of values. Designating value based on the unintentional—the factors that are not readily apparent and thus harder to recognize—will inspire a more enlightened *eidōs*. It is precisely these obscure influences

that contain the greatest significance and therefore the proper authority to determine value.

In a similar light, Dostoyevsky illustrates through his novel the problematic and flawed explanations proposed by rationalism. The narrator, often referred to as the Underground Man, epitomizes the fundamental flaw of rationalism—that humans are inherently irrational beings. The Underground Man conveys this idea in the statement, "Well, even in toothache there is enjoyment" (Dostoyevsky 28). Rationalism attempts to define the complex elements of reality in terms of universal molds that exist dichotomously—things are either true or untrue, and they are the same for everyone. Being someone who finds pleasure in a toothache, an experience that rationalists would describe as universally unpleasurable, the Underground Man is a contradiction to the validity of this way of thinking. The character's obverse disposition illustrates the proclivity for humankind to value free-will over reason, even if—and in this case precisely because—the result is inimical to their best interest. The character's antithetical nature carries additional implications against the perspective of rationalism and reveals its paradoxical philosophy. The fact that the Underground Man takes pleasure in a toothache is an illustration of this paradox: the belief that humans, a species that is intrinsically illogical, have the ability to comprehend their reality exclusively through reason and logic.

The Underground Man describes himself as a man of acute perception and consciousness, further exemplifying the rationalist paradigm. He is also highly self-reflective, constantly questioning his

experience, “Can a man who attempts to find enjoyment in the very feeling of his own degradation possibly have a spark of respect for himself?” (Dostoyevsky 32). The question implies that a man who relies purely on reason, who derives pleasure from his pain, and is aware of this aporia, is therefore unable to have any self-respect. Through the use of his reason, the Underground Man concludes that he is not to blame for being a scoundrel; however, this realization does not provide any solace for the fact that he now knows that he is a scoundrel (Dostoyevsky 16). In essence, the Underground Man is an irrational rationalist, existing as an oxymoron, and yet he is consciously aware of this fact, further demonstrating the paradox of rationalist philosophy.

The Underground Man continues to rationalize his toothache and the pain it ensues, searching for the logical purpose of his suffering. The Underground Man endures this perpetual state of misery out of spite, which he expresses through malicious moans, forcing everyone around him to experience his suffering. He continues to divulge the depths of his rancor, describing the intricacies behind his moans. As a person of high intellect and reason, he reaches the conclusion that there is pleasure in causing others’ distress. His moans shift from being expressions of pain into vexations with the sole purpose of causing others to suffer with him. The Underground Man thrives on *schadenfreude*, taking pleasure from the misfortune of others especially when that misfortune is caused by him. His antisocial behavior exists as an example of where man can go when he relies on reason alone for understanding the world.

From a sense of intellectual superiority, as he is a man of exceptional reason, the Underground Man explains that his moans are an expression of the meaninglessness of pain—that it is absolute and one has no other choice than to endure it (Dostoyevsky 28). The Underground Man lacks the ability to understand the reason behind his suffering, ergo triggering his nihilistic perspective. The irony in the Underground Man’s conviction is that he is aware of the fact that he chose this reality by refusing to go to the dentist, yet he also believes that his suffering is inescapable. This further demonstrates the futile and dismal result of rationalist philosophy. Man, as an illogical being, is unable to deduce objective meaning and truth from the perspective of reason; his essence causes a distorted imitation which is then perceived to be reason. A man who seeks meaning through his perverse reason is fated to the destitute reality of meaninglessness as the fundamentals of truth far exceed the bounds that reason alone is able to deduce.

The Underground Man is an extreme example of how rationalism can instill an existence that is detached from reality. Though he is a fictional character, the prevalence of rationalism spawned an era where individuals like that of the Underground Man undoubtedly exist in society (Dostoyevsky 3). The reductive explanations of rationalism creates overgeneralized descriptions for behavior; it is a theory that codifies the complexities and inconsistencies of humanity and creates absolute definitions which ultimately fail to recognize the diversity of the human spectrum. As a result, and depicted through the Underground Man, existence becomes reduced to a set of definitive scientific

descriptions, creating an abject reality that is void of meaning.

In the pursuit of a more satisfactory existential explanation, one that is congruous with reality, Nietzsche states, “But we, we others who thirst after reason, are determined to scrutinize our experiences as severely as a scientific experiment—hour after hour, day after day. We wish ourselves to be our experiments and guinea pigs” (Dostoyevsky 5). Here, Nietzsche is referring to authentic reason, that is, not the a priori reason of rationalism. Rationalist reasoning draws conclusions using universal definitions of existential concepts that are overly reductive and thus incomplete. In contrast, authentic reasoning stems from the understanding that the realities of the human experience are inherently multifaceted and complex, requiring a deeper interpretation.

Dostoyevsky’s narrator also begins to doubt the validity of the rationalist approach, echoing a similar uncertainty as he poses the question, “What does reason know?...I admit that twice two makes four is an excellent thing, but if we are to give everything its due, twice two makes five is sometimes a very charming thing too” (Dostoyevsky 68). In other words, the Underground Man is making the argument that not all that makes up existence can be explained by rationality alone.

Where then does one look for this answer—an answer that goes beyond reason, one that can explain the questions that remain unresolved and can lead man to his entelechy? One explanation to this question comes from John Donne in his poem “The Good-Morrow.” Donne concludes that existential meaning is found through interpersonal connection and love. He be-

gins his poem with a question, “I wonder, by my troth, what thou and I / Did, till we loved?” (Donne 1). Donne illustrates the efficacious power of love, as its very manifestation causes him to question the actualities of life preceding his experience of it. He characterizes his former life as that of a child’s, still dependent on its mother. Donne describes that prior to love his life was jejune and insignificant, any perception of meaning had merely been an illusion, “If ever any beauty I did see...’twas but a dream of thee” (Donne 1). Whether it directly provides the answers, or replaces the need for an answer altogether, love has the ability to satisfy life’s most challenging questions.

In a brief moment of lucidity, the Underground Man arrives at a similar conclusion. Dissociating from his rational mindset he states, “[W]ith love one can live even without happiness. Even in sorrow life is sweet” (Dostoyevsky 192). The Underground Man realizes that merely existing without suffering does not compare to the experience of love. Love has the ability to supersede affliction, allowing for contentment in an existence that without love, would be unattainable. Love provides meaning by establishing a constant foundation in one’s existence that cannot be altered by negative experiences. The Underground Man, so preoccupied with finding meaning in an existence filled with suffering, obliquely admits that his suffering would be inconsequential when love becomes the basis for existential meaning.

Rationalism attempts to explicate the elements of existence through methodical processes which create codified explanations for conditions that ultimately transcend the confines of logic and reason.

Love however, an experience that defies a standard or singular definition, can provide a potential resolution that rationalism is incapable of offering. Love is a nebulous force, one that cannot be constrained or categorized. It ignores the laws of reason as its essence is both subjective and objective, allowing it to accommodate the complexities of existence and can lead to the fulfillment of meaning.

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Author's Note

As a psychology student with a passion for philosophy, this essay provided me with the interdisciplinary harmony that I desired. The psychological and physical conditions of existence have always fascinated me. Along with existence comes the ability to think, reason, and establish beliefs. Existential meaning can be expressed as a result of these cognitive processes, yet the question remains as to how and where this meaning is ultimately found. The subject of life's meaning can be deeply personal, however it can also shine light into the consciousness of humankind. Through conceptual analysis of existential literature,

this essay acts as a reflection of the human tendency towards the pursuit of meaning.

Given that this is my final year at Saint Mary's, I wanted my last seminar essay to be personally significant and relevant. Seminar has introduced me to many memorable works and inspiring authors, however I wholeheartedly fell in love with Fyodor Dostoyevsky's *Notes from the Underground*. I was mesmerized by his unsympathetic illustration of the human condition, portrayed through the mind of a misanthropic narrator. The honest self-evaluation that Dostoyevsky's approach presents is bold and at times uncomfortable—an experience I found both moving and enticing. Dostoyevsky's work challenges the mind and invites sincere contemplation—a standard I strove to uphold in this essay.

This compositional endeavor was not achieved alone and many thanks are necessary. I want to acknowledge Professor Lisanti for seeing potential in my work and for nominating this essay. Thank you for your feedback and support during the writing process. I also want to thank the greatest writing adviser and CWAC's very own, Bianca Guzman. You have a remarkable ability to make editing enjoyable, a skill that is second to none. Finally, to Fyodor Dostoyevsky, may we all be worthy of our sufferings.

Seminar in Relation to Biology

Mac ArmstrongBrown

Throughout my academic career at Saint Mary's College of California, I have witnessed many things come and go, such as friends, colleagues, and in-person instruction. However, one of the most important constants I have had throughout my four years attending college has been my love for the Seminar Program. Life can be very unpredictable at times, with pandemics, issues of social injustice, and personal affairs getting in the way, yet throughout it all the Seminar Program has been there for me, serving as a platform to cultivate my habits of mind and as a safe space in which difficult conversations could be held. During the past four years, I have dedicated my undergraduate experience to earning a Bachelor of Science in Biology and a minor in Theology and Religious Studies with the ultimate career path of attending medical school to become a physician anesthesiologist. Although the discussions had in seminar classrooms span a wide range of topics, from scientific readings

such as Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species* to satirical texts which discuss the monotony of everyday life as seen in Voltaire's *Candide* and Charles Dickens' *Hard Times*, I have never had the opportunity to explore the intersection between the Seminar Program and my chosen disciplines until now. Though it may not be immediately apparent for someone exploring my area of study, the Seminar Program has fundamentally helped me along my career path, allowing me to develop a mastery in the skills of critical analysis, written and oral communication, and examining the relationship between a text and the macrocosm of society. The scope of this essay seeks to examine the interdisciplinarity between my major of study and the Seminar Program, using the respective department learning outcomes along with past seminar readings as a mechanism to inform the individual growth I have experienced in the past four years.

To many it will come as no surprise that

the Biology major is one of the most difficult majors to pursue at Saint Mary's. This major is one that is highly defined by academic rigor, requiring that students showcase the learning outcome of a thorough understanding of cellular and molecular biology, organismal and ecological biology, and evolution. In addition to content heavy lectures, the primary method in which science majors learn to analyze logically and think critically about scientific information is during the labs required for nearly every science course. These labs function to give hopeful science majors tangible experience that demonstrates the complex topics described in lecture, and they also serve as a method to allow students to communicate their findings skillfully through oral and written reports. Beyond academia, pursuing a degree in science at any school is a task that is highly competitive, the outcome of which creates an atmosphere where students constantly compare themselves to others and compete for opportunities to do research and obtain publication in scientific journals. Dedicating one's life to science, and in my case, the pursuit of a career in medicine, is a task that can prove to be very lonely, with success in the field requiring that the individual eat, sleep, and breathe science. My life as a Biology major and pre-medicine student thus far has been consumed by clinical internships, microbiology research, and personal sacrifices necessary to get ahead. Despite this, the high level of specialization required for success in my field has in turn provided me with a skillset that has greatly improved my contributions to my other classes, most significantly, seminar.

At the heart of the intersection between seminar and biology is the ability to read

a text, whether it be historical or scientific, and identify the main concepts the author is attempting to communicate to their audience. While in the lab, science majors at Saint Mary's must utilize this skill in order to ask meaningful questions about academic journals and explore new areas of inquiry (research), just as a seminar students use text-based evidence as a means to drive critical thinking and shared inquiry. In this way my career in science has very well prepared me to recreate this skill in the "lab" that can be described as the seminar classroom; however, the intersectionality between the two does not stop here. In the field of medicine, physicians must understand the complex biochemical pathways present in the human body if they are expected to treat patients. Though medicine is deeply grounded in the highly specific details of scientific understanding, physicians cannot simply focus on the microcosm. Medicine requires that physicians must also relate these topics to the bigger picture of the human body, and success in a seminar setting requires much the same. Although citing specific text-based evidence is a fundamental aspect of the seminar process, students must also learn to relate these concepts to the overall purpose of the text, and ultimately, to the macrocosm of what the author is attempting to say about society. In the seminar syllabus, it is uncommon for science majors to encounter texts that are so deeply intertwined with their discipline. However, a direct example in which I was afforded the opportunity to put these skills into practice can be seen when looking at past discussions of *The Origin of Species* by Charles Darwin from Seminar Western Traditions II.

As the only science major in the class, I

felt as if it was my responsibility to guide its participants through the complicated nature of the text, and my previous encounters with it provided me with the unique insight necessary to do so. This in turn allowed me to practice yet another skill fundamental to the seminar process: drawing on personal experience as a means to inform conversation and stimulate discussion. During these conversations my previous experiences with the text allowed me to clarify skillfully Darwin's theories by pointing to specific areas of the reading, and most notably, they also enabled me to highlight this text in relation to the larger structures of society. In these discussions I was able to shed light on the point that in applying this reading to humanity, Darwin's theories were taken out of their original context, the dangers of which were ultimately responsible for the birth of social Darwinism. This is merely one example which showcases the ways my chosen discipline has provided me with a skill set necessary to inform discussions, and thus, drive them to a greater degree of depth; but I must also be transparent in mentioning that this intersection has not been the most significant to my overall development while at Saint Mary's. To understand why we must further examine my chosen disciplines, and the ways in which they strive to mirror the grand purpose of the Seminar Program.

During the past four years I have realized that the Seminar Program strives to embody the meaning of a liberal arts education, aiming to equip students for entering the world prepared to have a variety of conversations and think in a way beyond the mere lens of their major. While my discipline of science has informed my

performance within the seminar classroom, obtaining the ability to evade a monomaniacal way of thinking has proved to be a great contribution to my life outside of the course. Due to the aforementioned characteristics of competitiveness and specialization required for my major, it is not uncommon for scientists and doctors to develop a close minded, highly logical way of thinking. Though this may be beneficial within the fields of science and medicine, this character trait can serve as a great detriment to everyday life, negatively affecting personal and professional relationships. It is for this reason, guided by the liberal arts mission of seminar, that I chose to minor in Theology and Religious Studies, a field completely opposite of my primary degree. Religion has always seemed to combat science; however, in choosing to study both, I have ensured that I obtain the ability to evaluate the interplay between a variety of social, cultural, scientific, and political topics as is practiced in every seminar setting at Saint Mary's. As a future physician, I do not wish to view my patients through a one-dimensional lens distilling them to a sequence of physiological symptoms that I am capable of treating. As a future physician, I wish to approach problems creatively, using my learned skills of critical thinking along with my ability to see the big picture to recognize the different religious, scientific, and social constructs that describe the person in front of me. The Seminar Program has provided me with skills necessary to combat close-mindedness and in turn, the ability to enter the world as a student capable of recognizing the humanity of those around me.

Although the interdisciplinarity between seminar and my chosen fields of study

have greatly contributed to my development as a human prepared to learn and lead in this world, it is important to note that these characteristics are not specific to me exclusively. Instead, the personal growth outlined in this essay is what I believe to be the goal of the Seminar Department as a whole. The reality is that seminar classrooms are composed of individuals ranging from a variety of different socioeconomic, ethnic, and academic backgrounds, but it is the marriage of these elements which give the setting its power. Individuals do not need to be science majors to understand why a certain character from a text, such as the highly logical and fact-based Mr. Gradgrind from Charles Dickens' *Hard Times*, is extremely flawed and only capable of seeing the world through a single lens. The overall themes are present, and it is our individual experiences and passions that enable seminar conversations to have meaning. At the end of the day, it is the shared experience of sitting around a table and attempting to answer the famous question of "Why was this text included in the seminar syllabus?" which encourages students to realize that we have more in common than we may originally think. For me, seminar is about all of these things, and in the famous words of Voltaire, reminds us that "...we must cultivate our garden" (Candide 120).

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Author's Note

I have always considered myself to be a very curious and introspective person. It was this curiosity, and my natural desire to learn and understand more about the world around me, that first caused me to realize my love for science. As a fourth year Biology major, I have found that while science has helped me along my journey to understand this crazy world we live in, the rigor and amount of knowledge that I am expected to learn often causes me to feel as if my life is imbalanced. Rather than spending time with friends and family, I have spent countless nights turning myself into a sponge, attempting to absorb as much information as possible; but with all things, there are limitations.

During my time at Saint Mary's, in addition to taking science classes, I have especially loved taking courses that are opposite my major. Whether it is Ethics, Religion, or seminar, these classes have provided me with a platform to share my introspective thoughts, either through conversation or writing essays, restoring some of the balance that I felt I was lacking. With this thought in mind, the goal of this essay sought to describe the ways that like science, seminar has also greatly impacted the way I view and understand the world around me. Although the connections between science and seminar were not immediately apparent when I first sat down to write this essay, I hope it does justice to each discipline, and encapsulates their significance in my development over the past four years. My name is Mac ArmstrongBrown, and seminar has helped me

get one step closer to becoming the person that I want to be; that is, someone who is multifaceted and more than a sponge.

I would like to thank Catherine Davalos for encouraging me to submit my essay and for supporting me in ways that extended beyond the seminar classroom. I would also like to thank Loisa Fenichell for helping me throughout the revision process and for advocating for my essay. Lastly, I would like to thank all of my past English and seminar professors, Katherine Field, Kathleen Tierney, Carl Guarneri, Molly Metherd, and Catherine Davalos for cultivating a safe environment in their classrooms, and for helping me become the writer I am today. I will carry the skills I learned in your classes for the rest of my life.

The Importance of Fostering an Inclusive Community within the Seminar Curriculum

Kristen Williams

In honor of St. John Baptist de la Salle, Saint Mary's has established five core principles that serve as foundations for the college and its beliefs. The five core principles are: Faith in the Presence of God, Concern for the Poor and Social Justice, Quality Education, Inclusive Community, and Respect for All Persons. When examining these principles, it is easy to see how they are all encompassed in social justice, which is a common theme throughout most, if not all, of the text we read in Seminar 104. Although each principle could be observed through this lens, I believe that the Inclusive Community provides a deeper understanding of what social justice is and how we can achieve it. The Inclusive Community principle states that Saint Mary's College strives to "celebrate diversity and welcome all members of our community" ("Lasallian Core Principles"). A major component of social justice is providing equal opportunities for everyone by advocating for one another, and to do

that, it is important to acknowledge and praise the differences that exist among us. The Concern for the Poor and Social Justice principle highlights this message of advocating, yet the Inclusive community principle takes it further. It is with the principle of Inclusive Community where we start to see this component of social justice come to life and it becomes further highlighted through the works of Audre Lorde and Gloria Anzaldua.

Inclusive community is a principle that self-described black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet Audre Lorde would champion for. In Lorde's essay "Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference," she aims to highlight the many forms of oppression that exist within our world and how our personal experiences can be used to dismantle oppression. Within her essay, Lorde focuses on feminism and how historically, this movement hasn't been inclusive stating, "too often, we pour the energy needed for recognizing and

exploring difference into pretending those differences are insurmountable barriers or that they do not exist at all” (Lorde 304). She draws attention to this idea called the mythical norm. In America, the mythical norm is defined as, “white, thin, male, young, heterosexual, Christian, and financially secure” (Lorde 304). Lorde connects this definition of the mythical norm to the experiences of women of color within the feminist movement. She highlights how the experiences of Black women differ from the experiences of white women, expressing that, “within the women’s movement today, white women focus upon their oppression as women and ignore differences of race, sexual preference, class, and age” (Lorde 304). By ignoring these differences, what is considered to be a sisterhood in the women’s movement actually doesn’t exist at all. Lorde labels this inability to recognize differences as, “the most serious threat to the mobilization of women’s joint power” (Lorde 305).

Connecting back to the Inclusive community principle, Lorde is touching on a very important skill that is required for the development of an inclusive community. Being able to acknowledge differences is a major aspect of this principle because it allows us to celebrate what makes us different while also making those that are different from us feel welcomed instead of excluded. Lorde mentions that, “by ignoring the past, we are encouraged to repeat its mistakes” (Lorde 305), therefore we need to ensure that we recognize our differences so we don’t make the same mistakes in the future. One way we can acknowledge the past is by implementing more texts that center minority voices within the curriculum. Lorde mentions that there is

an “absence of the experience of women of Color as a resource for women’s studies courses... [and] the literature of women of Color is seldom included in women’s literature courses and almost never in other literature courses, nor in women’s studies as a whole” (Lorde 305). Without the voices of women of color, the idea that oppression is experienced equally is perpetuated. An inclusive community that is understood through the lens of social justice includes perspectives of people of color and recognizes that oppression affects individuals, specifically women of color, differently. When thinking about the texts incorporated within the Seminar curriculum, it is fair to say that there is still room to grow in this aspect. Saint Mary’s does a good job of including certain perspectives from individuals like Martin Luther King Jr., but there is still a need for diverse voices that aren’t as recognizable. Taking a specialty course like Multicultural Thought shouldn’t be the only way to hear from these diverse perspectives. Instead, these stories should already be implemented into the course curriculum, especially if the colleges’ goal is to maintain an inclusive community. In Gloria Anzaldua’s essays, “How to Tame a Wild Tongue” and “La conciencia de la mestiza/ Towards a New Consciousness,” she examines how important it is to implement texts that center minority voices within school curriculums.

In these two essays, Anzaldua talks about her life as a Chicana woman and highlights the ways gender, sexuality, and ethnicity have informed her experiences. One of the stories she references in “How to Tame a Wild Tongue” is about her experience teaching high school English to Chicano students. In this class, she tried

to, “supplement the required texts with works by Chicanos, only to be reprimanded and forbidden to do so by the principal [who claimed] that [she] was supposed to teach “American” and “English literature” (Anzaldua 332). In response to this, she “swore her students to secrecy and slipped in Chicano short stories, poems, [and] a play” (Anzaldua 332). Her efforts to try and provide her Chicano students with works centered in perspectives they would be familiar with were shot down because they weren’t “American” enough, even though Chicano history is the history of Mexican Americans. To the principal, they weren’t considered American enough to be taught to the students. This reminded Anzaldua of her upbringing and how hard it was to find the perspectives of the people who shared her experiences. She turned to movies and music for representation since she was unable to get the history from schools. She reveals that the movies she watched gave her a sense of belonging, homecoming, and alienation, since “people who were to amount to something didn’t go to Mexican movies or balies, or tune their radios to bolero, rancherita, and corrido music” (Anzaldua 332). The people around Anzaldua encouraged her to attend school to make a life for herself, yet within the school curriculum, she wasn’t learning from the perspectives of other Chicana individuals. Instead, she was being taught a white-washed version of her community’s history.

In another story, she mentions the impact of assimilation, saying there was, “a sense of shame at being caught listening to [Chicano] music... [yet she could not] hide from [herself] the exhilaration [she] felt when [she] heard it” (Anzaldua 333). This

shows that she had to hide the parts of herself to integrate into a society that didn’t appreciate her and her culture. Connecting back to the importance of the Inclusive Community principle, Anzaldua’s stories further showcase a need for implementing narratives from diverse perspectives within the school curriculum, acknowledging differences, and celebrating diversity.

Anzaldua encountered many attempts to ignore and alter Chicano history through the education system, so there is a clear lack of knowledge surrounding the experiences of other cultures in that system. The Seminar curriculum at Saint Mary’s would benefit from the inclusion of more diverse stories because it is the easiest way to acknowledge the differences that exist. Through the exposure and acknowledgment of differing perspectives, we are able to advocate and provide equal opportunities for one another.

In the past, I have not paid much attention to the Lasallian Core Principles because they weren’t always talked about in my other courses, but Seminar 104 has made me realize how important they can be. At Saint Mary’s, although these principles are championed by the community, they aren’t always implemented, especially within the Seminar curriculum. This has been an issue with Seminar since the beginning, which is revealed by the lack of diversity within the reading list. Although some strides have been made, like the creation of Multicultural Thought, there are still some major problems today. There have been many incidents that happen in Seminar that would not be considered a celebration of diversity or promotion of a comfortable atmosphere for all. Although we can see in Lorde’s and Anzaldua’s work

that an inclusive community is important, there is so much more work to be done within the Seminar curriculum. While this is my last year at Saint Mary's and my last Seminar class, I hope that these principles, especially Inclusive Community, are discussed more within Seminar and that there is a larger effort to connect them to the readings. Like Lorde and Anzaldua mentioned, the biggest difference that can be made towards fostering an inclusive community, especially within the education system, is acknowledging and celebrating our differences.

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Author's Note

I am Kristen Williams, a fourth-year Child and Adolescent Psychology major. Throughout my college career, I have always been interested in social justice and the classes I have taken at Saint Mary's have only enhanced that interest. Whenever I was given writing assignments, I would gravitate towards texts that discussed social justice issues and centered minority perspectives. During the Seminar classes

I took, it was harder to do this since most of the readings were written by white men, which is a perspective I will never relate to. In my final seminar essay, I highlighted the inconsistencies within the seminar curriculum while advocating the use of the Lasallian Core Principles through the works of two minority women, Audre Lorde and Gloria Anzaldua. Although I will be graduating in May, I hope that Saint Mary's continues to make strides towards a more inclusive reading list and make an effort to connect the Lasallian Core Principles to the curriculum.

When I found out my essay was nominated for the Newman Award, I was in complete shock. To be fully transparent, I wrote this essay in a hurry, eager to shut off my laptop and enjoy winter break after spending countless hours on Zoom during the semester. Due to this, I would like to thank Professor Davalos for nominating my essay and my writing adviser at CWAC, Nicole Schaffer, who guided me through the process of revision. I would also like to thank Mark Barajas, Denise Witzig, Jeannine King, and David Quijada for providing safe spaces for me to fully explore the depths of being a black female psychology major. Taking classes with these professors was the highlight of my time at Saint Mary's and their classes continue to inspire my writing. Finally, I would like to thank all of my family members specifically, my two sisters. As the youngest sibling, my sisters have been incredible role models for me throughout my life. Thank you for always encouraging me to use my voice and pushing me past my comfort zone.

Two Are Not the Same

Sofia Guardado

Intersectionality is a major part of feminism, without it you are negating the space of other voices and experiences to be heard. Two large figures of feminist literature are Gloria Anzaldua and Virginia Woolf, specifically their texts “Speaking in Tongues” and *A Room of One’s Own*. Virginia Woolf’s *A Room of One’s Own* describes how women in fiction are treated differently than men reflecting the patriarchal realities of real life. While in Gloria Anzaldua’s “Speaking in Tongues,” she argues how women of color or US Third World Women as she coins, are largely ignored and not even acknowledged in by the dominant white fiction world. She calls to action women of color to write their own stories that reflect their lives. Although in *A Room of One’s Own* and “Speaking in Tongues,” both write about the experiences of female authors, Woolf’s essay addresses how the writing struggles for white women are not as multifaceted as women of color. Anzadula writes the

complete opposite stating how the conflicts of being a woman of color are not the same for each identifying woman. Both authors can agree on the struggles of being in a male dominated world, to the point where their audiences can relate with one another.

One way these two texts differ are how their audiences are not the same. Woolf highlights the differences between men and women stating, “Life for both sexes—and I look at them, shouldering their way along the pavement—is arduous, difficult, a perpetual struggle. It calls for gigantic courage and strength. More than anything, perhaps, creatures of illusion that we are, it calls for confidence in oneself” (Woolf 5). Woolf understands the way men treat women as second class citizens. Woolf’s word choice of “shouldering” suggests that white men and women are side by side, implying they are at the same level; both their work gets published. White women in the literary world are pushed off this pavement and

fight their way back on top the sidewalk, sharing the space with men. This might exist for white women, but the reality for women of color is that they have to create their own path. Anzaldua states in “Speaking in Tongues” on page 165, “My dear *hermanas*, the dangers we face as women writers of color are not the same as those of white women though we have many in common. We don’t have as much to lose - we never had any privileges.” The professional literary writing world for women of color does not exist. Third world women of color can write whatever they want and have no repercussions because there is no publishing house or critics to judge them. Their stories are not expressed for other audiences who do not share their lifestyle; their stories exist for themselves and those who relate to them. White women and women of color’s ideas, struggles, and audiences are not the same. White female writers have a chance to share their stories among men, they have a seat at the table in the literary world; third world women have to advocate for that seat.

Seeing other women’s bodies of work in the publishing industry gives representation to women; it paves a road for other women to identify their dreams and to follow them. It is a vehicle of change to see oneself represented. Woolf challenges this idea when she tells her audience to not give her a name. She states, “Call me Mary Beton, Mary Seton, Mary Carmichael or any other name you please—it is not a matter of importance” (Woolf 1). Woolf lists out these names to disguise herself. Woolf’s identity as a woman and writer, her name and importance blends in with the women previously mentioned. Calling her by Benton, Seton, and Carmichael allows her

to identify herself with these women - by becoming a group, nameless like the rest of women in literature. But this point of view can not be related to other women specifically, women of color. Women of color are already put in a box where they are grouped together, seen as the same. Stereotyped by their race, their voices are silenced. Anzaldua makes it a point to name out the voices of third world women of color writers stating:

“[...] none can stir the audience with their craft and truth saying as do Cherie Moraga (Chicana), Genny Lim (Asian American), and Luisah Teish (Black)... the loneliness of writing and the sense of powerlessness can be dispelled. We can walk among each other talking of our writing, reading to each other” (Anzaldua 172).

Anzaldua lists out the other names of women of color writers and purposefully distinguishes them from each other. These women give a voice to Chicana, Black, or Asian American women because Anzaldua realizes these stories are not the same nor more important than one another. The authors’ word choices of loneliness and sense of powerlessness describes the fears and insecurities women of color authors might encounter. Their experiences as women of color are not the same and listing out each race speaks to their distinct relations in the world. By calling women the same or telling readers to disregard one’s identity denies the lack of representation for other women. It places women as all the same, when in reality women are unique in all aspects of social, racial, gender, class, and economic standings.

Money and socioeconomic status are

some of the ways to succeed in our world. With money comes influence, power and an audience to write to. The two authors bring up different opinions on how writing is backed by financial means. Woolf writes that in order to write, “A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction” (Woolf 2). She further writes, “Fiction here is likely to contain more truth than fact” (Woolf 3). What if the fact is women of color don’t have the financial means to have their own room? This is especially hard when women of color are not paid enough or recognized to receive the same amount of money as other people (i.e. white men and women). Woolf alludes that the work women produce is not published because of their gender and even if it is they do not receive the same recognition as their male counterparts. While this is true for all women, there are many layers on why third world women authors cannot break through the literary world. Anzaldúa writes:

“Forget the room of one’s own - write in the kitchen, lock yourself up in the bathroom. Write on the bus or the welfare line, on the job or during meals, between sleeping or waking... No long stretches at the typewriter unless you’re wealthy or have a patron - you may not even own a typewriter” (Anzaldúa 170).

The room between each author is different. The room of every woman is not the same nor do they have the same circumstances. For some women of color, writing in a room is a privilege. They have to write and exist in spaces that are not as calm as a “room.” Writing in the welfare line, on the job, or in the bathroom are the realities of

the experiences of women of color because at times that is all they are afforded. The room is to be broken down where women as a collective can reach different audiences.

Lastly, Woolf and Anzaldúa both write texts that discuss why women should have a place in the literary field. Woolf might not be as inclusive in her writing, but she definitely starts the conversation of inclusion. Anzaldúa develops the idea and makes it a point for the inclusion of all women from different races, backgrounds, sexual orientations, and ethnicities to have a voice. Woolf advances the women literary movement by having the credibility and platform to speak of the injustices women face and Anzaldúa uses her highly established repertoire to point in the direction of works of unrepresented women in literature. Both speeches are love letters to audiences to engage and listen to what women have to say; that their works are valid and have potential. The authors add to the argument on how much work needs to be done for women to reach their full capability in the literary world.

Overall, both bodies of work write to the experiences of women, but from different contexts. Woolf composes from the perspective of being a white woman, while Anzaldúa is more inclusive addressing all women and women identifying people. Both authors create texts that are necessary for the inclusion of voices in the male dominated literature world. While the injustices that white women face in the literary world are valid in that they are silenced and often pushed aside, women of color face far more struggles such as a lack of tools, resources, and money to even be considered into the literary world. Thus,

intersectionality is so important to include in the discourse of what it means to be a woman as it offers different voices to be heard for the feminist movement.

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Author's Note

My name is Sofia Guardado, I'm a junior at Saint Mary's College of California majoring in Communication and minoring in Spanish and Women and Gender Studies. My assignment was to pick a story that I was currently reading in my seminar class and compare it to a previous reading in seminar. I chose these two pieces because both letters impacted me in such a profound way. I read *A Room of One's Own* as a freshman in college, and that was the first time I had been exposed to talking about feminist literature in an academic setting. *Speaking in Tongues* continued that discourse, but from a Latina's perspective; something I could relate to. It was important to me to highlight the intersectionality of feminism and how both these pieces act as a call to action for women! I worked with an editor from Saint Mary's Writing Center (thank you Sophie!) to revise and perfect my essay.

First off, I want to thank my professor Cathy Davalos, who saw me, encouraged, and pushed my critical thinking brain. For exposing me to writers like Gloria

Anzaldua, who so perfectly articulated my thoughts, wants, and overall validated my experiences. My classmates in our seminar class who created a safe space to share our ideas and where we had mind-blowing, deep conversations that I will never forget. And lastly to my parents, *gracias por tu esfuerzo, tu constantemente apoyo que me da ánimo para seguir adelante, los amo. Daisy, I love you and you're the best sister I could ever ask for!*

Economics, Environment, and Empathy

Sophia Warren

My whole life, I have been privileged with a well-rounded and multifaceted education. I have found insurmountable value in understanding multiple perspectives before moving forward with a solution or deepening a relationship. During my time at Saint Mary's, I have been pushed by my major studies and core requirements but further challenged by seminar classes to understand the tangible and plentiful ways we can seek justice in our world. My experiences in Seminar have enhanced my education of economics and environmental science by pushing me to consider all voices in problem solving and emphasizing the need for empathy and humanity in changemaking.

In recent years, my seminar classes have supplemented explorations within my major to help me find just and equitable solutions to our society's darkest problems. The first two seminars were instrumental to understanding the written and oral skill objectives required for Socratic-style

discussion. During my time in these early seminars, I became a better listener, mediator, and communicator. However, my understanding of the additional objectives, or Habits of Mind, of the Seminar Program — critical thinking and shared inquiry — grew exponentially through my third and fourth year seminar courses. My third seminar, Multicultural Thought, included texts incorporating diverse identities and exploring inequality as experienced by minorities in Northern California. My fourth and final seminar focused on Latinidad authors, artists, and perspectives. In this paper, I will be reintroducing the most illuminating texts to my personal and academic growth in the final two courses of the Saint Mary's College collegiate seminar program. I will be discussing the texts *Living Outside the Box* by Pandora Leong and *Parable of the Sower* by Octavia Butler from Multicultural Thought as well as *The Miner's Canary* by Gerald Torres from the Latinidad seminar course. These texts have

enriched my beliefs, learning, and actions in and out of the classroom.

My major is Economics with a concentration in Sustainability Studies. It splits economics and environmental science in an effort to dive into the causes of the largest climate concerns and injustices set up by our current economic systems. Many believe this to be a contrasting set of studies, but their relationship reflects the architecture of current western society and the causes of oppression in our communities. All decisions of our capitalist society are a matter of cost and benefit, maximizing individual profit in the short-term while ignoring the negative externalities of production and growth. On the contrary, environmental science analyzes the intricate and ancient systems that make our earth both plentiful and fragile, emphasizing the importance of long-term sustainability and protection of our futures. I hesitated to enter this major because I didn't value the sentiment of profit maximizing economics, but I came to understand that I needed to know more about the economic systems in which injustices are built in order to conquer them. My last two seminar classes as well as an Environmental Justice class last spring helped me better grasp the role of social justice within economic studies. Given this understanding, I wanted to continue my studies on how the environment and economics played a role in injustice, racism, and identity.

Both economics and environmental science are factual, objective studies, traditionally leaving little room for imagination. However, when choosing my path, I noticed this interdisciplinary degree plan as having potential for more exploration. The course list is divergent, with the possibility

of taking classes from almost any department. I am prone to overextending my passions, so the myriad of politics, seminar, JCL, ethnic studies, and philosophy classes offered under my major assured me of the well-rounded education I desired. These many courses, as well as learning economic and conventional environmental science, have led me to better understand the depths to which our society is structured around individual certainty/control, economic success, and resource exploitation. My seminars led me to combine this knowledge with the greater human experience, inspiring my passion for the Environmental Justice field. My seminar classes have been invaluable to my future in this line of work, as I will continue to engage in shared inquiry with those who have different lives, privileges, and adversities than I.

Seminar deliberately included the essence of humanity that I was longing for in my academic development. They challenged theories of economics and science to bring into question ethics and longevity. This was highlighted in *Parable of the Sower* by Octavia Butler, where the main character, Lauren, suffered from extreme, crippling empathy. This science fiction novel challenged the unjust and individualist future we are headed toward, one where we are void of empathy for each other's suffering. Lauren says, "'But if everyone could feel everyone else's pain, who would torture?'" (Butler 115). *Parable of the Sower* warns us of the danger of "othering" people, which in the future can lead to disintegration of human connection. While reading this text my third year, I was also learning the ways in which our current economic system is already "othering." We

live in a society where individual success trumps community success, and we have selfishly ignored the pain of our communities. This text made me question who it is that gains from economic growth and resource exploitation. In the words of Pandora Leong, in *Living Outside the Box*, “You can’t pull yourself up by the bootstraps if you don’t have shoes” (Leong 348). Many groups in America are barely offered a position in the race toward economic success, and even if they are, the starting line is set paces behind privileged middle/upper-class, white Americans. Environmental Justice seeks to find the root cause of unjust externalities of pollution, economic exploitation, and environmental degradation to create both long and short term solutions. Oftentimes, people who are most discriminated against or suffer most from these injustices are the ones with the most clarity on how to change, how to move forward. However, these are the people with the least amount of voice in the political and policy-making sphere. These realities cause us to question our power hierarchies, spoken about often in *The Miner’s Canary*. While exploring race primarily, Torres dives into how we can deconstruct the zero-sum, conventional systems of power, to include diverse voices, representation, and genuine well-rounded support for change by minority action. She says, “In short, there are ‘winners’; there is a bias in the rules that defines ‘winning’; and there is a narrative that justifies both the winners and the rules by which they win” (Torres 112). This text asks us to redefine what it means to be a “winner.” Where traditionally we praise individual success, we need to instead promote removal of personal leverage by embracing the well-being of

whole communities and the land we live on. All of these texts work to elucidate the inequalities ground into our daily lives and the courage it takes to break those habits of injustice.

This is where we are called to change the architecture of our society and to end the perpetuated injustices that cycle through our communities. The powerful authors we read in seminars and the topics I have studied in my major have taught me to recognize the immense diversity within our humanity and environment. They have called us to reimagine the system we live in and how to include all voices. In the words of Pandora Leong, “To define myself is to become visible and redefine the box—or throw it away altogether” (353). I am here to imagine and work for a local and global community that revolts against our current order to make way for the representation of people who have suffered the consequences of our haphazard ecological damage and white powered, patriarchal decision making. We can only do this by learning and listening from experiences of others.

We are responsible for our agency and how we use our knowledge to break the mold of our toxic societal tendencies to create a more united and boundless universe. Our minds are like growing seeds, fed by education and springing up to uproot the structures of hate and ignorance society has created. My interdisciplinary vision and experiences have taught me to embrace many understandings of the world. Each day, I am learning more about the nuanced relationships between human empathy, economic power, and the implications of their patterns in environmental and social justice. I have found

my identity in the capability of the human mind and heart to overcome societal shortcomings through the culmination of my college courses. The relationships I have built in shared inquiry, as well as my pursuit to illuminate voices of undervalued community members, have shown me the importance of humility and empathy while seeking to change this world for the better. I am grateful for the opportunity I have had in college to learn and implement these lessons and look forward to digging deeper as I continue on.

skills learned at Saint Mary's to deepen my conversations, impact, and actions toward a more just world.

I would like to thank my seminar mentors, Catherine Davalos and David Quijada, for their choices to empower underrepresented authors. I would also like to thank those who helped me in my personal growth throughout this process. The Writing Center for helping me gather my thoughts, and my many seminar peers over the years who have taught me there are always conversations worth having.

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Author's Note

This piece is a reflection on how my choice in major is related to the seminar program. As I leave college, I am grateful for this opportunity to tie together the experiences I have had grappling with injustice in seminars to what I have learned in my economics and environmental science studies. My path at Saint Mary's has brought me closer to myself, my passions, and my community. I will forever use the

“Who Really Cares?”: Lasallian Principles and the Seminar Experience

Alyssa Plummer

In Seminar 146 Common Good: Latinidad Remix we had multiple discussions surrounding the experiences of people from different class and racial backgrounds. Due to large income inequality and systemic racism, many Americans grow up experiencing drastically contrasting lives. Throughout our seminar discussions we have considered what it means to have privilege and how one can use their privilege to help others, rather than harm them. As a Lasallian school, Saint Mary's College of California claims to teach their students based on Lasallian teachings. One of the Lasallian Core Principles is concern for the poor and social justice. The tenets state Lasallians are in solidarity with the poor and advocate for those suffering from injustices. Within our seminar class, we have been advocating for larger discussions and change within the sphere of racial injustice, with an added lens of class struggle. In the works *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter* and *Real Women Have*

Curves, the idea of class and race struggle within the Mexican-American experience is explored. In these two works, characters with privilege ignore the true call to help those in need, and instead act in a performative manner.

The curriculum in Seminar 146 consisted of many different mediums including movies, visual and performing arts, poetry, and written work which allowed us to explore more diverse struggles than any previous seminar. One example from literature of class and race difference is in the book *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter*. Throughout the book, the divide between class and race is made very clear in many places. One such instance is in the contrast between the houses Amá cleans versus the house she lives in. Amá, the main character's mother, cleans houses for a living. As the main character Julia describes them, they are the houses of rich white people, doctors, lawyers, and professors in a different neighborhood from

where Julia lives in Chicago. One day Amá takes Julia with her to clean some and although the houses look nice on the outside, they are still dirty within. Julia complains, “Amá says we should begin with the most disgusting parts of the house...the bathroom is covered with piles of wet clothes and towels. The sink is smeared with gobs of toothpaste and little black hairs. Gross” (Sánchez 100). The home of the rich is described as unkempt, the tenants not caring because they have hired someone else to deal with their messes. In the book, we also see Julia describe her own house’s dirty areas describing what happens coming back from her Quinceañera: “We do the cockroach dance which consists of stomping all over the kitchen floor because they have a party whenever we’re not home. This time I have to lift my dress and kill them with my new white shoes” (Sánchez 161).

The new white shoes are juxtaposed onto killing filth, cockroaches. Julia comes home from the party, where her parents have spent a lot of money, to her daily reality of a bug infested apartment. Unlike the home of the rich, which were dirty because they were too lazy to clean a mess they created, Julia’s house is dirty because of her situation. As we see throughout the rest of the book, Amá cleans the house constantly, yet the roaches always come back. Julia’s family is at a disadvantage that they cannot fix without help from a landlord. When talking about the housing difference between the white rich neighborhood and the small apartments Julia, and many other Mexican-Americans live in, we can see an example of inequality in the way the poor and nonwhite characters live their lives. Those who hire Amá do not exhibit Lasallian principles such as

caring for the poor as they make no effort to respect Amá as a human being, only seeing her as someone beneath them to clean up after their messes. The divide between the neighborhoods of Julia and the white people her mother works for are a clear example of the class and race struggle presented throughout the text. Those with privilege lack solidarity with the poor, as demonstrated by their nonchalant attitude towards picking up after themselves in any way that might benefit those who work for them.

A second example from this text concerning racial and class inequality is in Julia’s relationship with her rich, white boyfriend Connor. Julia herself is in love with the idea of Connor more than the actual person: “I look at Connor, and a wave of sadness washes over me. I miss him, even though he’s sitting right in front of me...I get nostalgic before I have to” (Sanchez 359). The idea of a boyfriend who cares for Julia is something she is attached to, but as a person, Connor does not actively work toward fighting inequality and deep down Julia knows. Her acknowledgement of missing him demonstrates her longing for someone who is present for her in all areas of her life, even though he does not live up to this role. His care for her does not extend to caring about her struggles due to her disenfranchised position in society.

Julia may be struggling to understand this fully, but her friends around her are not. One friend Lorena mentions that Connor cannot possibly see Julia as equal, because of their economic and racial differences: “Okay, I get it, but do you actually believe he doesn’t look down on us? You don’t think he sees us without thinking we’re ghetto? I just don’t want you to get

hurt. You can tell right away that he's rich" (Sánchez 307). Lorena fears that Julia is going to suffer; she thinks no matter what Connor will not be able to understand Julia's life nor will he be able to overcome his prejudice. Lorena believes that he cannot understand the lives of her and Julia because, as she puts it, he is "rich" while they are "ghetto" referring to both their class and race differences. Ghetto is contextualized to mean a poor part of the city where minorities live. It makes the reader question whether Connor has ever actually done anything to support Julia. Julia actively tries to defend Connor remarking, "He's not like that though," but it is made apparent that he should be expected to make more of an effort to understand her life and confront his biases (Sánchez 307). Julia has no further rebuttal for why he is not who Lorena describes. Throughout the book, Connor does not act to help Julia confront her own struggles; he sits by and has fun with her while ignoring his ability to help advocate for her. He is another example of a character not acting in a Lasalian manner when it comes to helping the disenfranchised in society.

The class and race struggle is equally important in the movie *Real Women Have Curves*. In this movie, the life of Latina high schooler Ana is told through her perspective. Ana quits her job working at a fast-food restaurant and her mother and sister recruit her to work for her sister's dress making business. This business consists of Latina women sewing dresses for a larger retail store, Bloomingdale's. In this facet of the movie, the commentary on systemic class and race issues is made apparent. The eldest daughter Estela is struggling to pay her bills. She needs to

produce more dresses to be paid but cannot with the few people she has working. Turning to her family for guidance, her mother suggests Ana work for free. Once she gets to the dress making factory, Ana comes to many realizations. She realizes how hard the work is, and she discovers the inequality her sister and the others are facing: "This is dirty work. This is a sweatshop. Don't you get it? You're all cheap labor for Bloomingdale's! They want cheap labor" (*Real Women Have Curves*). The amount the workers are compensated is not enough to sustain the business or pay for their own basic needs. Ana sees these beautiful dresses being made, for much less than they are sold for, and yet Estela is still struggling to pay the bills. Those in a position of power at Bloomingdale's are taking advantage of the workers with a lower-class position in society. Those who are in a better economic position, the bosses at Bloomingdale's, lack care for the poor.

In hopes of receiving help from someone who could advocate for Estela, Ana decides to meet with the white female boss who pays Estela. Going to Bloomingdale's, Ana explains the situation to the boss asking for an advance to pay the bills. Ana expresses her frustration in her sister's reality. In response she is scolded:

And who are you? Estela knows the rules. I can't pay advances. I went out on a limb to hire you in the first place because I believe a woman like me should help one like you but I can only help you so much. You have to help yourself and meet your deadlines. You have until the end of the month, when the order has to be shipped. You have 10 days, honey. 10 days, that's it. (*Real Women Have Curves*)

The boss is an example of someone who is not actually acting in the way they say they are. This woman believes herself to be helping those with a lower economic status: “a woman like me should help one like you” because she has given Estela and the others a job. In reality, she has no compassion and is not going out of her way to use her privilege to help those with less privilege. In her words we can see that she still views herself as better than Estela and Ana. She believes that they are lazy, not disenfranchised by society. The woman from Bloomingdale’s has made no effort to change her inherent bias, or gone out of her way to help those who need it; she instead blames them for their misfortune without a true understanding of their lives. The white woman from Bloomingdale’s is in a position of power and therefore claims she will help Estela who is not, but she does not help her, it is performative. With this movie, our class dialogue consisted of a discussion of what it looks like to be viewed by society as “cheap labor” and who usually is given those positions in society. The woman from Bloomingdale’s sounds as though she is acting on Lasallian principles, working in solidarity with the poor and those suffering from injustice, but is not. She acts as though giving them a job for not enough pay is her helping them, despite the fact she is profiting 100-fold on their labor. Although nothing the woman says is overtly racist, the micro-aggression of calling the Latina workers lazy is a common micro-aggression that this woman uses. This character does not have an understanding of how to help those who are disenfranchised and does not exhibit Lasallian core values.

In these works, and in our Seminar 146

discussions, we discussed class and race issues and confronted our own privilege. In discussing our privilege, we recognized ways we could work towards helping those suffering from economic disenfranchisement and racial injustice. We discussed ways in which the characters could have followed Lasallian principles by caring for the poor and acting to fight racism. However, many of these characters make different choices. Those who employ Amá do not make an effort to ease her job in the book *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter*. Connor is another such example, not ever being actively present in Julia’s life other than to spend time with her. An instance from *Real Women Have Curves* is the woman at Bloomingdale’s who said she wanted to help Estela but would not help her pay her bills. These examples of ways in which actions can be performative remind me of my previous seminar experiences. Within my three other years of Seminar, I have struggled to see discussions surrounding helping the disenfranchised happening. What disheartens me the most is our school claims to work towards these principles in seminar, but I have only seen it happen in Seminar 146, the one I exchanged in place of the “regular” one. In previous seminars I did have many essays in which I chose to write about topics that fall under Lasallian Principles, but the discussions in general became stuck in the discussion of the language, power without any discussion of race, gender or sexuality, and multiple arguments about how “women are too emotional.” I would like to challenge the Seminar department and our school to do better as I know other students have. Situations in the Seminar 146 works demonstrate clear examples of

proclaiming one will work for the poor and those suffering from injustice and then not following through. Similarly, the school seems to have a problem structuring the Seminar curriculum to facilitate discussions that actually work toward the principles they preach.

Works Cited

Real Women Have Curves. Directed by Patricia Cardoso, written by Joséfina Lopez, HBO Films, 2002.

Sánchez, Erika L. *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter*. New York: Random House Children's Books, 2017. Print.

Author's Note

After writing four semesters' worth of Seminar papers, having the opportunity to write a different variety of paper as my second part of the senior seminar capstone allowed me to reflect on what I have learned from the seminar. I chose to take the alternate Seminar 146 based on work written by Latine authors because I wanted a change from the works I had engaged with previously. From the first day, my classmates and I formed a space in which we all felt comfortable for who we were. This allowed us to have deep, honest, thoughtful conversations. I was able to not only comprehend the work I was reading, but also question the work and the world around me. Thanks to my classmates and my professor, Cathy Davalos, it was the most engaging seminar I have ever participated in.

Upon writing my final paper and looking at the Lasallian Values, I found many parallels within the contents of Seminar

146, but I also began to question how I might have written this essay had I needed to draw on experience from my previous seminars. In a time where we are all being called to act in our personal lives to stand against class and racial prejudice, I wanted to analyze how our school's Seminar Program, a pride of the school, was or was not doing their part. One of my favorite aspects of Saint Mary's is the way the school has allowed me to learn and grow as a person with multiple interests as a woman in Biochemistry and Dance, who still has opportunities to grow in other ways taking core curriculum. A place this falls short is within the Seminar curriculum, which lacks diverse perspectives within the first three years. I am earnestly hopeful the school is listening and working toward a positive change.

Thank you to Cathy for encouraging me to take this alternate seminar class, for nominating my writing, and for all the endless support over my past four years working with you. Thank you to Sara Mameesh at CWAC for all of your help allowing me to clarify my thoughts and present an essay that is deeply important and honest. Finally, thank you to my Fall 2020 Seminar 146 classmates. You have pushed me to continue higher levels of discourse and to truly care.

Call for Submissions

WRITING: We welcome submissions in any genre of prose writing produced as part of an undergraduate class in any discipline.

Please submit in Microsoft Word or Google Doc format via email to cwac@stmarys-ca.edu with “The Undergraduate Spectrum Writing Submission” in the subject line, or in person to the Center for Writing Across the Curriculum (De La Salle 110). Submissions should include the student author’s name, the professor’s name, the course number, semester, and year, and any associated prompt or instructions. Writing may be submitted by student authors or professors by Dec. 31, 2021.

VISUAL ART: We welcome submissions of original, 2D student artwork – photography, painting, drawing, printmaking, digital, or mixed media – through Dec. 31, 2021.

Works inspired by Collegiate Seminar texts are encouraged, but not required. Selections will be made by a jury of SMC faculty, staff, and students. Submissions in JPG, PDF, or PSD file formats with minimum specifications of 5” x 7” at 300 dpi resolution should be shared via Google Drive with cwac@stmarys-ca.edu. Please send with message: “The Undergraduate Spectrum Art Submission.”

