crossings.

an undergraduate arts journal

Volume Four

Land Acknowledgement

The Organization for Arts Students and Interdisciplinary Studies, Crossings, and The University of Alberta respectfully acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 6 territory, a traditional gathering place for diverse Indigenous peoples including the Cree, Blackfoot, Métis, Naktoo Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, Ojibway/Saulteaux/Anishinaabe, Inuit, and many others whose histories, languages, and cultures continue to influence our vibrant community.





Photographer: Jienan Chen



Editorial Team



Photographer: Arthur Macatangay



Jayden Blumhagen
Editor-in-Chief



Peilin Wu
Art & Design Director



Nathan Perez
Editorial Director



Abigail Cullen
Media & Communications Director



Jasleen Mahindru
Senior Copyeditor



Feven Worede
Social Sciences Section Editor



Logan West
Humanities Section Editor



Cameron Kennedy
Fine Arts Section Editor

Photographer: Arthur Macatangay



Jayden Blumhagen

I am thrilled to welcome you to the fourth volume of Crossings: An Undergraduate Arts Journal. As the peer-reviewed journal for the Faculty of Arts undergraduates, we take pride in showcasing the best written and visual works spanning the fine arts, humanities, and social sciences at the University of Alberta. Despite coming into this role a little late, I have witnessed an inspiring display of creativity and intellectual rigour. The continued growth and development of our faculty are sources of immense pride for me. Arts students have consistently shown remarkable resilience in adapting to various challenges and opportunities. This resilience was particularly evident this year with the closure of the Humanities Centre, a building that was not only the heart of the Arts community on campus but also a long-standing home to OASIS.

The successful completion of this volume is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our exceptional editorial board and review team. I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to our art and design director, Peilin Wu, along with our junior graphic designer, Vira Novoselska, who were the creative force behind Crossings. The invaluable contributions of our Section Editors, Cameron Kennedy, Logan West, and Feven Worede, in leading a large review team and refining the work in this volume cannot be overstated. Jasleen Mahindru, our senior copyeditor, guided the copyediting team through extensive revisions to ensure the highest quality of each submission. Our communications director, Abigail Cullen, played a crucial role in promoting the Crossings name through effective social media management. Lastly, my deepest gratitude goes to Nathan Perez, our editorial director, who worked tirelessly alongside me to ensure a smooth execution of this year's processes.

Working alongside such experienced and passionate peer review and copyediting teams in creating this volume has been an absolute honour. Our peer review and copyediting teams, consisting of 21 individuals, encompass each discipline within the Faculty of Arts. Their expertise in their respective fields and enthusiasm for this project have been vital to the success of this volume. I extend my deepest appreciation to each and every one of them for their significant contributions to Crossings and the Arts community as a whole.

I would like to express my greatest appreciation to my colleagues at OASIS: Hussain Alhussainy, Layla Alhussainy, Prishna Sweeney, Alex Ballos, and Nathan Perez. Their support, assistance, and enthusiasm have been invaluable in producing this volume. I cannot wait to see what our incoming OASIS executives will achieve not only with the Crossings journal but with the organization as a whole.

On that note, I now turn to Dr. Christine Brown, who has provided much guidance and support to Crossings since its creation. Her contributions have been instrumental in promoting undergraduate research and fostering a sense of community within the Arts.

To all of our readers, I extend my heartfelt gratitude for your continued support and engagement. As you delve into the fourth volume of Crossings, I hope you find it as enriching to read as it was for us to create.

Jayden Blumhagen
Editor in Chief



Hussain Alhussainy

As the OASIS president for this academic year, I have had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the resilience and dedication of our arts students. Despite the unexpected shutdown of the Humanities Centre and the subsequent challenges that came with relocating the OASIS office, our community has not only persevered but thrived.

In the face of these obstacles, Jayden and the Crossings team have pressed on, culminating in the release of the fourth edition of the journal. This accomplishment underscores our unwavering commitment to showcasing the talents of art students within the community and highlighting the bright minds and great research conducted within the faculty.

Our students have shown exceptional work ethic and made significant contributions, working diligently to advance their education and enhance the academic and social fabric of our faculty. Through active engagement with OASIS initiatives and participation in a multitude of activities, they have played a pivotal role in shaping our faculty into the best it can be.

Your dedication and contributions have not gone unnoticed, and I am deeply humbled to have served as your OASIS president this academic year.

Hussain Alhussainy
OASIS president



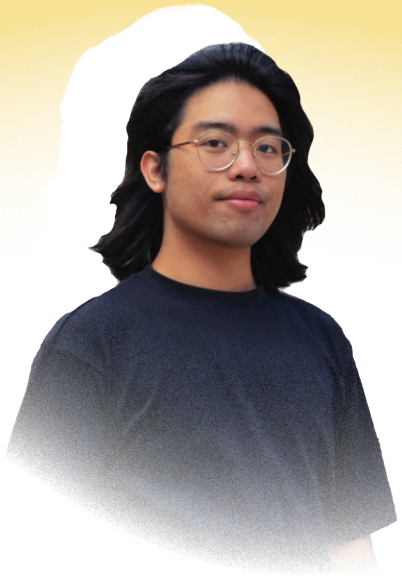
Dr. Christine Brown

As the journal's academic sponsor, I congratulate the editorial team on producing this excellent fourth volume of Crossings. I continue to be impressed by the quality of the work presented and congratulate all the authors whose work appears in this volume. It has been my pleasure to support the editorial team in their efforts to present a highly interdisciplinary collection of undergraduate research.

The University of Alberta Library provides crucial support and development opportunities for student editors. My Open Publishing & Digitization Service colleagues provide training, development, and invaluable technical support to Crossings and other student journals, facilitating their success. This issue exemplifies the breadth and depth of learning the editorial team has undertaken. Team members have invested considerable effort in developing their skills in recruiting team members, seeking submissions, editing, layout design, and the collaboration required to produce this new issue. Their commitment to developing and promoting Crossings demonstrates the impact that student-led journals can have on the academic culture at the University of Alberta.

The editorial team has worked diligently to ensure this volume reflects the diversity and breadth of student research in the Faculty of Arts. This volume contains 25 undergraduate essays covering the fine arts, humanities, and social sciences. The quality of thought and research undertaken reflects the excellence that the Faculty of Arts instills in its students. As you read the papers in this new volume, you will find much food for thought.

Dr. Christine Brown
Head, Faculty Engagement (Social Sciences & Humanities)
Crossings, Academic Sponsor





Nathan Perez

I am pleased to be the inaugural Editorial Director for Crossings. My role was working closely with the Editor-in-Chief in an administrative capacity. I have had the pleasure of seeing the hard work of the editorial team, facilitating communication in the Art and Design team, and preparing necessary documents for the Editorial Board's meetings. Throughout this journey, I was also fortunate enough to meet many wonderful student-applicants by sitting at interviews on behalf of the Editor-in-Chief and getting to know them and their many talents.

A considerable thanks goes to Jayden Blumhagen, this year's Editor-in-Chief, for the immense work she has put in the fourth edition of Crossings and for the creation of this position. Upon taking the role of the VP Academic, Jayden immediately jumped straight to work in ensuring the success of Crossings and its team; her dedication in elevating students' achievements is truly reflected in the quality of this journal. A special thanks to the OASIS Executive team: Hussain Alhussainy, Layla Alhussainy, Alex Ballos, Prishna Sweeney and Jayden Blumhagen; to Peilin Wu, our Art and Design Director, Abigail Cullen, Communications, and Arthur Macatangay, our team photographer.

It has been a real pleasure being Andrea Sachs to Ms. Blumhagen's Miranda Priestly at the Arts' very own Runway.

Nathan Perez
Editorial Director

Abigail Cullen

Crossings Undergraduate Journal exists in a unique space as an accumulation of the diverse, interdisciplinary and meaningful voices of undergraduate academic research. As this year's Media and Communications Director and my first year on the Crossings team, I am grateful to have been a part of this project, and am excited to bear witness to the discourse which springs from the insightful works published here. This year has allowed me to experience Crossings' champions and cheerleaders in their collaboration, making this journal the best it can be. The effort and love poured into this year's journal has been a constant reminder that the arts, and all contained within it, is fluid and collaborative at every turn.

This year, Crossings has begun to grow our presence on social media. You can now find us and hear about upcoming opportunities on Instagram, X, and Threads! This year has marked a year of growth as Crossings has also discussed creating a more varied social media feed, establishing colour schemes, and more. In the future, it is my hope that Crossing's identity and presence will continue to be discussed and developed to fully represent the hard work of undergraduate art students!

Abigail Cullen
Media and Communications Director



Peilin Wu

As this year's Art and Design Director for Crossings: An Undergraduate Arts Journal, I'm dedicated to shaping our creative vision and building an inclusive environment where diverse voices can thrive. With a focus on accessibility and intersectionality, I aim to amplify the voices of emerging artists while celebrating the rich variety of artistic expression.

Our design direction this year is centered around the themes of Forming, Building, and Connecting. Our cover, featuring a collage of student work, serves as a visual representation of the landscapes we're forming and the connections we're building within our community.

I want to express my heartfelt appreciation to Vira Novoselska, our Junior Graphic Designer, for her exceptional work in assisting with the final publication of the journal. Through our discussions and shared creative ideas, we are honoured to publish and present to you this year's edition.

At Crossings, we're all about embracing exploration and adventure. As Art and Design Director, I invite you to join us as we navigate these pathways of creativity together. Let's discover the incredible works waiting to be uncovered on a journey of artistic discovery unlike any other.

Peilin Wu
Art & Design Director

Vira Novoselska
Junior Graphic Designer


FINE



Artist: Leila Zolfalipour



Cameron Kennedy

Fine Arts

Section Editor

Being a drama student, I have often felt a disconnect between myself and those in more "academic" programs. I would liken it to the disconnect often felt between arts and STEM students, the "what do you do in your classes?". The arts is such a broad and diverse faculty that it can be hard to create a space that is for everyone in it. I have been an elected member of OASIS since before crossings was created, or even a concept that was being tossed around as something we could do. Before this year I had mostly watched from the wings as I was not directly involved in the production or publication of the journal (but my name is still in the back of every edition as a fine arts councillor, you can check), but I always felt a sense of pride toward the fine arts section, these were people I knew personally and had classes with, having articles published in a peer reviewed journal. I had let the thoughts of others about my degree and program internalise, thinking of the work I was doing as less "academic" or "real", but I was certainly wrong in those feelings, the work done in the fine arts is not lesser than anywhere else, and it's important that we are able to display this work to those outside of our immediate community. I would like to give an enormous thanks to the authors, peer reviewers, and copyeditors who have made this section possible. You have all done the heavy lifting throughout this process and I appreciate how you have all worked with my hectic and ever-changing schedule. I would also like to thank this year's editorial team for being supportive and helping to keep all of us accountable, especially our editor-in-chief who had to come into the position late and get everything done on a much more condensed schedule. Lastly I'd like to thank you, the reader, for supporting us in our efforts to continue having this space for arts students to be able to have their work published.



Artist: Corbin Hycha

She Creates, She Controls, She Commands Respect: Feminist Readings of Women as Deities in Classic and Modern Rock

Brooklyn Murphy

ABSTRACT: This essay examines how women have been represented in Western rock music through their role as deities. In particular, it aims to understand how these portrayals can reflect the evolution of feminist thought and theory in the Western world. A comparative analysis of Rhiannon by Fleetwood Mac and Lazaretto by Jack White aims to demonstrate how these depictions connect with and respond to Western feminist thought from the second wave of feminism in the 1970s to the fourth wave of feminism in the 2010s. Along with musical characteristics, the analysis of these portrayals focuses on spatial and temporal factors regarding the relation of the deity to the narrator while incorporating discussions of systemic issues that have impacted women in both the music industry and general Western society.

It would be an understatement to claim that feminism and Rock & Roll have a complicated history. Women have customarily been barred from the genre through both male-dominated management creating a marketable image of the ideal female musician (characterized by submissive, conventionally attractive, emotion-driven women using the voice as their primary instrument) and the often sexist portrayal of women in the lyrics of rock songs themselves; a topic which has been debated since the birth of the genre (Frith and McRobbie 321). However, the portrayal of women in both classic and modern rock music can serve as a reflection for how feminism has evolved. One key way feminism has informed Rock music is through the genre's portrayal of women as deities. Analyzing "Rhiannon" by Fleetwood Mac and "Lazaretto" by Jack White demonstrates that the portrayal of women as deities is key to understanding how the genre incorporates and responds to continuously evolving feminist beliefs and practices; from the second wave of feminism occurring in the 1970s, to the ongoing fourth wave of feminism. This paper will engage with these ideas by analyzing the tone of the relationship between the deity and the narrator inhabiting the profane realm, and how physicality (or the lack thereof) is portrayed in relation to the deity. This can help put into context the evolution of critical concepts, such as independence in second wave feminism, or physical power in fourth wave feminism. These analytical tools can serve an important purpose for scholars in women's studies and musicology, as they provide historical context to music typically deemed trivial pieces of pop culture.

"Rhiannon" by Fleetwood Mac

In her discussion of Emo music and culture, Jessica Hopper talks about the genre's female-focused lyrics as putting women "on a pedestal, on [their] backs. Muses at best. Cum rags or invisible at worst" (1). While one could argue that the portrayal of women as deities lacks any affiliation with women in the profane world, this trope portrays the women as many of these attributes simultaneously. This quote highlights the way that this portrayal has traditionally worked in songs such as "Rhiannon" by Fleetwood Mac, with the women's agency being removed through her discussion in relation to a male in the profane world. The most damning part is that the figure of the deity is, quite literally, invisible in the profane world that is inhabited by the person she is being discussed in relation to. As Hopper puts it, "Their lives, their day-to-day does not exist, women do not get colored in" (1).

In *"Rhiannon"*, it can be argued that the woman discussed in the song is not a deity at all. Instead, she is perceived as one from the narrator's point of view. In order for a being to be classified as deity, they must hold both omnipotence (an all-powerful presence) and omnibenevolence (the ability to be a perfect being) (Trigger). The narrator of the song is responsible for ascribing these traits to the woman through lyrics such as "She rules her life like a bird in flight" (Mac 2:00-2:02), and "She is like a cat in the dark/And then she is to darkness" (Mac 0:46-0:51). The third person pronouns both contributes to these traits, but also to an ambiguity and mystery felt by the narrator about her presence. Instead of a literal, life-like deity (such as an earth mother tasked with protecting nature in the profane realm, or a deity associated with an institutionalized religion) the song's deity is shown to be an object of temptation, with the narrator emphasizing her allure through open ended questions. This is most clear when the narrator asks, "And wouldn't you love to love her?" (Mac 0:19- 0:21) and "And who will be her lover?" (Mac 0:27-0:29).

This portrayal of a deity as a temptress figure is reflected upon in Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*. Despite being published in 1949, it is credited with kickstarting the rise of second wave feminism (beginning in the 1960s and continuing into the 1970s) which focused on women's independence from male power (Spencer). In the book, de Beauvoir uses ancient myths to highlight the historical association of women with evil, resulting in women being othered and discriminated against. One example credited in *The Second Sex* is the Ancient Greek myth of Pandora. After being given a jar containing all the evils of the world, Pandora's curiosity results in her opening the jar and Zeus blaming Pandora for releasing the evils. In this case, Pandora is perceived as taking away Zeus's power to keep the jar closed.
As a result, she is punished and viewed as subservient to him. "Rhiannon" functions in a similar way, with the focus on the imbalance of power between the female deity and those she tempts resulting in the deity exclusively being discussed in relation to those who desire her love. In simpler terms, "humanity is male, and man defines woman, not in herself, but in relation to himself" (de Beauvoir 5).

This perception of women's inferiority to men was omnipresent in rock at the time, and female rock stars had begun responding to enforcement of how they should look, dress, and act. Thus, reflecting the individual freedom encouraged throughout much of the second wave of feminism. Through the lens of Simone de Beauvoir's observations of how the patriarchy has attempted to justify women's inferiority, this practice could be shown through how "rebellious men are still seen to be in control of themselves whilst rebellious women are protesting at their own lack of control" (Reynolds and Press 329). One well documented response to the genre's sexism was female rock stars, such as Janis Joplin and Joan Jett, acting like 'one of the boys' in order to carve out an inauthentic niche and succeed in the industry (Brabazon 212). Since the sole songwriter of "Rhiannon" is Stevie Nicks, the song could be interpreted as an example of this phenomenon. Although this strategy has traditionally focused on appearance, with lyrics being an afterthought, Norma Coates notes that the voice plays an influential part in this strategy as well, arguing "they must talk like a man, or more accurately, as if they were men" (83). These lyrics, while retaining a male voice through their tone and disregard of the female deity's personhood, can accurately fit this description.

"Lazaretto" by Jack White

Unlike "Rhiannon", much of "Lazaretto" portrays the female deity (in this case, quite literally "God herself" (White 0:32-0:34) as an egalitarian figure in relation to the male in the profane world. During the second wave of feminism, egalitarianism (or the

belief in equality) had been debated in relation to male structures of power, with some questioning if true egalitarianism could even exist if women were to have any relation to men (Brunell and Burkett). Female separatism, a belief that women couldn't liberate themselves without being separated from men, was seen by some radical feminists at the time as a way to overhaul the social structures deeply rooted in women's subordination. Some founders and popularizers of radical feminism, who believed in separatism to varying degrees, acknowledged that this was in part due to how these power imbalances translated to our physical forms. Andrea Dworkin points to how women's bodies are seen as spaces to invade and conquer in patriarchal societies, and Adrienne Rich identifies that "the woman's body is the terrain on which patriarchy is ejected" (55). This dynamic of a female deity and a male from the profane world is helpful in connecting similar ideas to the fourth wave of feminism. This wave began in 2012, approximately two years before this song's release, and focuses on similar physical forms of inequality, such as: body shaming, rape culture, and domestic abuse (Brunell and Burkett).

The equality in the relationship between the female God and man in the profane world is initially established musically. Discussing "Lola" by The Kinks, Tara Brabazon elaborates on the "instability and ambivalence" created through the combination of "aggressive power chording and rhythm guitar patterns" and lyrics about "a heterosexual woman dominating a man" (222-23). In "Lazaretto"'s case, the rhythmic and frequently changing guitar patterns offer the song stability. This stands in contrast to "Rhiannon", where the instruments and vocals are largely separated throughout most of the song, and the melody at the end of each musical phrase never resolves; resulting in a sense of musical instability that is often read as queer. The lyrical relationship between the two subjects is then established through a mental acknowledgement. Expanding upon "Rhiannon"'s focus on inner thoughts and feelings, the lyric "And even God herself has fewer plans than me" (0:30-0:37) serves to address the deity prior to direct acknowledgement of her physical presence. While it is not known if this could be a projection onto the deity, as was the case in "Rhiannon", it implies an initial power imbalance between the subjects. By subverting the role of the mysterious temptress musically, while beginning with this lyrical power imbalance, "Lazaretto" finds a way to connect with core feminist beliefs in an indirect, subtle manner.

As the song continues, strong emphasis is placed on physicality, first with the lyric "She takes a stick and then she pokes it at me" (White 0:37-0:39), and later with the lyric "Then I shake God's hand" (White 1:20-1:22). The latter further emphasizing the egalitarian relationship between the female God and man in the profane world. Since the female God is emphasized in these interactions, she gains autonomy through physical power and control, which is greatly emphasized in fourth wave feminism. This idea has been discussed previously in both religious studies and feminist research. Ally Moder's article "Women, Personhood, and the Male God" discusses the positive impact that the portrayal of women as the Judeo-Christian God can have on women coping with domestic abuse, by explaining that "divine naming cannot be void of gendered sexuality as humans attempt to relate to and embody the divine life. A retrieval of feminine imagery and language for God is thus important for women to regain personhood". Despite its surface level effectiveness as a tool of subversion, there is an ironic edge to this portrayal. As although the roles of deities can vary greatly among belief systems, deities in many western Rock songs are intended to be confined to a spiritual realm. This portrayal of a female deity crossing into the physical realm serves to humanize her by allowing her to have individualized thoughts that can be acted upon. It gives the deity the ability to critique others in the profane world and reject traditional notions of femininity (such as passivity, and the focus on emotion and intuition). Through the lens of the man (that the female God is discussed in relation to), the subversion and rejection of these characteristics causes him to increasingly value the female God.

Conclusion

To conclude, the portrayal of women as deities can be a key resource to help Rock fans and feminist scholars alike dissect both the state of feminism at the time of a song's release, and how feminist practices and beliefs have evolved. Through "Rhiannon", which was released during the second wave of feminism, this was shown by the female deity being perceived by the narrator as mentally controlling or tempting those in the profane world into romance. It reflects frustrations and guiding theories in second wave feminism by portraying the woman exclusively in relation to how the narrator of the song felt about her (both in lyrics, and in the songwriter's creative process). Through Simone de Beauvoir's theory, we can see how second wave feminists acknowledged the othering of women as bringers of evil, a sentiment the song reflects. "Lazaretto" reflects the shift in feminist ideology from frustrations about the othering and demonizing of women, to the use of physical power in order to push back against injustices that stem from these beliefs. In the context of fourth wave feminism, this physical portrayal of the deity is used to give her power by rejecting traditionally feminine ways of being. While much has changed over the last 50 years of feminist thought, the belief in fighting for a more equitable world has stayed the same. As long as women are fighting for this, it will be sustained and reflected in music.

Work Cited

Beauvoir, Simone de. *The Second Sex.* Vintage Digital, 2015. p. 5.

Brabazon, Tara. *Popular Music: Topics, Trends & Trajectories.* Sage Publications, 2011, pp. 212-23.

Brunell, Laura, and Elinor Burkett. "The Second Wave of Feminism." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., https://www.britannica.com/topic/feminism/The-second-wave-of-feminism.

Brunell, Laura, and Elinor Burkett. "The Fourth Wave of Feminism." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., https://www.britannica.com/topic/feminism/The-fourth-wave-of-feminism.

Coates, Norma. "Can't we just talk about music? Rock and gender on the internet." *Mapping the Beat: Popular Music and Contemporary Theory*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998, p. 83.

Dworkin, Andrea. *Intercourse*. FreePress Paperbacks, 1987.

Frith, Simon, and Angela McRobbie. "Rock and Sexuality." *Society for Education Film and Television*, vol. 29, 1978, pp. 3–19. https://doi.org/10.5040/9781350393875.ch-006.

Hopper, Jessica. "Where the Girls Aren't." *Rookie*, 14 July 2015, p. 1. https://www.rookiemag.com/2015/07/where-the-girls-arent/.

Mac, Fleetwood. "Rhiannon." Spotify. https://open.spotify.com/track/05oETzWbd4SI33qK2gbJfR?si=e4fb01139d47462b.

Moder, Ally. "Women, Personhood, and the Male God: A Feminist Critique of Patriarchal Concepts of God in View of Domestic Abuse." *Sage Journals*, 6 Aug. 2019. https://doi.org/10.1177/0966735019859471.

Reynolds, Simon, and Joy Press. The Sex Revolts: Gender, Rebellion, and Rock"n" Roll. Harvard University Press, 1996, pp. 329.

Rich, Adrienne. *Of Woman Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution.* W.W. Norton, 1976, p. 55.

Spencer, Erika Hope. "Research Guides: Feminism & French Women in History: A Resource Guide: Simone de Beauvoir." *Library of Congress*, guides.loc.gov/feminism-french-women-history/famous/simone-de-beauvoir.

Trigger, Bruce G. "Understanding Early Civilizations." *Cambridge Core*, Cambridge University Press, 2003. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511840630.

White, Jack. "Lazaretto." Spotify. https://open.spotify.com/track/3T76zPJz3tWL27FrjJe2ot?si=6c9267bb0d574410.



Artist: Madelaine Mae Dack

Unbridled Imagination and Imperturbable Logic: an Analysis of the Theatre du Grand Guignol and the Historical, Technological, and Theatrical Changes it Embodied

Colby Mackenzie

ABSTRACT: The Theatre du Grande Guignol was in operation between 1897 and 1962; during its tenure, it provided entertainment to the Parisian masses. This paper seeks to prove that the violent entertainment shown in the Theatre du Grand Guignol epitomizes a microcosm of the broader historical, technological, and theatrical changes during its 65 years in operation. Through primary source documents, such as the plays being performed, and secondary sources, such as French historical documents, this analysis consolidates these informative texts to understand the bigger picture of the Theatre in the grander context of human experience. The violent nature being represented on the stage of the Guignol soon reflected the brutal nature of World War Two, thus blurring the lines between fact and fiction, art and life, imagination and reality. This opens up a discussion on the essence of humanity and its ensuing effect on the entertainment industry leading into the modern day, and the enduring macabre fascination with gruesome spectacle.

From 1897 to 1962, Parisian theatre-goers could walk to the 285-seat Theatre du Grand Guignol at 20 rue Chaptal and witness spectacles of comedy and horror performed on the intimate 20 by 20-foot stage. This historic building was haunted by its previous life as a Jansenist convent in 1786 before its sacking during the Reign of Terror; confessional-style boxes housed the audience and large wooden angels hung from the ceiling (Gordon 14). Lingering symbols of the *ancien regime* and eerie gothic architecture, brimming with religious imagery, contrasted the gruesome violence and moral disarray of the Naturalistic horror performed there. It is crucial to understand the physical location of the Guignol within Paris as the Theatre, as both the literal building and the content performed, represented an epicentre of the immense social, scientific, political, and artistic transformations of the time. The Theatre du Grand Guignol epitomizes a microcosm of the broader historical, technological, and theatrical changes during its 65 years in operation. This analysis will examine these shifting ideas through the rise of the Guignol in 1897 amid Third Republic France and Naturalism, the height of the Theatre under Andre de Lorde, and the emerging field of psychobiology, culminating in the fall of the Guignol in the wake of WWII and the rise of the cinema.

The Theatre du Grand Guignol established itself at a time of upheaval for France. Surrounded by the historical shifts of *fin de siecle* France, the popularity of *faits divers*, and the birth of Naturalism, the Guignol encapsulates the changes of the time. By the end of the 19th century, French people were "defeated, occupied, ransomed, and reduced" (Goubert 266) by the short but calamitous Franco-Prussian War of 1870, leading to the Paris Commune of 1871. This paroxysm of vacillating power structures eventually led to the installation of the Third Republic, a system rattled by mediocre scandals, anarchist attacks, and "ferocious anticlericalism" (271). The end of the 19th century under the Third Republic was characterized by an overall "[lack of] confidence" (276) in the worth of the colonies and a denouncement of colonial undertakings. Many French people were not interested in the colonial project. They were critical of the disputes over colonial territory, the expropriation of indigenous resources and labour, and capital being sent to far-off lands. However, it is crucial to note that colonial undertakings became popular after soldiers provided by the colonies helped France in WWI (277). France's colonial project became immense and significantly impacted its history and government in the following decades (303-6).

French sentiments at the time allowed the Guignol to present Naturalistic horror and bourgeoisie critiques with moderate success. The rampant anticlericalism consuming the French people under the Third Republic attracted audiences to the Guignol; the moral depravity of violence and sexuality, backdropped by the religiously charged atmosphere, embodied the feelings of the time. The popularity of *faits divers*, short anecdotal stories based on the grisly, gory true crime of the Paris underbelly, inspired the "tragic and absurd" (Jullien 68) plots of the early Guignol. The opprobrium of colonialism welcomed the natural depiction of "the bestial nature of humanity under post-colonial capitalism" (Jurković 5-6) offered by the macabre horrors and socially critical comedies of the Theatre. The protective frame of unreality provided by the Theatre allowed the intimate staging of human monstrosity to limit the disconnect between the audience and the crime performed, turning the spectator from a viewer into a witness and potential perpetrator of the crime. The "depiction of what is" (Zola qtd. in Jurković 5) supplied by Naturalism and the real-life inspiration of *faits divers*, in combination with the proximal staging, permitted the audience to "discover the monster hidden deep inside" (Jurković 2) themselves. The French sentiments under the Third Republic, their thirst for violence exhibited by the popularity of *fait divers*, and the phlegmatic character of Naturalism all fuse to establish a path of success for the Theatre du Grand Guignol.

Unlike Naturalism, which withered in the face of the brutal senselessness of World War One, the Theatre du Grand Guignol began to peak in popularity before and during WWI, and held fast in the following interwar period. Encapsulating everything that made the Guignol so successful at this time was the playwright, Andre de Lorde. De Lorde, also known as the Prince of Terror, was fascinated with the macabre from a young age when he realized that what he "envisioned in his mind's eye" would always be more terrifying than the "sight of an actual corpse" (Gordon 21). Writing for the Guignol from 1901 to 1926, the Prince of Terror took Naturalism, which sought to turn the stage into a laboratory of human experimentation, to its natural zenith, being one of the first playwrights to stage the action in operating

rooms, insane asylums, and laboratories; turning Naturalism's metaphorical laboratory of emotional experimentation into a literal lab of human experimentation. The Naturalism of the Guignol survived the death of the movement in WWI by merging the realism and complex human behaviour proposed by Naturalism with the sensationalism and predictability of melodrama. In de Lorde's words, the key to spectacular and enduring horror was the combination of "unbridled imagination and imperturbable logic, the fusion of nightmare and truth" (qtd. in Gordon 114). In his frequent collaborations with scientists and psychologists, de Lorde achieved the fusion of reality and horrific imagination in a new subgenre of the Theatre of Horror, the *Théâtre médical*, to great success. In de Lorde's works of maliciousmedical madness, the Guignol embodied the fears of the time.

Advancements in medicine and psychiatry marked the early 20th century. This time saw a diversification of the field of psychiatry into psychoanalysis, psychosomatics, and, most notably for the Guignol, psychobiology. Psychobiology embraced radical treatments of a physical nature, such as malaria fever treatment, insulin-shock therapy, the use of chemical convulsive agents, electroconvulsive shock therapy, leucotomy, and prefrontal lobotomies (Duffin 327-29). It was through these extreme experiments, carried out on vulnerable residents of ineffectual insane asylums, that the "most successful formula" (Jurković 12) for horror performed at the Guignol was developed. De Lorde perfected the marriage of logical fears with his morbid imagination to create immensely popular horror theatre. The vicious and frightening real-life-inspired medical horrors played out against the backdrop of the insane asylum displayed a new kind of monstrosity.

De Lorde's collaborations with actual scientists and psychiatrists injected a new level of complexity and realism into his drama. Exploring experimental psychiatry's problems in sanitoriums, de Lorde discovered the inherent bestial nature of the system to which man is subordinate. The nature of diagnosing mental illness in which a person displays abnormal behaviours is socially constructed and thus is often used to abuse and exert social control. Insane asylums were imposing buildings meant to symbolize the stature, power, and authority held by the system under which they operated. This system could hold patients "indefinitely" and administer "punitive treatments" (Duffin 316). Those who ran the institution enjoyed the "absolute power" they held over the inhabitants and the immunity they had from the "courts and police" (316). De Lorde recognized the underlying horror of the system of asylums in which a person was deprived of freedom without a scrap of control over their lives. In de Lorde's theatrical environment of medicine and science, the monster no longer appeared "just in the form of a man or a being with monstrous features, but the system [itself]" (Jurković 10). In de Lorde's plays, such as The Horrible Experiment (1909), The Laboratory of Hallucinations (1916), and Crime in a Madhouse (1925), the monstrosity lies not only in the demented doctors but the entire system, allowing the sadistic violence to germinate.

The Prince of Terror's new horror genre exemplifies the prevalent fears of the time. The Guignol was successful in the interwar period because the Theatre of Horror was most popular during chaotic times. The industrialization of death introduced by WWI expanded the Guignol's lexicon of gruesomeness, trading in their pistols and daggers for poison gas and surgical instruments. The catastrophic human cost of WWI drove French audiences to seek comfort in the protective frame of unreality provided by the Guignol, to be reassured that the malicious violence on stage was just a representation. Ironically, WWII's inventive inhumanity would be the Guignol's downfall.

The events of WWII triggered the drawn-out death of the Guignol in 1962. The Guignol had a brief period of prosperity in the late 30s that quickly decayed in the wake of the 1940 German invasion of France. The invasion resulted in the unequivocal demise of the Third Republic and the "quasi-monarchial regime" (Goubert 295) of Vichy France. The authoritarian puppet state installed a new moral order that departed from the anticlericalism and parliamentary supremacy of the previous government. Vichy France demanded the glorification of the family, the sacrosanctity of work, and the veneration of organized religion while prohibiting any electoral system (295)—a considerable departure from the Third Republic tenets which allowed the Guignol to succeed. Like Vichy France, the Guignol gained a reputation for collaboration with the Nazis during the occupation. No longer were the audiences at 20 rue Chaptal millionaires and royalty but instead non-French speaking enemy troops; tremendously bad optics for the Theatre in the post-war period. Mirroring the "drained economy" (301) of France

under German occupation and post-WWII, the Guignol's finances fell into ruin. However, it was the reality of extreme torture under the Nazis which would hammer the final nail in the coffin for the Guignol.

In the aftermath of WWII, the Guignol lost its unique identity as a place that produced fantastic violence in a Naturalistic style. The havoc and disorder experienced by the French people during WWII left them traumatized and the only way for them to cope was through viewing "hideous events" (Gordon 31). However, thanks to the lived reality of Nazi atrocities, they no longer desired the protective frame of unreality imparted by the Theatre. Books, magazines, and documentaries immortalizing actual Nazi death camps and medical experiments made the plots of the Guignol tame in comparison. What de Lorde and writers like him "envisioned in [their] mind's eye" (21) was no longer more frightening than reality. De Lorde's plays, once so gruesome the Theatre's on-call doctor averaged two faintings a night, were now relegated to "pseudo-atrocities" (31). The imagination displayed on stage, formerly thought impossibly horrendous, did not hold a candle to the horrific truth expressed during the war. A grim reality that was easily accessible through relaxing film censorship laws and the propagation of nickelodeons, all of which allowed copious showings of Nazi atrocities. Charles Nonon, the final director of the Theatre du Grand Guignol, said succinctly, "We could never equal Buchenwald" (qtd. in Gordon 33). Although the Guignol did not close its doors until November 1962, its death began with the monstrous maliciousness of WWII and the extreme reality presented in archival footage, two things the Theatre could never hope to rival.

The Theatre du Grand Guignol may have died a quiet death in 1962, but the inventive plots of horror and bloody effects live on. The horrors of WWII sparked the Guignol's downfall, but the loosening of censorship laws in the film industry reduced it to ashes. The film industry may have inadvertently killed the Guignol, but it still carries a distinct impression from the Theatre, a quality of Grand-Guignolesque. The essence of the Guignol is present in the "intimate and claustrophobic" (DeGiglio-Bellemare 25) nature of horror films and the ability to not only witness, but feel the gruesomeness being depicted. The Guignol leaves its mark in both performance style and bloody special effects. The Guignol was not only the historic building at 20 rue Chaptal but also an enduring horror genre. The Grand-Guignolesque piece of horror, theatre or cinema, recognizes the structures seen before: you know what will happen when someone explores an unknown noise, and yet it still will manage to scare you. The Theatre itself is gone, closed in 1962 and demolished in 1963, but the Guignol spirit continues to haunt and inspire today's horror.

The Theatre du Grand Guignol epitomizes a microcosm of the broader historical, technological, and theatrical changes during its 65 years. It embodies this through the rise of the Theatre amid Third Republic France and Naturalism, the height of the Guignol under Andre de Lorde, backgrounded by the emergence of psychobiology, and its demise in the wake of WWII and the rise of cinema. Studying the Guignol and the horror it inspires is crucial because its bestialness is an integral part of the human condition, as seen in the enduring nature of violent entertainment. As de Lorde relays, when all of humanity is stripped away, "nothing human [is] left except suffering" (qtd. in Gordon 185).

Work Cited

DeGiglio-Bellemare, Mario, and Mario DeGiglio-Bellemare. "The Grand-Guignol Theatre: A Short History of the Theatre and Spatial Ecologies of Dread." *Grand-Guignol Cinema and the Horror Genre: Sinister Tableaux of Dread, Corporeality and the Senses*, Anthem Press, 2023, pp. 25–61.

Duffin, Jacalyn. *History of Medicine: A Scandalously Short Introduction*. University of Toronto Press, 2010.

Gordon, Mel. *The Grand Guignol: Theatre of Fear and Terror*. Da Capo Press, 1988.

Goubert, Pierre. *The Course of French History*. Taylor and Francis Group, 1991, *ProQuest Ebook Central*, ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ualberta/reader.action?docID=169757, Accessed 23 Nov. 2023.

Jullien, Dominique. "Anecdotes, 'Faits Divers', and the Literary." *SubStance*, vol. 38, no. 1, 2009, pp. 66–76. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/40492982. Accessed 23 Nov. 2023.

Jurković, Tanja. "Blood, monstrosity and Violent Imagery: Grand-Guignol, the French Theatre of Horror as a Form of Violent Entertainment." *Journal of Literature, Culture and Literary Translation*, no. 1, 2013, doi.org/10.15291/sic/1.4.lc.3. Accessed 23 Nov. 2023

Leila Zolfalipour is an Iranian multidisciplinary artist living and working in Edmonton. Her work is at the crossroads of new digital technologies, painting, and sculpture. She focuses on producing artworks that bridge the virtual and the real world. Her interests are our connections to the natural world through the lens of femininity. She is bringing traditional painting and sculpture into an expanded field by incorporating virtual reality and 3D modelling, pushing artistic boundaries between traditional craftsmanship and digital. She is finishing her last semester of BFA at the University of Alberta. She is a member of the Golden Key International Honour Society and The Alberta Society of Artists and has received awards. She has participated in group exhibitions internationally and locally in Edmonton and Calgary.



Zolfalipour, Leila, Cultural Tapestry of Nature, 2023, Oil and Ink on Canvas, 60 x 42.



Dack, Madelaine Mae, Violet Dreaming, 2023, Oil and acrylic on stretched canvas, 20 x 24 inches.

"In my work, I like to explore connections between femininity and the body, and the influence each one has over the other. I work with many mediums in my paintings, including collage, embroidery, and different methods of paint application"

— Madelaine Mae Dack





Artist: Madelaine Mae Dack

Dionysus in the Dungeon: The Nietzschean Duality in David Ives' *Venus in Fur*

Daisy Brazil

ABSTRACT: Since The Birth of Tragedy, Frederich Nietzsche's theories have completely changed the landscape of theatre analysis. Even as tragedy as a genre has declined in popularity in recent years, his writings on tragedy remain relevant. The framework of The Birth of Tragedy has been used to reevaluate many different works, from the Greek classics to cartoons. I will explore how the Apollonian and Dionysian duality manifests in contemporary theatre, using David Ives' Venus in Fur as an example of effective use of this duality, while also examining the ways in which relying on it can stunt character development in the writing process.

Since *The Birth of Tragedy*, Frederich Nietzsche's theories have completely changed the landscape of theatre analysis, providing an alternative to the analysis of Aristotle's *Poetics* that is, unlike the works of the Neoclassicist writers a few centuries before, rooted in a deep understanding of what Greek theatre was and what it was attempting to do. Instead of focusing on plot or the Unities, Nietzsche writes that Greek theatre is composed of two major forces that, when they co-exist, encompass the full spectrum of human emotion. The Apollonian and the Dionysian, as he conceived them, are opposing forces that eternally rail against the other, and yet they are mutually dependent in order to reach their full potential. The Apollonian, named for the Greek deity of painting and sculpture, is associated with "light, dream (…) rational knowledge and moderation" (Wilhelm 2000). The Dionysian is in many ways the inverse. Dionysus is the god of intoxication and music, which is Nietzsche attributes with "formless flux, mysticism, and excess" (Wilhelm 2000). Both are needed to create tragedy, Nietzsche says, and the entirety of Greek theatre can be distilled into these two characteristics. His writings on tragedy remain relevant, even as tragedy as a genre has declined in popularity in recent years. The framework of *The Birth of Tragedy* has been used to reevaluate many different works, from the Greek classics to *SpongeBob SquarePants*. Through this essay, I hope to explore how the Apollonian and Dionysian duality manifests in contemporary theatre, using David Ives' *Venus in Fur* as an example of an effective use of this duality, while also examining the ways in which leaning too far into these characteristics can have a negative effect on character development.

While the classics will always be remounted and reimagined, the amount of new theatre that counts as a pure tragedy (not a tragicomedy, not a drama), is dwindling. This change in trends happened for a myriad of reasons, but as tragedies decline in popularity, theatre scholars have increasingly turned to applying Nietzsche's ideas to plays that aren't tragedies, and they argue that a play doesn't have to be a tragedy in order to have some of the features described in *The Birth of Tragedy*.

The Apollonian and Dionysian forces he writes about are no doubt ubiquitous within tragedy, but can they appear in plays that don't fit the tragic genre? Nietzsche's writing, which was exclusively explaining classical Greek tragedy, makes constant reference to the chorus of a tragedy (which he argues is the Dionysian element of theatre), which most plays today, even tragedies, lack. In Greek theatre, a chorus is a group of actors that narrate the events of the story and act as audience surrogates, often using music and dance to embody how the community feels about the events of the play. By the parameters set out in *The Birth of Tragedy*, the chorus is what makes a tragedy, and is at the heart of classic drama. As tragedy has evolved, the chorus has become less prevalent (that is not to say that more recent tragedies do not have any elements that could be understood as a chorus), but much of Nietzsche's writing remains relevant even in the absence of the chorus.

As theatre has moved away from tragedy as a prominent genre, we can begin to see the prevalence of elements of Nietzsche's theatre analysis in genres other than tragedy. While Nietzsche himself asserts that the Apollonian and Dionysian forces can only be a part of tragedy as a function of the genre, many have written extensively about applying the concept to other genres and forms of media, from *A Chorus Line* (Dunbar 2010) to *SpongeBob SquarePants* (Wynn 2021). In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche asserted that the Apollonian/Dionysian polarity embodies the full spectrum of human emotion and experience, and though characters that fit in these categories are still represented today, the aim is not usually to capture the complete range of human emotion as it was in the Greek era. Instead, the Apollonian and Dionysian are often written as two diametrically opposed character types that are eternally at odds with each other. While they are not stock characters in the same way the Commedia dell'arte characters are, they have become a sort of archetype that are recognizable and come with a built-in conflict: the Apollonian character is dedicated, rational, and harmonious, where the Dionysian character is unfocused, impulsive, and intuitive. Their inherent qualities exist in opposition to each other, and the conflict in their relationship exists because they need each other, much in the same way as Nietzsche proposed. Using these character types means that playwrights have a built-in sense of conflict between the characters, and they can choose to heighten the conflict through plot or by continuing to develop the characters. Two characters who share very different traits but still rely on each other to exist, as the Apollo and Dionysian figures do, already have some amount of friction that a playwright can build a compelling story on top of.

David Ives' 2010 drama *Venus in Fur* is a strong example of how the use of the Apollonian/Dionysian duality can strengthen a story and build compelling conflict. In *Venus in Fur*, the character Thomas is a playwright/director who is attempting to find the perfect actress to play the lead woman in his new version of *Venus in Furs*, based on the 1870 novel written by Sacher-Masoch, but continues to be unsuccessful due to his rigid and unrealistic standards. When the actress Vanda (conveniently sharing her name with the character Thomas is casting) who desperately wants the role shows up to Thomas' apartment, she appears in a flurry of ditzy, unfocused conversation that hides a deep intelligence and sensuality. By setting up these two seemingly opposite characters, Ives leans on the framework that Nietzsche proposed, which creates an immediate tension between them. The relationship between the Apollonian and Dionysian figures are constantly in conflict with each other by design, and their differences are what draws them to each other. There is very little plot-driven conflict in *Venus in Furs* as there was in the Greek tragedy Nietzsche was writing about, as most of the conflict in the play is centered around the tension between the two characters, which is driven by the fundamental forces underpinning them.

Thomas is the Apollonian figure in the show – he is practical, rational, and certain, seeking to make the best play that he can. His abrasiveness and undeniably misogynistic attitude towards the potential actresses for his play are rooted in his ambition – this is of course not an excuse for Thomas' misogyny, though the play does not attempt to rationalize it or excuse it either. He seems at least somewhat invested in truth, at least as it pertains to trying to catch Vanda in her white lies. The Apollonian operates in the world of dreams, Nietzsche says, and while Thomas appears to be too practical to be a dreamer, his writing does reveal truths about himself that he won't consciously accept — much in the same ways that dreams do. When Vanda asks him about the origins of the character Kushemski's desire to be humiliated by a powerful woman:

> THOMAS: This stupid, impoverished world we live in! Why are we so eager to diminish ourselves? Why do we want to reduce ourselves to examples of something? As if we were nothing but proof of Freud, or proof of whatever dime store psychology is in People Magazine this week. What are you going to throw at me next, 'race, class and gender'?
> VANDA: You oughta write all that up and send it to the Times.
> THOMAS: I did. They didn't print it.
> (Ives 2017)

By intellectualizing Vanda's question about the childhood origins of Kushemski's sexual proclivities, Thomas denies that he bears any resemblance to the male protagonist of the play he is writing, but it is clear to everyone but himself that he is writing a fantasy version of himself who achieves all his repressed sexual desires.

Vanda, on the other hand, is the manifestation of the Dionysian drive. Nietzsche describes the Dionysian as intoxication, and though Vanda herself is not literally intoxicated at any point in the play, she does possess an abandon in her desires and actions; she doesn't hesitate to act on an impulse or to say what is on her mind.

> VANDA: (…) How come you didn't put in that scene with Venus? When she appears to him at the beginning? Naked under a fur in front of a fireplace?
> THOMAS: I didn't know how to fit it in.
> VANDA: Just stick it in at the top – so to speak – before he meets Vanda. (…) I'll do it. Naked onstage? Fuck. I'll take a freebie.
> THOMAS: I'll think about it.
> VANDA: Why? We can improv it. Maybe you'll get some ideas. Okay, I'm Venus now. (*She undoes her dress and steps out of it so that she is again in bra and panties.*) Imagine me totally naked.
> THOMAS: You're not coming on to me now, are you, Vanda?
> VANDA: Come on, you're a big boy. (…)
> THOMAS: I've never done this before.
> VANDA: That's what all the girls say.

There is palpable eroticism to Vanda's demeanor, which is visible both in her brazen behaviour and in the way she chooses to flirt with Thomas throughout the play. Her brash words are impulsive in a way that grates on Thomas, but there is a calculated strategy to them; they are perfectly selected to bring a certain reaction out of him.

This is the nature of the Apollonian/Dionysian

relationship. They seek constantly to overpower each other, but ultimately the Dionysian aims to destroy the individual, and the Apollonian will forever succumb to the desires brought out by its counterpart. Such is the case with *Venus*. Nietzsche writes that the effect brought out by the Dionysian appalls the Apollonian, but ultimately the Dionysian brings out the Apollonian's "hidden substratum of suffering and knowledge" (32) that they were ultimately hiding from within themselves. Thomas' desire to be dominated, to be consumed by eroticism, is one he denies to himself until he meets Vanda, who pushes him by embodying the dominatrix character he has written out of an unrealized desire.

Natalie Wynn posits that another essential element of this relationship is Apollo's envy of Dionysus – for all of Apollo's self-control and optimism, he envies the drunken ecstasy of Dionysus, who manages to create art just the same as Apollo. The envy between the Apollonian and Dionysian can also be easily seen between Thomas and Vanda. While envy is certainly not the driving force of their relationship, Thomas resents Vanda's passionate but frivolous behaviour and her valley-girl speech. His resentment is rooted in the envy that he feels for her ability to act according to her whims, with no concern for orderliness or artistic rigor – at least his definition of rigor. Her lack of sexual inhibitions also provokes him, because he envies that he feels as though he should keep his own desires repressed. Despite his resentment, Thomas needs Vanda to harness her own confidence in order for him to express his desires.

The sexual tension between Vanda and Thomas is the prime example of the Apollonian/Dionysian tug-of-war in the play. When Vanda asks him if his play, which heavily features sadomasochism at the hands of a dominatrix figure, has any relevance in his own life and sexual tastes, Thomas denies it and insists that he is purely writing fiction that has nothing to do with his own desires. It is clear from the beginning that he is writing this play because he is compelled by this sexual fantasy, and his orderly and focused personality leads him to using his writing as a vessel for his more inconvenient desires. Vanda, on the other hand, relishes in the sexual energy she has, unafraid to reveal her mostly naked body to Thomas and to begin to dominate him in real life when the script calls for it. Her demeanor reflects the drunken ecstasy that is an essential part of the Dionysian spirit. The ways in which she approaches sexuality is fearless and unabashed. Though it's unclear whether she herself enjoys dominating Thomas in the same way he enjoys being dominated by her, Vanda has no problem pulling his desires out of him and doesn't share the same hangups that Thomas does. The push and pull of a character who wishes to deny their more uncontrollable desires and their counterpart who feels no need to conceal it or hide from pleasure is the epitome of the Apollonian/Dionysian polarity.

The conflict between the Apollonian and Dionysian traits, however, rests on the fact that these characters are being their true selves, and that the force that moves them is a core part of who they are, which dictates their behaviour. In *Venus in Fur*, the end of the play involves the reveal that Vanda is, in fact, the goddess Aphrodite, who intentionally appeared to Thomas in the same way a fictional version of her appears in his play. This reversal implies that Vanda/Aphrodite orchestrated this entire situation in order to get a desired reaction out of Thomas, which makes it unclear whether she in fact fits in this Dionysian category, or whether she simply embodies that energy in order to counter Thomas' stalwart Apollonian personality. In this light, Vanda as a character who embodies Dionysus feels unexpectedly pernicious – as though Ives writes her as a wish-fulfillment fantasy of a woman. Having a woman, especially one who appears out of nowhere to a man and provoking him only to fulfill all of the ecstatic sexual fantasies that he has harbored but was too tightly wound to approach on his own, gives the impression of a male fantasy that has little concern for building a fleshed-out character. The Apollonian/Dionysian character duality can quickly become stereotypical and demeaning when the playwright begins to play into this notion of (impulsive, passionate, intuitive) women who exist to unlock (logical, orderly, driven) men's sexual fantasies and serve no other purpose. At the end of the play, Vanda abruptly pulls back from the scene she is acting out with Thomas to tell him that his play is sexist, wish-fulfillment pornography that degrades women. It seems as though Ives wanted to frame this scene as Thomas getting his feminist comeuppance and being told what's what by Aphrodite herself, but ultimately this doesn't read in the way he intended. Ives' attitude towards Thomas' sexist language and attitudes towards actresses (and presumably women in general) doesn't seem to take any issue with the way Thomas speaks, and any analysis to the contrary, while

not invalid, seems to write off Ives' own sexist blind spots. Vanda/Aphrodite can tell Thomas off for being sexist and writing women in a demeaning way that is nothing but his sexual wish fulfillment, but ultimately, she did give him the sexual fantasy he's always wanted. Her criticism of him is undermined by the fact that he received everything he wanted from her, and she is left feeling demeaned and upset by it, having gotten nothing in return from him.

Nietzsche's writings on theatre provided a completely new lens through which theatre can be analyzed, and his ideas have continued to persist, in ways he might not have initially intended. Though the world of theatre has mostly moved on from the classic Greek styles of theatre, certain elements continue to re-emerge in new ways. The duality of the Apollonian/Dionysian forces have begun to appear as recognizable character types in contemporary theatre, operating in mostly the same way as Nietzsche originally described. While *Venus in Fur* is a strong example of this, it also provides a model for how these character dynamics can become demeaning if the characters are not fleshed out enough. The duality of the two energies is a compelling building block for character development, but when the characters don't grow or change over the course of the story, especially when there is a sexual element to the relationship, it can easily become reductive and objectifying.

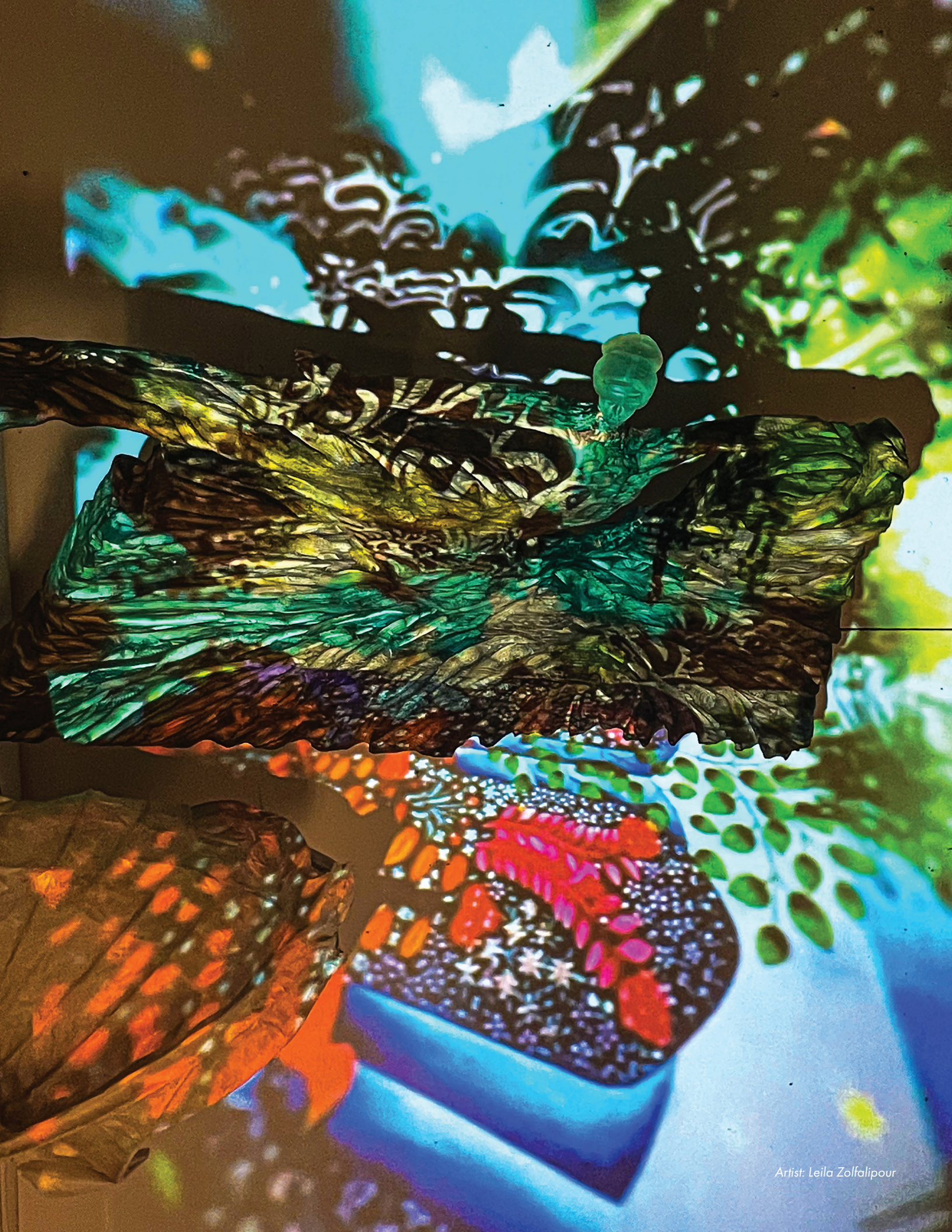
Work Cited

Dunbar, Zachary. "Dionysian Reflections upon A Chorus Line." Studies in Musical Theatre, vol. 4, no. 2, 2010, pp. 155–69. EBSCOhost, https://doi-org.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/10.1386/smt.4.2.155-1.

Ives, David. *Venus in Fur*, Oberon Books, 2017. ProQuest Ebook Central, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ualberta/detail.action?docID=5283746.

Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm. *The Birth of Tragedy*. Oxford University Press, 2000. EBSCOhost, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=56036&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

Wynn, Natalie. *Envy*. YouTube, uploaded by ContraPoints, 7 Aug. 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aPhrTOg1RUk.



Artist: Leila Zolfalipour

Threads of Tradition and Global Expression: Persian Rugs Unraveled Through Paintings and Globalization

Leila Zolfalipour

ABSTRACT: Unravelling Persian Rugs: Art, Tradition, and Globalization
This study investigates the dynamic relationship between Persian rugs, art, and globalization, and follows their transformation from functional objects to powerful symbols of identity. This study examines representations in paintings from various historical periods, and highlights the nuanced interplay between these textiles and global influences. Persian rugs have served as conduits for cross-cultural communication throughout history, from luxury in the Renaissance to modernistic interpretations in the 20th century. Through case studies, this paper delves into narratives that connect tradition and transformation, and aims to contribute to a better understanding of art, culture, and our shared human journey.

KEYWORDS: Persian Rugs, Globalization, Art History, Cross-cultural, Communication, Tradition, Identity, and Cultural Evolution.

In the intricate dance of Persian rugs, paintings, and globalization, a compelling narrative emerges: A tapestry woven with cultural heritage, artistic expression, and the currents of our interconnected world. This study delves into the complex interplay between Persian rug depictions in paintings and their engagement with globalization. This research aims to reveal the intertwined fabric of art history, trade routes, and cultural exchange through the illumination of how these representations reflect the deep connection between Persian carpets and global transformation. These meticulously crafted textiles, intertwined with the fabric of art history, bear witness to tales of trade routes, cultural amalgamation, and shifting perspectives. Within the intricate patterns of these rugs lies a journey through the nuanced narratives of human connection across epochs and canvases. This exploration celebrates the artistry of these textiles, while deciphering the messages they convey, the cultural dialogues they represent, and their role in bridging past and present, local and global. The inclusion of Persian rugs in paintings beckons viewers to explore narratives of cultural fusion, artistic expression, and the ongoing interplay between tradition and transformation. This investigation extends an invitation to unravel the connections that bind art, culture, and globalization, fostering contemplation of the dynamic interactions that continue to shape our shared global heritage.

Persian rugs have evolved beyond their functional origins, and embody cultural heritage, luxury, and craftsmanship, with intricate designs. These handcrafted treasures, which originated from various regions in Persia *(now modern Iran)*, weave a narrative of societies across epochs. However, the allure of these rugs transcends the physical realm, particularly in the context of globalization. The expansion of trade routes during the late Middle Ages and beyond enabled carpets to traverse distant origins and forge connections between nations and cultures. Globalization reshaped trade dynamics, which fostered the exchange of ideas and elevated Persian rugs to coveted commodities among merchants and the elite. Mercedes Volait's study on commerce in late Ottoman Cairo and Damascus vividly illustrates this global impact. Her research illuminates how moving items like Persian carpets facilitated international dialogue and trade and navigated the nuanced interplay of architecture and craftsmanship during transit and transformation. As an assistant professor of early modern art history at Boise State University, Tomasz Grusiecki's exploration delves into the vulnerability of traditional crafts, like Persian rugs, to the currents of globalization. His work questions the authenticity of regional styles, and accentuates the intricacies of cultural identity within a global context. As globalization erases geographical boundaries, it promotes the dissemination of knowledge, creative influences, and cultural discourse. Persian rugs, frequently featured in art, embody the intricate web of worldwide relationships. Often adorning lavish settings, these rugs accentuate the interconnectivity of civilizations, and symbolize *"local identities"* and global aspirations. This investigation delves into the fusion of Persian carpets with the forces of globalization, and casts an indelible impact on the tapestry of art history across pivotal eras, including the Renaissance, Baroque, and Orientalist movements.

During the 15th to 18th centuries, a dynamic interplay between paintings and Persian rugs unfolded, which revealed cross-cultural connections and exotic allure. As witnessed in the Renaissance, Persian carpets symbolized luxury and wealth, with their presence in artworks that convey social status. Notably, Volait's exploration of trade in late Ottoman Cairo and Damascus underscores the role of these rugs in intercultural interaction.[1] This theme continued into the Baroque era, where elaborate textures and patterns of Persian rugs complemented ornate settings, and Grusiecki's investigation questions the integrity of regional aesthetics.[2] The 19th-century Orientalist movement further elevated the connection between art and Persian rugs, as Daniel Pearl's research emphasizes their representation of foreign cultures.[3] These depictions also capture intricate global commerce networks that offer a unique lens to study the intersection of cultural heritage and globalization. Exploring these woven narratives reveals the enduring impact of Persian rugs on the canvas of art history.

Nineteenth-century paintings often feature Persian rugs and reflect socio-economic and cultural changes triggered by industrialization and globalization. These rugs reflect the re-evaluation of traditional

[1] Volait, Mercedes. "Expanding Trades in Late Ottoman Cairo and Damascus." In Antique Dealing and Creative Reuse in Cairo and Damascus 1850-1890: Intercultural Engagements with Architecture and Craft in the Age of Travel and Reform, 87. Brill, 2021. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1163/j.ctv1v7zbh3.7.
[2] Grusiecki, Tomasz. 2023. "Rethinking the So-Called Polish Carpets." *Journal of Art Historiography*, no. 28 (June): 1–16. https://search-ebscohost-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aft&AN=164572085&site=eds-live&scope=site.
[3] Pearl, Daniel. 1997. "Looming Large: This Persian Rug Should Set a Record. (Cover Story)." Wall Street Journal - Eastern Edition, June 30. https://search-ebscohost-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=9707010562&site=eds-live&scope=site.

craftsmanship and the negotiation of luxury and artistic endeavour amidst mechanization. At the heart of this discourse lies Grusiecki's influential study, which prompts a reassessment of regional aesthetics against the backdrop of evolving global dynamics. Simultaneously, the surging tide of globalization, facilitated by rapid advancements in transportation and communication, wrought a transformative impact on artistic practices, characterized by what Safoora Maghsoodi and Ahmad Nadalian termed "artistic entanglement."[4] Their investigation into the "Interaction of 'Globalization' and Persian 'Handicrafts'" artfully weaves Persian craftsmanship into the broader global narrative.[5] To paraphrase Thomas Erdbrink,[6] it is through the lens of 19th-century artworks that the portrayal of Persian rugs embodies a nuanced interplay, which encapsulates responses to industrialization, while it delicately navigates the tension between tradition and progress. The 19th century depicts "cross-cultural," "cross-fertilization," and the convergence of civilizations within a globalized paradigm, with Persian carpets a symbol of the interconnectedness of diverse cultures.[7]

Persian rugs were interpreted modernistically in artworks during the 20th century, and broke with tradition to reflect the era's universal attitude. Artists embraced abstraction, geometric shapes, and vivid hues to portray the spirit of a quickly transforming environment, as discussed in the works of Reza Askarizad and Daniel Pearl. By connecting with the developing themes of cross-cultural interaction and connectivity, the inclusion of Persian rug motifs became a means to reconcile heritage and contemporary vision.
In my exploration of critical art history, I have selected paintings that vividly illustrate the interplay between Persian rugs, art, and globalization. These artworks exemplify how Persian rugs have transcended mere decoration to become potent symbols, and channels for cross-cultural communication. I traverse different epochs and artistic movements, and begin with the luxury of the Renaissance in Emanuel de Witte's "Interior with a Woman Playing the Virginal."[8] Here, Persian rugs signify both visual opulence and markers of wealth and fascination. Transitioning to the era of industrialization, Jean-Léon Gérôme's "The Snake Charmer"[9] reflects the tension between traditional craftsmanship and 19th-century mechanization, and uses the Persian rug as a metaphor for shifting paradigms. In the modern age, Henri Matisse's "Odalisque with Red Culottes" seamlessly integrates Persian rug themes into modernist compositions, forging connections across cultures. In the 21st century, Farhad Moshiri's "Home Sweet Home"[10] expertly captures contemporary identity and highlights the "enduring relevance" of Persian rugs in a globalized world.[11] These case studies illustrate evolving perceptions and identities in our interconnected world, and invite us to explore the profound connections between art, culture, and globalization.

[4] Safoora Maghsoodi and Ahmad Nadalian. 2018. "'The Interaction of 'Globalization' and Persian 'Handicrafts': An Analytical Investigation." Tarih Kültür ve Sanat Araştırmaları Dergisi 7 (5): 124. doi:10.7596/taksad. v7i5.1629.
[5] Safoora Maghsoodi and Ahmad Nadalian. 2018. "'The Interaction of 'Globalization' and Persian 'Handicrafts': An Analytical Investigation." Tarih Kültür ve Sanat Araştırmaları Dergisi 7 (5): 125. doi:10.7596/taksad. v7i5.1629.
[6] Erdbrink, Thomas. "The Persian Rug May Not Be Long for This World." New York Times, 27 May 2016, p. A4(L). Gale In Context: World History, link.gale.com/apps/doc/A453475579/WHIC?u=edmo69826&sid=bookmark-WHIC&xid=0a671300. Accessed 15 Aug. 2023.
[7] Zār Spirit Possession in Iran and African Countries: Group Distress, Culture-Bound Syndrome or Cultural Concept of Distress? Authors: Fahimeh Mianji and Yousef Semnani. 2016. "Zār Spirit Possession in Iran and African Countries: Group Distress, Culture-Bound Syndrome or Cultural Concept of Distress?" Iranian Journal of Psychiatry 10 (4). https://search-ebscohost-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsdoj&AN=edsdoj.405f6fd9ae5e40528a73035237768dab&site=eds-live&scope=site.
[8] Emanuel de Witte's "Interior with a Woman Playing a Virginal" 1660-1667
[9] Gérôme, Jean-Léon. "The Snake Charmer." 1879. Painting.
[10] Farhad Moshiri's "Home Sweet Home" 2003
[11] MORAL AND VALUABLE WORLD OF IRAN OF THE LATE 20th – EARLY 21st CENTURIES IN THE CONTEXT OF "CULTURAL HERITAGE" AND "DIALOGUE OF CIVILIZATIONS" CONCEPTS
Egnara G. Vartanyan. 2020. "Moral and Valuable World of Iran of the Late 20th – Early 21st Centuries in the Context of 'Cultural Heritage' and 'Dialogue of Civilizations' Concepts." Vestnik Volgogradskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta. Seriâ 4. Istoriâ, Regionovedenie, Meždunarodnye Otnošeniâ 25 (5): 77–88. doi:10.15688/jvolsu4.2020.5.7.

Exploring Persian rugs within paintings weaves intricate narratives that transcend borders and epochs. As discussed through Maghsoodi, Askarizad, and Fahimeh Mianji lenses, these textiles encapsulate the interplay between tradition and innovation, heritage and adaptation, and local identity and global connectivity. This journey through art history, informed by the works of Erdbrink and Maghsoodi, reminds us that these representations are not static artifacts, but living symbols that bridge cultures and span eras. By analyzing the interaction of Persian rugs with art and globalization, and delving into specific eras and case studies, this paper underscores the shared aspirations, interwoven narratives, and constant negotiation between preservation and transformation that characterize our collective human experience. The representation of Persian rugs within paintings is a powerful testament to the enduring resonance of cultural exchange and the potent fusion of art and identity in a globalized world. By unravelling these narratives we profoundly understand the multifaceted relationship between art, culture, and the ever-evolving currents of our shared human journey.

Work Cited

Egnara G. Vartanyan. 2020. "Moral and Valuable World of Iran of the Late 20th – Early 21st Centuries in the Context of 'Cultural Heritage' and 'Dialogue of Civilizations' Concepts." Vestnik Volgogradskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta. Seriâ 4. Istoriâ, Regionovedenie, Meždunarodnye Otnošeniâ 25 (5): 77–88. doi:10.15688/jvolsu4.2020.5.7

Emanuel de Witte's "Interior with a Woman Playing a Virginal" 1660-1667

Farhad Moshiri's "Home Sweet Home" 2003

Grusiecki, Tomasz. 2023. "Rethinking the So-Called Polish Carpets." Journal of Art Historiography, no. 28 (June): 1–16. https://search-ebscohost-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aft&AN=164572085&site=eds-live&scope=site.

Gérôme, Jean-Léon. "The Snake Charmer." 1879. Painting.

Henri Matisse's "Odalisque with Red Culottes" 1921

Pearl, Daniel. 1997. "Looming Large: This Persian Rug Should Set a Record. (Cover Story)." Wall Street Journal - Eastern Edition, June 30. https://search-ebscohost-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=9707010562&site=eds-live&scope=site.

"Persian Treasure." 2000. Architectural Digest 57 (9): 218. https://search-ebscohost-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aft&AN=3525073&site=eds-live&scope=site.

Askarizad, Reza, Jinliao He, and Roomina Soleymani Ardejani. 2022. Semiology of Art and Mysticism in Persian Architecture According to Rumi's Mystical Opinions (Case Study: Sheikh Lotf-Allah Mosque, Iran). Religions 13: 1059. https://doi.org/10.3390/ rel13111059.

Safoora Maghsoodi and Ahmad Nadalian. 2018. "The Interaction of 'Globalization' and Persian 'Handicrafts': An Analytical Investigation." Tarih Kültür ve Sanat Araştırmaları Dergisi 7 (5): 124. doi:10.7596/taksad. v7i5.1629.

Erdbrink, Thomas. "The Persian Rug May Not Be Long for This World." New York Times, 27 May 2016, p. A4(L). Gale In Context: World History, link.gale.com/apps/doc/A453475579/WHIC?u=edmo69826&sid=bookmark WHIC&xid=0a671300. Accessed 15, Aug. 2023.

Volait, Mercedes. "Expanding Trades in Late Ottoman Cairo and Damascus." In Antique Dealing and Creative Reuse in Cairo and Damascus 1850-1890: Intercultural Engagements with Architecture and Craft in the Age of Travel and Reform, 54-89. Brill, 2021. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1163/j.ctv1v7zbh3.7.

Zār Spirit Possession in Iran and African Countries: Group Distress, Culture-Bound Syndrome or Cultural Concept of Distress? Authors: Fahimeh Mianji and Yousef Semnani. 2016. "Zār Spirit Possession in Iran and African Countries: Group Distress, Culture-Bound Syndrome or Cultural Concept of Distress?" Iranian Journal of Psychiatry 10 (4). https://search-ebscohost-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsdoj&AN=edsdoj.405f6fd9ae5e40528a73035237768dab&site=eds-live&scope=site.



Artist: Leila Zolfalipour

After the Dream: Postdramatic Approaches to Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream

Daisy Brazil

ABSTRACT: Adaptations of Shakespeare's work are nothing new, but to what extent theatre practitioners should be able to take liberties with Shakespeare's original texts is hotly debated. Emma Rice's 2016 modern-dress production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was a raucous send-up of the beloved classic that took an irreverent attitude toward the original text. Rice, along with dramaturg Tanika Gupta, added plain English lines alongside the Elizabethan text, a controversial move among Shakespeare purists. Julie Taymor's 2014 version of the same play did not alter the text in any way, but it did take a backseat to the visual elements of the show, which included projections, the use of a fly, and striking stylistic cohesion. In this paper, I explore how both Taymor and Rice's respective productions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* operate within the post-dramatic – that is, their respective choices to move beyond using Shakespeare's original text as the central element of performance. Using Hans-Thies Lehmann's framework, I will examine how these productions exemplify the "perpetual conflict between text and scene" (Lehmann 145) that infuse elements of the post-dramatic into these productions.

Adaptations of Shakespeare's work are nothing new to the entertainment industry, but to what extent English-speaking theatre practitioners should be able to take liberties with Shakespeare's original text is hotly debated. As the field of theatre constantly reinvents itself with new styles and approaches to working with text, it only makes sense that playwrights and directors would want to bring texts from the Western cultural canon into an updated format. Shakespeare adaptations are inescapable in Western, English-speaking culture, and it is common to take well-known Shakespeare plays and uproot them into a different setting than what was originally intended. *Macbeth* in a Cree tribe at the dawn of Western colonialism, *Othello* in a film noir-esque underground criminal ring, and *Twelfth Night* in Victorian England are a few of the adaptations I have personally seen. All of these adaptations, however far they ventured from their original setting, did choose to use the text as the primary element of performance. In both Julie Taymor's and Emma Rice's respective productions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, however, it is clear that Shakespeare's original text is not the focal point of the production.

Emma Rice's 2016 production at the Globe Theatre is a modern-dress version of *Midsummer* that took an irreverent attitude towards the original text of the play. Rice, alongside dramaturge Tanika Gupta, chose to update the text to take place specifically in contemporary England and added in new, plain-English lines alongside the traditional Elizabethan text, going so far as to add in a few jabs at Shakespeare's incomprehensibility in an entirely new scene at the top of the show performed by the Mechanicals. Julie Taymor's 2014 version of the same play could not have been more different – if it weren't for the title, one could hardly blame an audience member for not realizing that they are using the same source material. While Taymor's *Midsummer* doesn't deviate from the original text, it is secondary to her signature visual spectacle. The use of fly-ins, projections, the eerie children's chorus, and an airtight colour palette provided immaculately planned visuals that set the stage for the story. I will explore how both Taymor and Rice's productions operate in the postdramatic – that is, their respective choices to move beyond Shakespeare's original text as the primary guiding element of performance. Though these performances might not be considered postdramatic in and of themselves, I will use Hans-

Thies Lehmann's framework of postdramatic theatre to examine how they lean into the "perpetual conflict between text and scene" (Lehmann 145), and how Shakespeare plays provide the perfect slate for a postdramatic approach.

Hans-Thies Lehmann's definitive 1999 treatise on postdramatic theatre provides an in-depth analysis of developments in theatre since the 1960s that have influenced this new form of performance. While it is a sprawling genre that can encompass many types of performances, postdramatic theatre is, in essence, any performance that moves beyond the text as the central element and sole arbiter of performance. In the introduction to the 2006 English translation, translator and editor Karen Jurs-Munby makes a point of explaining the 'post' in postdramatic: it is not a category nor a "chronological 'after' drama, a 'forgetting' of the 'dramatic past'" (Lehmann 2006, 2), but instead a "rupture" of theatre's relationship with dramatic text. It is a deconstruction of traditional theatre practices and of theatre's relationship with drama, not necessarily a movement away from drama itself. Lehmann also points out the palimpsestuous nature of postdramatic theatre – the writing on the same space over and over again that creates a palimpsest that occurs both during the devising process (if the piece involves any devised elements), and in the recreation and referencing of previous productions. I believe this is the reason why Shakespeare's plays take so well to a postdramatic approach. Shakespeare is perhaps the most iconic writer in the Western tradition, and his stories are so ingrained in English-speaking culture that many, if not most, theatergoers purchase tickets to a Shakespeare production already knowing most of what will happen. This makes Shakespeare so easy (and entertaining) to riff on and try new approaches – directors and dramaturges can take liberties with his work since most audiences walk into *Romeo and Juliet* knowing full well how the story will end. The audience isn't buying a ticket so they can find out *what* happens in the story, they want to see *how* the story is being told. Many productions of Shakespeare plays are also deliberately self-referential either to themselves or to other productions of the same text, such as The Wooster Group's *Hamlet* (where the 1964 Broadway production of Hamlet is projected onto a scrim in the back as the actors perform a mirror image of what was being projected), or Emma Rice's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (where one of the Mechanicals in Rice's pre-show scene mentions that "tiredness and confusion" are typical when watching a Shakespeare play). This self-referentiality is possible because of the audience's (assumed) familiarity with other Shakespeare productions, as well as their assumed attitude towards them.

Julie Taymor's 2013 production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* holds all of the visual spectacle signature to Taymor's style. With Puck appearing on a fly-in, the billowing fabric surrounding Titania, and the projections of blooming flowers on the back of the stage, this production is not lacking in visual excitement. The show has an almost entirely neutral colour palette, except for Oberon's body paint which shimmers gold and blue in the light. Taymor creates a dreamlike world for the story to exist in, though it is not a light or playful dream like many productions choose to create. The neutral colour palette and children's ensemble of fairies (Taymor dubbed them *Rude Elementals* in the program) create an eerie and almost menacing environment that still manages to feel magical. The movement of the actors also adds to this; Puck's movements feel almost non-human as actress Kathryn Hunter contorts her body while delivering her lines, and the children's ensemble moves and whispers in a menacing manner that added to the uncanny dreaminess of it all. The costume design is also stunning – Titania and Oberon's costumes are ethereal and the sharp whites of Titania's costumes contrast Oberon's dark, glittering body paint and loose pants perfectly. The costumes of the human characters are much less ethereal, but the shared colour palette creates a cohesiveness between the magical and non-magical characters that demonstrated the connection and coexistence of the magical and non-magical world. While the show's aesthetics are unparalleled compared to any other Shakespeare production I have ever seen, overall this production seems to be created for audiences already familiar with Shakespeare, considering the extent to which the text is secondary. The action of the play is clear, but the story and characters feel almost insignificant when they are not the focus of the visual spectacle. The strong visual elements tell the story almost entirely on their own, and the text only exists to provide a canvas onto which Taymor can build her layers of visual storytelling. As Steve Mentz put it, Taymor's *Midsummer* "seemed to care more about spectacle than emotion" (Mentz 309). This was not by any means a poor or incorrect choice, but it is very interesting to witness since most Shakespeare

productions – especially *A Midsummer Night's Dream* – are intensely focused on the characters and the words that they speak due to the text being the most important aspect of the performance. This is certainly not the case here, and with Taymor's unrivalled visual storytelling, it seems as though she barely needed the text at all.

Emma Rice's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the inaugural production of her short and controversial tenure as Artistic Director of the Globe Theatre, was in many ways Taylor's foil. Her version of the play is brash and irreverent with little aesthetic cohesiveness in a performance that generally pleased audiences while upsetting Shakespeare purists. The most controversial move of this production was to add in plain-English lines alongside the traditional text. Some of these lines poked fun at Shakespeare's incomprehensibility and at Shakespeare-lovers' obsession with text. This, admittedly, is perhaps not the ideal move for a production at the Globe Theatre which is dedicated entirely to performing Shakespeare's work in the way they would have been performed during his lifetime, but yet it seemed to resonate with audiences relatively well. In an entirely new prologue to the show, the play begins with "volunteers" from the Globe Theatre presenting the health and safety guidelines to the audience before the show is supposed to begin, and as the prologue goes on, it becomes clear that these volunteers were in fact the mechanicals that would be featured later on in the play. Though Emma Rice's irreverent approach to Shakespeare during her time at the Globe alone could be the topic of an entirely different discussion, it is important to note how even in her production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, she seems to want to bypass the Shakespeare-ness of the play entirely. By updating the setting from ancient Athens to contemporary London, swapping Athenian youth for "Hoxton hipsters," Rice makes it clear that she thinks it is high time to move past the confines of the text that she thinks the audience cannot comprehend. While I agree with critic Lisa Hopkins' comment that adding in the plain-English lines and modern-day pop culture references risked making Rice seem as though she thinks the audience is too stupid to understand what is happening onstage (Hopkins 2016), I believe that it was not entirely a misguided choice. The new additions to the play add to the palimpsestuous nature of this postdramatic approach, which only serve to highlight the original writing that had existed before in an interesting way. These new lines created new moments for the characters that did not exist before and the few jabs at the incomprehensibility of Shakespeare from the Globe volunteers at the top of the play felt decidedly populist, reminding the audience that they did not have to feel bad for not comprehending everything that was going on. I do understand that many critics and Shakespeare purists felt as though Rice was denigrating the original text by doing this, but it remains a fact that many in the general population of occasional theatergoers do think that Shakespeare is difficult to understand even if they might know the general story of the play, so it makes sense that they would be eager to respond to a production that acknowledges and validates their feelings towards Shakespeare. The actors still deliver satisfying performances, and though the pop-culture references and one-liners do feel heavy-handed at times, it was a choice that paid off with a playful and joyous performance.

Julie Taymor and Emma Rice both took drastically different approaches to the same classic text of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, but they both decided to position the text as secondary to other elements of performance. Rice wanted to remove the potentially daunting Shakespeare-ness of a Shakespeare play altogether by adding contemporary lines and references to the script, and Taymor created a rich visual world that eclipsed the text altogether. Both of these productions were well-received by the public, but there is still resistance from some theatre critics on taking postdramatic approaches to Shakespeare's work. Despite this resistance, the familiarity of theatre audiences with Shakespeare's work makes it ideal to use as a blank canvas for trying new theatrical techniques since its timelessness can be leveraged to bolster new and innovative ideas.

Work Cited

Brokaw, Katherine Steele. "A Midsummer Night's Dream." Shakespeare Bulletin, vol. 35, no. 1, 2017, pp. 148–156., login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/midsummer-nights-dream/docview/1876460384/se-2?accountid=14474.

Hitchings, Henry. "A Midsummer Night's Dream, Review: A Rocking Dream with Real Spirit." Evening Standard, Evening Standard, 6 May 2016, www.standard.co.uk/culture/theatre/a-midsummer-night-s-dream-theatre-review-a-rocking-dream-with-real-spirit-a3241611.html.

Hopkins, Lisa. "A Midsummer Night's Dream, Presented by Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, London, 2016." Early Modern Literary Studies, vol. 19, no. 1, Jan. 2016, eds-p-ebscohost-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/eds/detail/detail?vid=1&sid=f9e8f04a-d392-4b36-aa26-6912f92ef209%40redis&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#AN=edscpi.A492221647&db=edscpi.

Lehmann, Hans-Thies. Postdramatic Theatre. Translated by Karen Jürs-Munby, Routledge, 2006.

Moosa, Hassana. "Review of Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream (Directed by Emma Rice) at Shakespeare's Globe, London, 5 May – 11 September 2016, Shown as Part of 'Culture in Quarantine' on BBC IPlayer, 23 April to 22 August 2020. Streamed Online on 8 August 2020." Shakespeare, vol. 17, no. 1, 2021, pp. 58–63., doi:10.1080/17450918.2021.1883103.

Rice, Emma, director. A Midsummer Night's Dream. Drama Online, Globe on Screen, www-dramaonlinelibrary-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/video?docid=do-9781350996649&tocid=do-9781350996649_5840921491001&st=midsummer+night%27s+dream.

Rooney, David. "'A Midsummer Night's Dream': Theater Review." The Hollywood Reporter, The Hollywood Reporter, 3 Nov. 2013, www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/general-news/a-midsummer-nights-dream-theater-652763/.

Taymor, Julie, director. A Midsummer Night's Dream. Alexander Street, Ealing Studios, 2014, video-alexanderstreet-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/watch/a-midsummer-night-s-dream-3/details?context=channel:william-shakespeare.



Artist: Ayomide Popoola



Photographer: Jienan Chen


HUM
AN
TIES



Logan West

Humanities

Section Editor

Featuring emerging areas of study, diverse voices, and unique subject matter that may be neglected by traditional academia, the following collection of articles highlights the groundbreaking and exciting work Humanities students have produced this year. The authors featured have worked tirelessly in collaboration with the Crossings team to craft high-quality academic work that they should be incredibly proud of, and I commend them for their dedication and effort.

What do lesbian vampires and X (the app formerly known as Twitter) have in common? From an exemplary analysis of the threat of erotic horror films on the heteronormativity of 1970s society, to a captivating inquiry into the proliferation of conspiracy theories on X, societal threat and public discourse thematically unite the articles from the disciplines of Film Studies and Media Studies. From the disciplines of English and Classics, labels and titles are of primary concern, as Trinculo's place in the canon of Shakespearean fools is critically questioned, while a teenage Macedonian queen's warrior status is earnestly investigated. From conducting a fascinating study of the adoption of Western dress in Russia, to drawing attention to the erasure of Black queer Americans from historical narratives during the Harlem Renaissance, fresh perspectives are brought to the discipline of History. It is particularly thrilling to have two thoughtful examinations of local history featured within this section. Shedding light on the legacy of Tommy Banks and Edmonton's oft-overlooked place in Canadian broadcasting history, as well as Club '70 and Womonspace, which provided safe social spaces for queer Edmontonians, these articles are determined to fill the gaps in Edmonton's cultural history.

I am honoured to have had the privilege to be this year's Humanities Section Editor. It was an immense team effort and I would like to thank all of the peer reviewers who volunteered their time to offer feedback and aid in selecting the very best papers for publication. As well, much love to the editorial board for all the laughs and support on this journey. Finally, to any students reading this, apply and submit for Crossings! You might just surprise yourself. I know I did.



Photographer: Henry Deng

Dressing for the Occasion: Adopting and Resisting Western Dress Under Peter the Great

Sarah Samuelson

ABSTRACT: This paper explores the importance of clothing to the Russian population during the reign of Peter Alekseyevich, known historically as Peter the Great. As part of his sweeping transformations, the Tsar mandated that the Russian people begin dressing in Western styles so they may better align themselves with their Western European counterparts. Many analyses of Peter the Great focus on the economic reforms, and in turn overlook the sociocultural aspects that facilitated the success of many of his projects. Despite the autocratic power of the Tsar, the Russian people were tied to their traditional garments, and were faced with a difficult choice – to follow the personally expensive requests of Peter I, or to risk their status and retain traditional Russian values. The sartorial reforms of Peter the Great implicated more than just clothing; rather, they were about religious piety, masculinity, changing social status, and growing divisions between ranks.

KEYWORDS: Peter the Great, Russia, Sartorial Reforms, History of Material Culture, Russian History

Introduction

Peter Alekseyevich is remembered in history as Peter the Great, a man recognized for instituting mass changes across Russian territory during his reign as Tsar from the 1680s until his death in 1725. The Tsar arguably had the greatest impact on the trajectory of the Eastern power. Foreign relations were altered throughout his reign, but domestically it was of high priority that the Russian nobility remained loyal to him despite the sweeping changes he instituted. With a personal interest in medicine and naval technology,[1] Tsar Peter I toured and worked in multiple European nations, learning what he could of their successes. Upon returning home, Peter's government began adopting and enforcing Western ways – from schooling, to the organization of government, and beyond – with the hope that this would bring Russian society up to par with the more advanced norms of the Western World. Peter brought back the ideas which emerged out of the period of enlightenment to the country he reigned and began implementing them at a rapid pace. While the Westernization of Peter the Great is often synonymous with technological advancements, the social structure of Russia also proved to be a critical component of the changes. By altering the most seemingly mundane aspects of society, Western ways eventually became inherent to Russian life. Social changes took place by introducing new forms of entertainment such as the regatta,[2] introducing a secular schooling system, and adopting new dress codes.

Traditional Russian society, prior to the reign of Peter I, was rooted in the norms of the Orthodox church and associated traditional dress with piety,[3] meaning that changing fashions were not as simple as adjusting to new styles and fabrics. Clothing was intertwined with one's religious beliefs, so when the Tsar began implementing these changes in dress, they were not warmly welcomed by those with vested religious interests. These ties between clothing and religion extended further, impacting the facial hair of Russian men. Believing that beards were demonstrative of masculinity and piety, Orthodox followers were hesitant to follow legislation which required a clean-shaven face. Not only did Peter I have to face the opposition from the church and their believers, but the Russian landmass was comprised of ethnically diverse groups, each with their own norms, values, and importantly, clothing. While similarities in traditional styles existed, the clothing of his subjects was not entirely cohesive. Therefore, the meanings associated with the garments were not cohesive, too.

While there are varying hypotheses which attempt to explain why Peter the Great instituted mass reforms which erased traditional values and embraced Western modernity, the focus on dress in these changes demonstrated the inherent nature of fashion to permeate society, as well as the use of dress as a political statement. By mandating dress changes, fashion became inherently political, and no Russian was able to escape making a political statement by the clothing they chose to wear. Initially, while older generations of nobility tended to follow policy in public, many rejected these changes in private. By mandating social change, Peter I's reforms became all encompassing, and allegiance to the Tsar's values could be clearly seen through the fashion of the masses.

Peter I's Rise & Desire to Westernize

The reign of the man who would one day become "the Great" began somewhat unconventionally when he was named Tsar a month before his tenth birthday.[4] After Peter's father, Tsar Aleksei, died in January 1676,[5] Peter's eldest half-brother succeeded the throne and became Fedor III, Tsar of All Russia at the age of fourteen.[6] Peter was only three at the time of their father's death. While this followed the tradition in which the eldest surviving son of the Tsar would rule after the monarch's death, Peter's family did not believe this would last long. Fedor was chronically ill, leading Peter's maternal family to believe he could one day be named the leader of the country. As relatives of the Tsar, this would cement their regal status as well as ensure they were awarded land and other valuable goods throughout their lives. Their desires came to fruition when Peter, who was still in the early years of his childhood, was named Tsar in 1682 after Fedor III died childless.[7] While already having waited for the death of the ruling Tsar, Peter's accession only occurred as his other

[1] Lindsay Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 3.
[2] Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, 265.
[3] Evgenii V. Anisimov, *The Reforms of Peter the Great: Progress through Coercion in Russia* (London: M.E. Sharpe, 1993), 219.
[4] Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, 8.
[5] James Cracraft, *The Revolution of Peter the Great* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 2.
[6] Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, 2.
[7] Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, 2.

half-brother, Ivan V, was recorded as having severe mental deficits, and therefore was unfit to rule alone. Had Ivan been considered, Peter would have been third in line following his father. However, Russian primogeniture was considered more of a custom than absolute law, so deviations such as this were accepted.[8] Despite being the Tsar of All Russia, Peter was still a child. Thus, his half-sister Sophia, who was the full sister of Fedor III, acted as Regent of Russia in his place.[9] Sophia, who was often described as 'power hungry,' gained her regency as the result of violent conflict between the two families, after which Ivan became the senior Tsar and Peter the junior.[10] While neither of the male sovereigns were capable of truly ruling Russia, Sophia acted in their place. Peter acted only in a ceremonial capacity by attending court functions for show,[11] but even this was limited and he often was left to pursue his own interests separate from the duties of the Tsar.[12] As Peter aged, support among the nobility for Sophia dwindled and she lost control in the fall of 1689, and Peter I regained his full autonomy as Tsar and began ruling in his own right.[13] Ivan remained a Tsar alongside Peter until his death in January 1696,[14] but mainly took on roles related to the Orthodox Church.

Nearly a decade into his personal reign, Peter I embarked upon his Grand Embassy to Europe from 1697-1698, where he studied shipbuilding and navigation in the Dutch Republic,[15] fueling his boyhood love of anything marine.[16] The Tsar's group continued across Europe, stopping in England, Vienna, the Netherlands, and modern-day Latvia. Each new location served as a stark reminder of how far behind his native Russia lagged. Peter feared that this would lead to long-term foreign dependency if nothing changed.[17] As Western practices had slowly been infiltrating the lives of upper-class Russians for decades, this trend was likely to continue, and would leave them at the mercy of foreign suppliers and prices. Royal account books which recorded purchases indicated a high number of orders for 'German dress' from foreign tailors and dressmakers between 1690 and 1691, not only for the Tsar himself, but for many of his close associates.[18] While the Russian elite had begun to make changes aligning with Western norms, the vast majority of the population remained in traditional ethnic dress.

Traditional Russian Garments

Often considered impious by the church in his early days for his love and use of German dress,[19] Peter's fashion choices clearly demonstrate the ties of clothing to Russian Orthodoxy, and by extension, traditional Russian culture. His love of Western dress strayed from the beliefs of both his father Aleksei, and older brother Fedor III, each of whom had implemented legislation to curtail the adoption of non-Russian fashions. Beginning in 1675, Aleksei banned all Russians from wearing any Western clothing to be able to better distinguish foreigners from natives. In 1680, Fedor extended this to ban specific styles from being worn, emphasizing this restriction for those attending court events. Despite these attempts, neither leader was fully effective. Their failure were caused by polish influence, though minor, that was present in the style dress and the removal of facial hair at court during Fedor's reign.[20] While a select few strayed from traditionalism, most who attended court retained Russian traditional dress until Peter mandated otherwise, if even then.

Local traditions had often influenced the style of ornamentation that would appear on garments, but during this period of transformation all ethnic dress was combined into a single category of Russian fashion.[21] Russian dress is generally characterized as being long in the body, often extending to the floor, with long sleeves on shirts or full-length garments. Additionally, both men's and women's dress were very loose, a significant distinction given how form-fitting garments were popular in Western Europe at the time. The loose style allowed most garments to be cut on straight lines and made of fewer sections of fabric, allowing for a more simplistic method of tailoring that could be done at home.[22] This was particularly important for the peasantry as it drastically reduced costs for necessary pieces.

Garments recovered across Russia are held in modern museums as a display of both the traditions and changes that Russian fashion has gone through. In 1976, the Metropolitan Museum of Art (The MET)

[8] Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, 8.
[9] Cracraft, *The Revolution of Peter the Great*, 3.
[10] Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, 9.
[11] Cracraft, *The Revolution of Peter the Great*, 4.
[12] Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, 9.
[13] Cracraft, *The Revolution of Peter the Great*, 3.
[14] Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, 16.
[15] Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, 23.
[16] L.R. Lewitter, "Peter the Great, Poland, and the Westernization of Russia," *Journal of the History of Ideas 19*, no. 4 (Oct 1958): 495, https://doi.org/10.2307/2707919.
[17] Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, 24.
[18] Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, 15.
[19] Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, 12.
[20] Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, 280.
[21] Christine Ruane, *The Empire's New Clothes: A History of the Russian Fashion Industry, 1700-1917* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 8.
[22] The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *History of Russian Costume from the Eleventh to the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1976), 11.

in New York City curated the *Glory of Russian Costume exhibition*, which obtained over 500 pieces of clothing and accessories[23] from five Russian museums[24] (called the USSR at the time of The MET collection). The exhibition was split into three sections, *Russian Costume from the 11th to the 17th Century*, *Folk Costume from the18th to the Early 20th Century*, and *Urban Costume from the 18th to the Early 20th Century*,[25] each of which displayed items characteristic of the time and place they originated from.

The *Russian Costume* section is of particular interest due to the archeological work that was done to obtain many of these earlier pieces, none of which were wholly preserved. Garments that were retrieved closer to the reign of Peter I, however, were kept in better condition, which allowed visitors of the initial exhibit, as well as readers of the collection catalogue, to see the consistency of style during this period. It is important to note that not all objects are photographed, but they are all numbered and described. Additionally, the majority of images that are included are shown in black and white, which means that while viewers are able to assessing the style of the garments themselves, their knowledge of the colour of the garments and the finer details are restricted to the description provided by The MET of each item.

While accessories dominated this collection, as metals and stones were more likely to be preserved than fabrics, there are a number of seventeenth-century garments which are well preserved. The first of these is item 62 in the catalogue, an *okhaben*, a woman's outer garment (Figure 1). The photo shows a relatively simplistic garment, open in the middle, with sleeves reaching almost to the bottom of the body of the piece. A darker trim is seen around the edges of each side,[26] described as "gold galloon."[27] A boy's shirt, called a *rubakha* (Figure 2), is pictured on the same page as the *okhaben* and follows the same general style – with the notable exception of the sleeve length. It too is a simple t-shape, having loose garment with trim along each edge as decoration. As this is not outerwear, it does not open in the center, but does have a large slit which opens at the neck.[28]

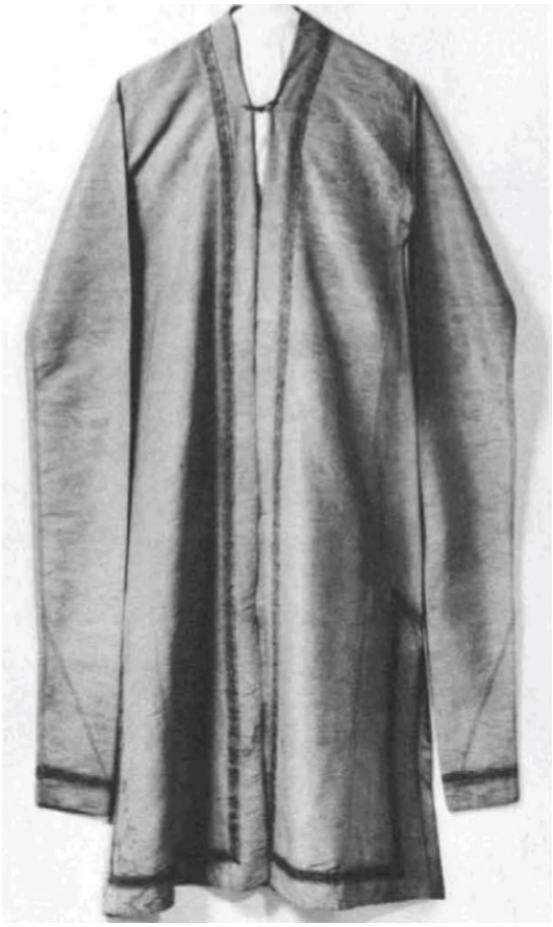


Figure 1. 'Okhaben (women's outer garment)' from The Metropolitan Museum of Art. *History of Russian Costume from the Eleventh to the Twentieth Century*. New York, 1976, 42.

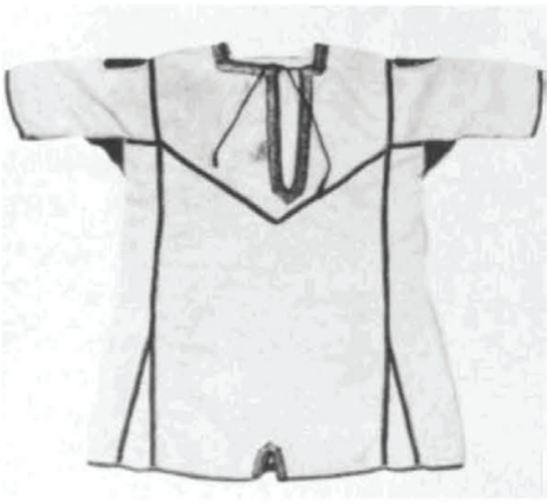


Figure 2. 'Rubakha (boy's shirt)' from The Metropolitan Museum of Art. *History of Russian Costume from the Eleventh to the Twentieth Century*. New York, 1976, 42.

[23] The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *History of Russian Costume*, 8.
[24] The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *History of Russian Costume*, 3.
[25] The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *History of Russian Costume*, 9.
[26] The Metropolitan Museum of Art, History of Russian Costume, 42.
[27] The Metropolitan Museum of Art, History of Russian Costume, 37.
[28] The Metropolitan Museum of Art, History of Russian Costume, 42.

Both examples showcase the simplicity of design that the average Russian would have worn prior to dress reform. While these were typical of the masses, clothing of the nobility or senior clergy members would have been more ornamented. The catalogue does not include pictures of these garments, though it describes two robes that would have been worn in religious ceremonies as having been decorated with pearls and precious stones and made of foreign fabrics.[29]As with other Russian-made garments, despite their increased decoration that served to show status, they would have been loose-fitting and long in the body and arms. Although these styles were cemented into Russian life for centuries, some of Peter's first reforms targeted clothing.

Sartorial Reforms

Fashion reform, like Peter I's other changes, started at the top with the Tsar and those closest to him before spreading downwards – first to the nobility, then to professionals located in high density urban areas and, finally, to the peasantry in the countryside. Even before formal legislation on dress, close associates and family members of Peter I were recorded to have worn Western fashions in their day to day lives.[30] Rather than allowing Western styles to infiltrate Russian society gradually, he mandated that members of the Russian court and all other officials abandon traditional garments in favour of the German style in an official proclamation of the Tsar – also known as an *ukaz* – in the year 1700.[31]

This initial decree targeted most demographics within the boundaries of Russia, but excluded members of the clergy and the peasantry – permitted they did not enter urban city limits. If, for any reason, a peasant were to enter city limits, they would be required to wear what became known as 'city clothes' in order to follow the requirements for Western dress, but could retain traditional ethnic dress so long as they remained engaged in agricultural activity outside of urban centers.[32] In this time, these two groups were exempt from following the new fashion requirements, whereas those working or living in urban centers, those of the upper ranks, and those employed by the state, were required to comply with the Tsar's demands. While it is unclear whether this was an intended consequence of the ruling, this subsequently deepened the urban-rural divide as it became increasingly visually clear where one was from based on the clothing they wore.[33]

In addition to Western clothing, Peter identified beards as a hallmark of Russian tradition, and therefore included facial hair in his list of mandatory changes. Soon after his first sartorial reforms were instituted, the Tsar decreed that all townsmen must be clean shaven, or they would be subject to an additional state tax. Some records claim the tax could range between 30 to 100 rubles,[34] while others had strict values, at 60 rubles for merchants and other townspeople, and 100 rubles for elite men. At the time, the average salary of a Russian carpenter was just 10 rubles per year,[35] meaning it would be financially impossible for the majority to opt out of the ban on facial hair. To ensure that men either followed the law or paid the appropriate tax, licenses – generally in the form of small discs called *znak*[36] – were attached to the beard. The *znak* were embossed with writing and a small picture, and meant that the tax had been paid[37] and the man's beard did not defy state sanctions. To show how seriously this law was taken, for a period of time, barbers were stationed outside the city gates of Moscow to shave any man's beard who did not have the proper license.[38]

Once these new laws were instituted, it was expected that they would be followed almost immediately, giving little time for the Russian fashion industry to catch up to legal expectations. When the first written rules were issued in early January 1700, those who were able were asked to abide by the legislation by Epiphany, which would happen two days later. Meanwhile, the rest would have until Shrovetide, which falls between early February and March each year. This timeline was impossible for most, so Peter I granted an extension until December 1 of that year for men, and January 1 of 1701 for women to follow the ruling.[39] Even with this extension, without the proper industries in place to accommodate the rapid change in clothing requirements, Russians were forced to turn to Western tailors and dressmakers as the internal fashion industry caught up.

[29] The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *History of Russian Costume*, 39.
[30] Ruane, *The Empire's New Clothes*, 21.
[31] Christine Ruane, "Clothes Make the Comrade: A History of the Russian Fashion Industry," *Russian History* 23, no. 1 (Spring 1996): 313.
[32] Ruane, *The Empire's New Clothes*, 67.
[33] Ruane, *The Empire's New Clothes*, 10.
[34] Anisimov, *The Reforms of Peter the Great*, 218.
[35] Matthew P. Romaniello, "'Grandeur and Show': Clothing, Commerce, and the Capital in Early Modern Russia," in *The Right to Dress: Sumptuary Laws in a Global Perspective, c 1200-1800*, ed. Giorgio Riello and Ulinka Rublack (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 386.
[36] Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, 282.
[37] Stephen Graham, *Peter the Great: A Life of Peter I in Russia* (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1950) 107.
[38] Graham, *Peter the Great*, 106.
[39] Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, 283.

Western Wear in Russia

The highly stratified nature of Russian society ensured that clearly defined boundaries isolated individuals and their families to a particular role. To this end, those closer to the top of the social hierarchy were subject to the most scrutiny by the Tsar for their fashion choices. During the early days of the fashion legislation, few tailors in Russia were trained in Western stitching techniques, nor were many aware of the latest men's and women's styles. Those that were trained in Western styles became overwhelmed with requests and were unable to keep up with demand.[40] In light of these challenges, as well as the desire to ensure they had the finest garments, top nobility was forced to turn to foreign designers to ensure they remained in the good graces of Peter I. This took place either by travelling abroad for the purpose of buying new clothing, or by having their new Western apparel imported.[41] Both options were quite expensive, and was therefore either unattainable for the majority, or unsustainable over the long term even if one could afford travel or importation initially.

The high cost of foreign goods in combination with the fact that Western wear was required for all urban, upper class, or state-employed individuals drove the fashion and design industry in Russia. At first, Russian tailors resorted to replicating foreign designs that they had purchased. This had a positive economic impact as domestic labour and capital was used in the production of these garments,[42] but it still heavily relied on foreign production, meaning prices remained higher than necessary. To encourage the domestication of the fashion industry, promote Western dress, and integrate general Western principles further into Russian life, Peter I campaigned to have European tailors move to Russia.

This began in the early eighteenth century as the Russian state assured foreigners that should they set up businesses in the Eastern country, they would quickly accumulate a large customer base. As there was a lack of appropriate garment manufacturers during this period, foreigners saw this as a lucrative opportunity. While the Russian state provided a stable business opportunity, they required the assurance that these foreigners would employ Russians as apprentices in their shops, teaching them the intricacies of Western design and needlework.[43] This would ensure that, in a future with fewer foreigners living and working in Russia, their knowledge of garment making would remain in the country. It also allowed Russian nationals to use their knowledge of local fashion taste to adapt foreign designs that may be more attractive to their customers.[44] This campaign proved to be so successful that Russian tailors would often use foreign names for their businesses to attempt to fool customers into thinking it was a legitimately foreign shop. In many cases this was futile, but it did demonstrate the preference that Russians had for foreign tailors, especially in the earlier years of Westernization.[45]

The opportunity to apprentice with a foreign tailor, while a promising opportunity, proved to be difficult for many. In order to truly infuse Russian society with European norms, the guild structure was introduced. A master who sat for and passed an examination would be inducted into the tailors' guild. He would then be permitted to set up his own business and hire and train apprentices and journeymen.[46] The conditions of these lower-status workers were often abysmal, with many living in a small workshop[47] where they worked long hours for little pay. In many cases, apprentices were treated as labourers, and it was not until one became a journeyman that their master would finally begin teaching the trade.[48] However, this remained a more favourable option to many.

Despite the attempts to domesticate foreign fashion and its production, many were hesitant to participate in the changes. Over the course of Peter's reign and his many successors, Russians of all social statuses would eventually adopt Western fashion as their everyday wear, though this did not occur as immediately as the Tsar had initially desired.

Rejecting Westernization

Social revitalization under Peter the Great is cited as the earliest example of a 'new order'[49] in which elites are able to show their loyalties to the ruler by adopting new forms of dress, or reject his principles by retaining aspects of traditional society.[50] Peter

[40] Ruane, *The Empire's New Clothes*, 14.
[41] Ruane, "*Clothes Make the Comrade*," 314.
[42] Ruane, "*Clothes Make the Comrade*," 314.
[43] Ruane, *The Empire's New Clothes*, 38.
[44] Ruane, "*Clothes Make the Comrade*," 314.
[45] Ruane, *The Empire's New Clothes*, 38.
[46] Ruane, *The Empire's New Clothes*, 25.
[47] Ruane, *The Empire's New Clothes*, 33.
[48] Ruane, *The Empire's New Clothes*, 28.
[49] Igor Fedyukin, "'Westernizations' from Peter I to Meiji: War, Political Competition, and Institutional Change," *Theory and Society 47*, no. 2 (April 2018): 215.
[50] Fedyukin, "'Westernizations' from Peter I to Meiji," 214.

himself, along with his close circle, had been wearing Western clothing for years, as demonstrated by the orders for 'German Dress' and other foreign goods such as Rhine wine and mathematical instruments[51] prior to the Grand Embassy to Europe of 1698. It is unclear how willing his associates were to change their dress, or if they did so only because of the Tsar's request. Whichever the case, they obliged. This was not the reality for the general population, however. As previously stated, Peter's initial expectations that Western wear would become the norm almost immediately after his January 1700 *ukaz*, was not the case. In response to the delay, Peter extended the regulations to take effect in December 1700 for men, and January 1701 for women. Even after this postponement, many who were subject to the laws chose to retain their traditional wear.

The younger generation of nobility was more willing to accept change, having been slowly exposed to foreign ways during their upbringing. Their mothers and fathers, however, were far more resistant. Having served Tsars Alexis and Fedor, both of whom had legislated against Western dress as well as being brought up in the Orthodox church, many saw Peter's choices as going against the word of God. The 1551 Stoglav Council produced the *One Hundred Chapters*, which intended to homogenize Orthodox traditions within the borders of Russia.[52] Here it is explicitly stated that "the sacred rules to all Orthodox Christians warn them not to shave their beards or moustaches or to cut their hair. Such is not an Orthodox practice, but a Latin and heretical bequest of the Greek Emperor Constantine V."[53] In addition to the clearly stated religious expectations of facial hair which separated practitioners of Eastern and Western Christianity, it was a common belief throughout Russian society that God gave men the ability to grow facial hair, but withheld this power from women so that they would be reminded of their subordinate positions to their husbands and fathers.[54] Abandoning their beards in favour of a clean face meant abandoning these beliefs, an act that most were unwilling to participate in.

In terms of dress, those who wanted to remain in the good graces of the Tsar would often sport French or German fashions in public, but felt more comfortable in loose fitting, traditional Russian dress which they continued to wear in the privacy of their homes.[55] This choice reflected the power Peter had as Tsar to impact the wealth and status of the nobility. Even those that did not agree with his principles, mainly for religious reasons, understood the possible negative effects their choice to publicly defy him could have. Choices of dress became inherently political; was it better to continue to align oneself with their spiritual beliefs, or to give this up in favour of political status? Everyone had a decision to make every day.

An anonymous 1708 letter claimed that the wives of the top boyars would only choose Western dresses when Peter was in Moscow. However, when he was travelling elsewhere, they would revert to their traditional clothing. The author of the letter went as far as identifying the offending women and their husbands by name in his writing.[56] Once again, this shows how the top nobility understood the consequences of their choice of clothing. Even the wives, who would not have been politically relevant to Peter's administration, knew their choice of clothing would have effects upon their husbands. When they were at risk of being seen by the Tsar, they would adhere to the regulations; but given more freedom, their choice, likely supported by their husbands, would be to return to traditional Russian clothing. "A German tunic worn by a German means nothing, but a German tunic worn by a Russian turns into a symbol of his adherence to European culture."[57] Conversely, purposely continuing to wear a Russian caftan became a symbol of adherence to tradition and protest against the Tsar's changes.

In Moscow, inspectors would issue fines to those who did not follow regulations, even going as far as to cut off the bottom of robes that went past the accepted length.[58] However, the fines appeared to be relatively ineffective as by 1720, two decades after the initial reforms, very minimal revenue had been brought in,[59] suggesting the enforcement of both fashion and the punishment was ineffective for the masses.

Much of the work around Russian dress reform focuses on the implications felt by the nobility as they

[51] Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, 15.
[52] Romaniello, "'Grandeur and Show,'" 377.
[53] Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, 284.
[54] Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, 284.
[55] Anisimov, *The Reforms of Peter the Great*, 219.
[56] Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, 285.
[57] Zhivov, V. M. and Uspensky B. A. "'Tsar' i Bog: Semiotiicheskie aspekty sakralizatsii monarkha v Rossii" Quoted in Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, 280.
[58] Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, 284.
[59] Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, 286.

were in more direct contact with Peter I. However, the legislation of 1700 also impacted anyone living and working in Russia's cities. Beginning in 1705, residents of Siberia petitioned the Tsar to be able to return to traditional dress due to the undue financial hardship that this change had imposed upon residents. Their request was granted in 1706, and traditional Russian clothing could continue to be worn without fear of punishment.[60]

Although the majority of scholars who have pioneered the field of Russian fashion agree that the adoption of Western dress faced numerous barriers, and was generally disliked in earlier years, this opinion is not universal. In a 1987 exhibit review of the Hermitage Museum in Leningrad, now Saint Petersburg, author Sandra Miller claims that members of the court were enthusiastic about the 1700 *ukaz* and needed little persuasion from their leader to don the "sophisticated looks sported at the court of Louis XIV," rather than their "unflattering image, beards and all."[61] Her claim is unsupported by evidence, but remains critical to include in a holistic study of Peter's dress reforms. Whether intentional or not, Miller's writing shows clear bias in assuming the superiority of the West as evident in his not assuming that Russians of the 1700s enjoyed and wanted to preserve their unique styles.

Despite some contrary beliefs, confirmation through letters, fines, and continuous legislation prove that the adoption of Western dress was slower than initially desired. The efforts of Peter were not unsuccessful entirely, however, as by 1900 even the Russian peasantry appeared European.[62] The efforts of Peter's subjects to resist change may have had some impact, but nothing would be enough for the Tsar to repeal his legislation.

Conclusion

Peter I's reforms began the sartorial transformation. Yet his expectation that such a massive social change would be accepted and instituted within a few years was unfounded. The barriers he faced were simply too great for this to become reality. From the association of piety with Russian dress and men's facial hair, to the lack of industry to produce Europeanized goods, the rapidity he sought for the adoption of Western dress in Russia was impossible. Fashion was used as a tool of allegiance or quiet rebellion, and despite efforts, there were limits to enforcement.

The changes discussed in this paper span only the first few years of Peter's sartorial reforms, however, this is by no means all encompassing. In addition to the work he did to modernize the Russian population, his successors followed his principles to further update Russia as they saw fit. Catherine I, Peter's wife, despite only being on the throne for a few years, continued to work on enforcing European transformation as did many that came after her.

[60] Hughes, *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*, 284.
[61] Sandra Miller, "Russian Style 1700-1920: Court and Country Dress from the Hermitage," *Irish Arts Review* 4 no. 1 (Spring 1987): 61
[62] Ruane, "*Clothes Make the Comrade*," 317.

Work Cited

Anisimov, Evgenii V. *The Reforms of Peter the Great: Progress through Coercion in Russia*. London: M.E. Sharpe, 1993.

Cracraft, James. *The Revolution of Peter the Great*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003.

Fedyukin, Igor. "'Westernizations' from Peter I to Meiji: War, Political Competition, and Institutional Change," *Theory and Society* 47, no. 2 (April 2018): 207-231.

Graham, Stephen. *Peter the Great: A Life of Peter I in Russia*. London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1950.

Hughes, Lindsay. *Russia in the Age of Peter the Great*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000.

Lewitter, L.R. "Peter the Great, Poland, and the Westernization of Russia," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 19, no. 4 (Oct 1958): 493-506. https://doi.org/10.2307/2707919.

Miller, Sandra. "Russian Style 1700-1920: Court and Country Dress from the Hermitage." *Irish Arts Review* 4 no. 1 (Spring 1987): 61-62.

Romaniello, Matthew P. "'Grandeur and Show': Clothing, Commerce, and the Capital in Early Modern Russia." In *The Right to Dress: Sumptuary Laws in a Global Perspective, c 1200-1800*, edited by Giorgio Riello and Ulinka Rublack, 375-392. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019.

Ruane, Christine. *The Empire's New Clothes: A History of the Russian Fashion Industry, 1700-1917*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009.

Ruane, Christine. "Clothes Make the Comrade: A History of the Russian Fashion Industry," *Russian History* 23, no. 1 (Spring 1996): 311-343.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art. *History of Russian Costume from the Eleventh to the Twentieth Century*. New York, 1976.



Photographer: Henry Deng

"A place of our own": Club '70, Womonspace, and the Creation of Queer Social Spaces in Edmonton

Megan Sparrow

ABSTRACT: While queer history is an ever-expanding field, academic attention has primarily been focused on larger cities such as New York and Vancouver. However, there is immense value in studying the queer histories of smaller, more traditionally conservative areas such as Edmonton; without also centring these areas in historical research, it is impossible to develop a nuanced understanding of the various challenges that queer Canadians have historically faced. This paper aims to contribute to the larger field of Canadian queer history by highlighting a portion of Edmonton's (often overlooked) history.

The organizations discussed in this paper - Club '70 and Womonspace - constituted some of the earliest formal social spaces available to queer Edmontonians. Each organization addressed slightly different needs; Club '70 provided a space for all queer Edmontonians to socialize, whereas Womonspace was founded specifically as a lesbian-focused organization. The existence of these social spaces allowed queer Edmontonians to connect with each other and find community at a time when the broader political climate was not especially welcoming. Both organizations significantly expanded the social opportunities available to queer Edmontonians and broadened the scope of LGBTQ+ organizational activities across the prairies. By facilitating socialization and providing a space for members to be their authentic selves, both Club '70 and Womonspace contributed to the development of an interconnected and distinctive "queer community" in Edmonton.

KEYWORDS: Queer History, Community Building, Edmonton, History, Canadian History, Cultural History

Introduction

Edmonton occupies a unique position within the larger queer history of Canada. Alberta's tradition of political conservatism has historically made queer life in Edmonton particularly difficult, as many queer Edmontonians faced discrimination from family, friends, and their places of employment.[1] A pervading sense of paranoia resulted in Edmonton's "gay scene" which remained generally hidden, consisting mostly of "groups of people who interact on a personal level in small numbers."[2] Compared to larger cities such as New York and Vancouver, Edmonton's queer community was often viewed as underdeveloped. However, to residents of rural areas surrounding Edmonton, the city was a "gay and lesbian mecca", providing opportunities not available in smaller towns.[3] This duality highlights the importance of studying Edmonton's queer history; while larger cities in traditionally progressive provinces may have more 'visible' histories involving the LGBTQ+ community, there is immense value in documenting the histories of smaller, more conservative areas as well. Without centering cities like Edmonton in historical research, it is impossible to develop a complete and nuanced understanding of the diversity of experiences that queer Canadians have historically faced.

The organizations discussed in this paper - Club '70 and Womonspace - constituted some of the earliest formal social spaces available to queer Edmontonians. Prior to the founding of these organizations, many Edmonton's queer residents were isolated from one another due to the lack of social infrastructure.[4] Both Club '70 and Womonspace were founded out of recognition for this need for queer social spaces, although they each addressed slightly different needs; Club '70 provided a space for all queer Edmontonians to socialize, whereas Womonspace was founded specifically as a lesbian-focused organization. Unlike other queer organizations throughout Edmonton's history, Club '70 and Womonspace exclusively focused on the objectives of socialization and community building; both organizations remained officially apolitical and were rarely directly involved with activism. Both Club '70 and Womonspace created spaces in which their members could express themselves authentically, and this had a tangible impact on the wider community. By facilitating socialization and providing a space to 'be queer', both Club '70 and Womonspace contributed to the development of an interconnected and distinctive "queer community" in Edmonton.

[1] "Newspaper Clippings A - Photocopied news clippings" (198-?), MS-1214 Box 3 File 26, Womonspace Collection, City of Edmonton Archives.
[2] "Canadian National Canadian Pacific Telecommunications from W.H. Munro, Managing Editor, Butch Magazine, Sydney, Australia, to GATE P.O. Box 1352 Edmonton Alberta, 28 October 1972". MS-595 Series 1 Box 1, Gay and Lesbian Archives of Edmonton fonds (GALA), City of Edmonton Archives. Quoted in Valerie J. Korinek, Prairie Fairies: A History of Queer Communities and People in Western Canada, 1930-1985 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018), 224.
[3] Valerie J. Korinek, Prairie Fairies: A History of Queer Communities and People in Western Canada, 1930-1985 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018), 22.
[4] "Newsletters" (1982-1984), MS-1214 Box 1 File 6, Womonspace Collection, City of Edmonton Archives.

A note on terminology

Throughout this paper, I will be using the word "queer" as an umbrella term to describe people within Edmonton's 2SLGBTQIA+ community. To echo Valerie Korinek, my use of the term "queer" as a general descriptor is meant to "capture the range of 'diverse experiences and identifications'" that Edmontonians have historically displayed.[5] However, I believe that it is vital to describe historical actors in their own terms when possible. In some sources, individuals explicitly identified using a specific label (such as "gay", "lesbian", "homosexual", or "bisexual"), and in those cases I have used their chosen descriptors to refer to them. When writing about Womonspace, I have defaulted to referring to members as lesbian, because the organization explicitly labeled itself as a "society for lesbians".[6] In cases where a narrator's identity is otherwise unclear, I have defaulted to the term "queer".

Club '70 (1970-1978)

Prior to the creation of Club '70, Edmonton lacked spaces that were exclusively 'queer'. Other than cruising sites, and hotels like the Mayfair and Corona that catered to gay clientele, there were few spaces available for queer Edmontonians to socialize and meet others.[7] The formation of Club '70 was kickstarted by two "former Calgarians", who, after a visit to the west coast in 1969, were inspired to start their own social club.[8] The development of the club was initially a collaborative effort between twelve people, but the project grew quickly, and soon over 53 people had joined to help create Club '70.[9]

Club '70 stands out in Edmonton's history because it was the first 'official' queer social organization established in the city. In fact, the club's lawyer speculated "that it was perhaps the first 'registered' Club of its kind in Canada".[10] Members-only social clubs like Club '70 were "a hallmark of post-1970s Western Canadian gay and lesbian community formation".[11] In a region and period where social opportunities were extremely limited, venues like Club '70 provided irreplaceable spaces for queer Edmontonians to socialize and form personal connections.

Existing as an officially queer organization in Edmonton at this time was not an easy task. Due to the difficulties of acquiring a liquor license, the club was initially only allowed to serve alcohol on certain nights.[12] Because the club was constantly monitored by law enforcement, liquor regulations were strictly enforced by management; reminders, usually along the lines of "liquor dispensing MUST BE DISCONTINUED at 1:00 a.m.… There can be NO exception to this rule" were frequently published in the club's newsletter. Drugs were also prohibited from club premises, and attendees were required to be 18 years or older.[13] These measures demonstrate just how diligent the club (and its members) had to be in order to continue existing – due to the frequency of police visits, any violation of city legislation would likely result in the club being shut down.

Throughout Club 70's lifespan, its primary directive was to create a space for queer Edmontonians to socialize. In addition to their usual hours on Wednesday nights and weekends, the club frequently hosted special events.[14] Dances seemed to be most popular, with themes ranging from "Old-Time-Hard-Time Dance" (jeans and plaid shirts required)[15], to "Hawaiian Night".[16] Holidays, such as Halloween and New Years were also celebrated at the club.[17] By the mid-1970s, Club '70 had also begun producing musicals and plays. Their 1974 production of *Hello Dolly* was attended by 244 people, with guests traveling from Calgary, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, and Regina.[18]

---

[5] Matt Cook and Jennifer V. Evans, "Introduction" in Queer Cities, Queer Cultures: Europe since 1945, ed. Cook and Evans (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), 3. Quoted in Valerie J. Korinek, *Prairie Fairies: A History of Queer Communities and People in Western Canada, 1930-1985* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018), 4.

[6] "Newsletter - Originators of Womonspace," (1982), MS-1214 Box 1 File 5, Womonspace Collection, City of Edmonton Archives.

[7] Korinek, *Prairie Fairies*, 227.

[8] *Club '70 News*, vol. 3, no. 1 (February 1972). "Club 70 - Newsletter" (1970-1972), MS-595 Series 11 Box 28 File 10, Gay and Lesbian Archives of Edmonton fonds (GALA), City of Edmonton Archives.

[9] *Club '70 News*, vol. 3, no. 1 (February 1972).

[10] *Club '70 News*, vol. 3, no. 1 (February 1972).

[11] Valerie J. Korinek, "A Queer-Eye View of the Prairies: Reorienting Western Canadian Histories", in *The West and Beyond: New Perspectives on an Imagined Region*, ed. Alvin Finkel, Sarah Carter, and Peter Fortna, 278-296 (Edmonton: Athabasca University Press, 2010), 286.

[12] Korinek, Prairie Fairies, 228.

[13] "Club 70's Second Year Anniversary", *Club '70 News*, vol. 3, no. 1 (February 1972)

[14] "Club 70", Edmonton Queer History Project.

[15] *'70 News* (1970). "Club 70 - Newsletter" (1970-1972), MS-595, Series 11, Box 28, File 10, Gay and Lesbian Archives of Edmonton fonds (GALA), City of Edmonton Archives.

[16] *Club '70 News* (Sept 1971), vol. 2, no.7. "Club 70 - Newsletter" (1970-1972), MS-595, Series 11, File 10, Gay and Lesbian Archives of Edmonton fonds (GALA), City of Edmonton Archives.

[17] *'70 News* (October 1971). "Club 70 - Newsletter" (1970-1972), MS-595, Series 11, File 10, Gay and Lesbian Archives of Edmonton fonds (GALA), City of Edmonton Archives.

[18] *Club '70 news* (June 1974). "Club 70 - Newsletter" (1974-1976,1978), MS-595, Series 11, File 11, Gay and Lesbian Archives of Edmonton fonds (GALA), City of Edmonton Archives.

In an effort to give back to the community, Club '70 also facilitated several fundraising drives. In 1970, the club hosted a 'Toy Blitz', in which members were required to bring a "toy or children's game" in addition to the usual entry fee.[19] The Blitz was a success - the club managed to fill a "large box" with toys, which were donated to Santa's Anonymous.[20] Perhaps the most notable of Club '70's fundraising expeditions was a benefit dance hosted by the club to raise money to cover the legal fees of a Saskatoon mother who was involved in a custody battle because of her sexual orientation.[21] This benefit dance demonstrates the extent to which Club '70 facilitated the formation of community ties within the prairies, and in cases like this, acted as a facilitator for community action. Additionally, the undertaking of this dance highlights the strong connection that Club '70 maintained with other queer social clubs across provincial lines.

It is important to note that Club '70 did not simply exist within a metropolitan bubble. Because of Edmonton's status as a major urban area in Alberta, Club '70 drew people in from areas outside of the city as well. In fact, many members of the club listed addresses outside of city limits, ranging from Sherwood Park, and Bon Accord to cities as far away as Calgary and Vancouver.[22] Because venues that catered to queer people were very limited within Edmonton throughout the 1970s, the club relied on support and programming from social clubs outside of the city as well. Calgary's queer social club, Club Carousel, had an especially close working relationship with Club '70, as members from Club '70 frequently traveled to Calgary on the weekends to attend events at Club Carousel.[23] Announcements for Club Carousel events were published in *Club '70 News* nearly every month, and the clubs often organized transportation such as charter buses between the two cities.[24] Occasionally, the two clubs collaborated to host joint events.[25] After its establishment in 1972, the Gemini Club in Saskatoon formed a similar relationship with Club '70. Members of both Gemini Club and Club Carousel enjoyed "the same rights and privileges" as Club '70 members, and membership cards for both clubs were honored by Club '70.[26] Cooperation with other social clubs across Western Canada granted Club '70 members access to a greater diversity and frequency of events. The cooperative relationship established between these three clubs also indicates that Club '70 functioned within a prairie-wide network of queer organizations; the interactions between these clubs fostered the development of inter-city relationships, and to some extent, the creation of a prairie-wide 'queer community'.

Officially, Club '70 was a mixed-gender organization. Women actively involved in leadership of the club, and female presidents were not uncommon - "Miss C. Jacobson"[27] and "Miss M. Collins",[28] who both served as president of the club, are mentioned frequently in early newsletters and meeting minutes. Based on interviews conducted by Valerie Korinek, there is "evidence that significant numbers of women attended… [Club '70] dances".[29] However, men still vastly outnumbered women in the club,[30] and well-intentioned outreaches to attract more lesbian members "were often compromised by their assumptions and stereotypes about lesbians".[31] Some attendees lamented that the club tended to be quite gender-segregated at times; in an article discussing Club '70, Barb Plaumann noted that it felt like "there was a contagious disease involved that the members of the opposite sex don't want to catch".[32] She urged members not to "split into even smaller groups", as it could harm the overall strength of the queer community.[33] Despite these difficulties, Club '70 maintained a "policy of inclusivity",[34] and in the years after it closed, many people remembered the club fondly as a space for members of both genders to congregate.

[19] *The Inside Track*, (Nov 1970), vol. 1, no. 12. "Club 70 - Newsletter" (1970-1972), MS-595, Series 11, File 10, Gay and Lesbian Archives of Edmonton fonds (GALA), City of Edmonton Archives.
[20] Ibid.
[21] *Club '70 news* (June 1974).
[22] Club '70 Membership list (September 17, 1970). MS-595 Series 11, Box 28 File 5, Gay and Lesbian Archives of Edmonton fonds (GALA), City of Edmonton Archives.
[23] "Club 70 - Meeting documents and mailings" (1970-1975). MS-595 Series 11 Box 28 File 6, Gay and Lesbian Archives of Edmonton fonds (GALA), City of Edmonton Archives.
[24] *The Inside Track*, vol. 2, no. 2, (February 1971). MS-595, Series 11, File 10, Gay and Lesbian Archives of Edmonton fonds (GALA), City of Edmonton Archive.
[25] Ibid.
[26] *Club '70 News* (December 1970). MS-595, Series 11, File 10, Gay and Lesbian Archives of Edmonton fonds (GALA), City of Edmonton Archives.
[27] Minutes from Club '70 Annual General Meeting, January 17, 1971. "Club 70 - Meeting documents and mailings" (1970-1975), MS-595, Series 11, Box 28, File 6, Gay and Lesbian Archives of Edmonton fonds (GALA), City of Edmonton Archives.
[28] Minutes from Club '70 Annual General Meeting, January 23, 1972.
[29] Korinek, *Prairie Fairies*, 227
[30] Ibid, 28.
[31] Ibid, 231.
[32] Club '70 News, vol. 3, no. 7, (September 1972). MS-595, Series 11, File 10, Gay and Lesbian Archives of Edmonton fonds (GALA), City of Edmonton Archives.
[33] *Club '70 News*, vol. 3, no. 7, (September 1972).
[34] Korinek, *Prairie Fairies*, 235.

Many of Club '70's members preferred to be discreet about their involvement with the organization. In a membership list from 1970, some members are listed with no phone numbers or addresses listed - it is likely they chose not to disclose that information to protect their privacy.[35] Having one's membership exposed to the public could result in both personal and professional setbacks.[36] The club strictly prohibited the invitation of straight guests; members that brought straight people into the club were subject to a $5 fine and 30-day suspension.[37] Although this policy may seem harsh, it was likely instituted as another means to protect the privacy and safety of members. The locations of social groups such as Club '70 were "purposely hard to find – you had to know someone to find them".[38] This emphasis on discretion was a common characteristic of social groups across the prairies and speaks to the broader social climate of Edmonton in the 1970s. Queer Edmontonians - at least the ones who chose to remain closeted in their daily lives - had a lot to lose if their identities were exposed. This characteristic need for discretion would carry over to Edmonton's later queer social organizations, including Womonspace.

A defining characteristic of Club '70 is the extent to which it relied on the support of members. *Club '70 News* often published calls for volunteers to help with the regular operations of the club, such as operating the coat check[39] and concession stand.[40] Renovations such as painting were sometimes undertaken by volunteers,[41] and members with experience in ventilation and sound systems were asked to provide advice on issues relating to those matters.[42] In 1972, the president of Club '70 stressed that "for the Club to operate at its capacity it would have to have the support of all the members".[43] Many members of Club '70 responded enthusiastically to these calls for support. In an editorial for *Club '70 News*, a member "Rodger Stone" stated that he saw it as his duty "become immediately involved in the various club committees and projects, and to do my part in making an even greater success of the club".[44] The extent to which members were willing to chip in and to keep Club '70 running demonstrates the level of commitment many of them felt towards the organization. As the years went on, members formed a relatively close-knit community that regularly contributed their time, energy, and skill to ensure the continued operation of the club.

Throughout its existence, Club '70 officially remained apolitical - in fact, the club was self-described as "basically a social club and not really actively involved in gay movements".[45] However, it was recognized that some members were politically inclined, and calls for activism were sometimes published in *Club '70 News*. The club also interacted with G.A.T.E. regularly, providing them with a space to sell periodicals and advertise G.A.T.E events in the newsletter.[46] While Club '70 avoided explicit political affiliation, their working relationship with G.A.T.E indicates that the club was by no means opposed to activism; instead, they simply chose to focus on community building.

The existence of Club '70 had a profound and lasting effect on queer Edmontonians; by providing invaluable opportunities for members to socialize, the club helped to combat the isolation felt by many queer men and women living within the city. According to Valerie Korinek, the club allowed members to openly express and explore their identities, and "became a mecca for those queer people who desired exclusively queer space"[47] By providing this space, Club '70 helped to facilitate the development of an interconnected 'queer community', both within Edmonton and between prairie cities.

> *"It might do everyone well to sit back for a moment, and fully realize how lucky we are to have a Club such as ours. I ask, 'what would we do if it didn't exist?' For the majority of us, it would be back to cruising straight bars, and we are all aware of what a frustrating and sometimes disheartening chore that is. Here we have a Club, that allows us to be ourselves, and that makes being 'GAY' a pleasure. A place of our own where we can meet on our own, and most important of all, a place where we are accepted for what we are."*[48]
>
> - 'Rodger Stone'

[35] Club '70 Membership list, (September 17, 1970).
[36] "Club 70", Edmonton Queer History Project.
[37] *Club '70 News*, vol. 3, no. 1 (February 1972).
[38] Korinek, "A Queer-Eye View of the Prairies", 285-286.
[39] *Club '70 News*, vol. 3, no. 1 (February 1972).
[40] *Club '70, News* (February 1970). MS-595, Series 11, File 10, Gay and Lesbian Archives of Edmonton fonds (GALA), City of Edmonton Archives.
[41] *Club '70 News*, vol. 3, no. 1 (February 1972).
[42] Ibid.
[43] Minutes from Club '70 Annual General Meeting, January 23, 1972. "Club 70 - Meeting documents and mailings" (1970-1975), MS-595, Series 11, Box 28, File 6, Gay and Lesbian Archives of Edmonton fonds (GALA), City of Edmonton Archives.
[44] Rodger Stone (pseudonym), "Editorial", *Club '70 News*, vol. 3, no. 4 (May 1972).
[45] *Club '70 News*, vol. 3, no. 7 (September 1972).
[46] Korinek, *Prairie Fairies*, 231.
[47] Ibid, 228.
[48] Rodger Stone (pseudonym), "Editorial", *Club '70 News*, vol. 3, no. 4 (May 1972).

Womonspace (1981-2018)

Formed in 1981, Womonspace was Edmonton's longest-running "social, recreational and educational society for lesbians".[49] Womonspace provided a much-needed space for Edmonton's lesbians to comfortably socialize and build community ties.

In the early 1980s, Edmonton's lesbians faced a distinct lack of social opportunities. Club '70, which had previously been a popular space for lesbians to socialize with the wider queer community, had closed its doors two years previously. The remaining clubs that catered to queer Edmontonians tended to be less than welcoming to lesbians, many of whom were becoming increasingly frustrated with the absence of queer social spaces open to them.[50] Additionally, women involved with organizations such as G.A.T.E. were often "ignored, interrupted" and patronized by their male counterparts.[51] When explaining the motivations behind the creation of Womonspace, founder Jeanne Rioux stated "there has to be space in this city for lesbians - we're here. We can't go on being anonymous and oblivious."[52] In 1981, a group of women organized a women's dance, the success of which sparked the official creation of Womonspace.[53]

The official goals of the organization were to provide a space for queer women to comfortably socialize, "foster a positive sense of Lesbian Identity", and "decrease the sense of isolation felt by many Lesbians".[54] Services provided by Womonspace included workshops, an information phone line, and a library. Special events, such as hayrides, roller skating, and self-defense workshops also occurred regularly. A main feature of Womonspace's programming was their monthly dances, which proved to be immensely popular amongst members.[55] In addition, Womonspace hosted "Lesbian Drop-Ins" every Thursday night.[56] These drop-ins, which were informal and usually consisted of coffee and chatting, provided a "first connection with the community" for many women.[57] In recognition that children could prevent women from attending the drop-ins, the organization provided a playroom and encouraged mothers to bring their children along with them.[58] The attention paid to the inclusion of children demonstrates the extent to which Womonspace recognized the unique challenges that lesbians and queer women faced when trying to socialize with others. Regular meetings, drop-ins, and dances helped to "create a sense of belonging with others" and thus strengthened a sense of 'lesbian identity' for members.[59]

In order to provide these services, Womonspace relied on volunteer work - often to an even greater extent than Club '70 did. The organization was "operated and organized completely by volunteers",[60] and active members were required to volunteer a minimum of 12 hours per year to maintain their membership status.[61]



Advertisement for a Womonspace dance, published in *Womonspace News*, October 1984 (accessed via Edmonton Queer History Project)

[49] "Newsletters - Originators of Womonspace" (1982), MS-1214 Box 1 File 5, Womonspace Collection, City of Edmonton Archives.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Jeanne Rioux, interview with Brian Chittock, *Fine Print*, (n.d.). "Newspaper Clippings B - Original news clippings" (198-? - 199-?), MS-1214 Box 3 File 27, Womonspace Collection, City of Edmonton Archives.
[52] Ibid.
[53] "Newsletters - Originators of Womonspace" (1982).
[54] Ibid.
[55] Lucas, 77.
[56] "Newsletters - Originators of Womonspace" (1982).
[57] Lucas, 76.
[58] "Newsletters" (1982-1984), MS-1214 Box 1 File 6, Womonspace Collection, City of Edmonton Archives.
[59] Lucas, 31.
[60] "Womonspace Dance Coordinating" (198-? - 199-?), MS-1214 Box 3 File 17, Womonspace Collection, City of Edmonton Archives.
[61] "Newsletters" (1982-1984).

In addition to the programming discussed above, Womonspace released a monthly newsletter starting in 1982. In addition to day-to-day administrative updates, *Womonspace News* published letters to the editor, poetry, cartoons, and classified advertisements. Member submissions were highly encouraged and made up a majority of the newsletter. Recurring features from early newsletters included "Book Reviews by Lindy",[62] and member-submitted poetry.[63] Letters to the editor provided a space for debates on various topics, including "pornography, disabled lesbians, lesbians and aging".[64] The high level of engagement that *Womonspace News* received is indicative of the role the organization played in facilitating discussions and connections between members. The material published in *Womonspace News* - whether it was the latest opinion on feminist discourse, or a cartoon about houseplants - contributed to the growth of a distinct lesbian subculture within Edmonton.

Like Club '70, Womonspace was an officially apolitical organization. While Womonspace defined itself as a "lesbian organization" in its own newsletter, they seldom identified this way in more mainstream publications.[65] Existing as a lesbian in Edmonton came with unique challenges, as queer women faced heightened risks of losing their children and employment if their identities were discovered.[66] To protect its members, Womonspace "fiercely protected anonymity",[67] and remaining publicly apolitical was one way to achieve this. In some ways, Womonspace's apolitical approach helped facilitate the development of a larger lesbian social network in Edmonton. By focusing solely on community building, the organization drew in many women who may not have joined an explicitly political group - whether they were still questioning their identity, or simply preferred to remain discreet about their involvement. Despite this, the topic of politicization was highly contentious within the group, and some members urged the group to take a more public stance on LGBTQ+ issues.[68] One such member, Elizabeth Massiah, clashed with the organization's leadership and was eventually expelled because her refusal to be discreet about her lesbianism was perceived as a threat to the group.[69]

Although the group identified itself as apolitical, it would be inaccurate to portray Womonspace as a group with no political affinity. Much like Club '70, *Womonspace News* often published calls for activism from groups such as GALA.[70] Members viewed socialization and community building as a means to strengthen the queer community from within; as Jeanne Rioux stated in *Womonspace News*, the organization's purpose was "not to split the gay community but rather to strengthen our half of it so that both the male and female parts will become equal in our path toward freedom".[71] Additionally, Womonspace served as a jumping-off point for many activists within the community - as members continued to socialize with each other and develop their own understandings of a 'lesbian identity', they increasingly became involved with political groups as well.[72]

Throughout its existence, Womonspace made a tremendous impact on the lesbian community in Edmonton. By providing a much-needed social space, the organization brought many women into the community and facilitated the development of a distinctive lesbian community within the city. The personal connections formed at Womonspace had effects on the wider community; as Noelle Lucas writes, "social commitments are an extension of political activism… the personal is the political."[73]

---

[62] Ibid.
[63] Lucas, 95.
[64] Ibid, 94.
[65] Korinek, *Prairie Fairies*, 248.
[66] *Womonspace News*, (December 1983). MS-1214 Box 1 File 6, Womonspace Collection, City of Edmonton Archives.
[67] Lucas, 82.
[68] Korinek, *Prairie Fairies*, 248.
[69] Liz Massiah, interview with Josephine Boxwell in "Womonspace: Creating Space for Edmonton's Lesbian Community in the 1980s", *Edmonton City as Museum Project*, August 12, 2020. https://citymuseumedmonton.ca/2020/08/12/womonspace-creating-space-for-edmontons-lesbian-community-in-the-1980s/.
[70] *Womonspace News* (January 1990). MS-1214 Box 2 File 9, Womonspace Collection, City of Edmonton Archives.
[71] Jeanne Rioux, "Some Thoughts on Womonspace", *Womonspace News* (September 1983). MS-1214 Box 1 File 6, Womonspace Collection, City of Edmonton Archives.
[72] Noelle M. Lucas, "Womonspace: Building a Lesbian Community in Edmonton, Alberta, 1970-1990" (Master's thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 2002), 79.
[73] Ibid, 79

Conclusion

Growing out of a demand for formal queer spaces in Edmonton, Club '70 and Womonspace occupy a notable space in the queer history of Edmonton. While both groups remained officially apolitical, their focus on social activities did not diminish the profound impacts they made. As Korinek argues in Prairie Fairies, the development of social spaces, regardless of how 'discreet' they were, allowed for queer Edmontonians to connect with each other and find community at a time when the larger social climate was not especially welcoming.[74] Both organizations significantly expanded the social opportunities available to queer Edmontonians, and broadened the scope of LGBTQ+ organizational activities across the prairies in general. By facilitating socialization and providing a space for members to be their authentic selves, both Club '70 and Womonspace contributed to the development of an interconnected and distinctive "queer community" in Edmonton.

[74] Korinek, *Prairie Fairies*, 257.

Work Cited

Anderson, A. Carolyn. "The Voices of Older Lesbian Women: An Oral History". PhD. Diss., University of Calgary, 2001. Retrieved from https://prism.ucalgary.ca. doi:10.11575/PRISM/20165

Boxwell, Josephine. "Womonspace: Creating Space for Edmonton's Lesbian Community in the 1980s". *Edmonton City as Museum Project*. August 12, 2020. https://citymuseumedmonton.ca/2020/08/12/womonspace-creating-space-for-edmontons-lesbian-community-in-the-1980s/.

Edmonton Queer History Project. "Resources". N.d. https://www.edmontonqueerhistoryproject.ca/resources.

Gay and Lesbian Archives of Edmonton fonds (GALA). MS-595. City of Edmonton Archives.

Gregory Barker Fonds. MS-1235. City of Edmonton Archives.

Korinek, Valerie J. *Prairie Fairies: A History of Queer Communities and People in Western Canada, 1930-1985*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018.

Korinek, Valerie J. "A Queer-Eye View of the Prairies: Reorienting Western Canadian Histories". In *The West and Beyond: New Perspectives on an Imagined Region*, edited by Alvin Finkel, Sarah Carter, and Peter Fortna, 278-296. Edmonton: Athabasca University Press, 2010.

Lucas, Noelle M. "Womonspace: Building a Lesbian Community in Edmonton, Alberta, 1970-1990". Master's thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 2002.

Womonspace Collection. MS-1214. City of Edmonton Archives.



Photographer: Henry Deng

Erased but Not Forgotten

Highlighting the Black/Gay Experience in America during the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s and the Repression that Resulted from this Narrative's Erasure

Haven Rice

ABSTRACT: The Harlem Renaissance is a decade known for its fluidity and non-conformity that allowed for a thriving underground culture where Black queer Americans could organize and interact as long as they remained hidden. While the queer community and the Black community flourished independently, the Black queer community was left behind in the wake of great progress for Black Americans, erased from the historical narrative despite its major contributions to Black and queer advancement. This presentation will examine how the Harlem Renaissance (1920s-1930s) fostered an underground network that allowed for the expression of the natural fluidity of sexuality and gender, unavailable to the heteronormative White Western society that existed above ground. Secondly, despite the Black queer community being credited for Black and queer progress, it was simultaneously victimized by a Black society so desperate for progress that it conformed to the colonial way, developing internalized racism and constructing an elite, heteronormative hierarchy through discursive distancing. This presentation will argue that the Black queer American experience of the Harlem Renaissance was erased from the historical narrative by White, Black, queer and straight masculinities and that the repression of this community further subordinated both the Black and Queer communities.

KEYWORDS: Queer History, Black History, American History, Marginalization History, Community History, History, Cultural History, Black Queer History

The Harlem Renaissance is a decade known for its fluidity and non-conformity that allowed for a thriving underground culture where Black queer Americans could organize and interact, as long as they remained hidden. During this period, the queer community and the Black community each flourished independently, however, the Black queer community was left behind in the wake of great progress for Black Americans, erased from the historical narrative despite its major contributions to Black and queer advancement. The exploration of these erased histories and the major figures who built them raises a question: how did American masculinities (Black and White) and American queerness intersect with Black American queerness during the Harlem Renaissance?

The Harlem Renaissance (1920s-1930s) fostered an underground network that allowed for the expression of the natural fluidity of sexuality and gender, unavailable to the heteronormative White Western society that existed above ground, in the mainstream. However, despite the Black queer community being credited for much Black and queer progress, it was simultaneously victimized by a Black society so desperate for progress that it conformed to colonial ways, developing internalized racism and constructing an elite, heteronormative hierarchy through discursive distancing. Finally, despite criticism and backlash from within the Black queer community about its own erasure during the 1920s, the damage was done, and long-lasting oppressive institutions had developed to maintain its marginalization. This paper will argue that the Black queer American experience of the Harlem Renaissance was erased from the historical narrative by White, Black, queer and straight masculinities, and that the repression of this community further subordinated both the Black and Queer communities.

Defining Relevant Terminology

Some terms used in this paper require definition for clear comprehension. "Queer" and the like will be used as an umbrella term for those who identified as non-heterosexual and/or non-cisgendered. In this historical context, this will mostly reference those who used the labels; lesbian, gay and bisexual. In addition, this text will discuss the masculinities that were systematically employed to support the oppressive heteronormative society of the United States. While masculinity is generally used to describe the attributes of men and boys, in this paper, it will also refer to the tools hegemonic masculinities used to maintain dominance and subordination. Within this hierarchical context, White, heterosexual men were at the top of the hierarchy and homosexual people of colour were subordinated to the very bottom. Further, it is critical to note that both men and women can uphold the patriarchy.

An Introduction to the Renaissance

While the American Civil War ended in 1865 with the abolition of slavery, reconstruction failed to establish a stable base upon which Black Americans could flourish, with its failures being especially visible in the South. The greatest struggle for the Black population was against White male "Redeemers" who felt the need to "intimidate" and "reassert their control over rebellious Blacks," in the hope that they could bring back the greatness of the Antebellum South.[1] In response to the failures of reconstruction, African Americans from the Southern United States began to make their way north and city-ward in what became known as the Great Migration, which continued from 1910 into the 1970s. Large Black communities developed in many of the big Northern cities, such as Detroit, Buffalo and Chicago. But it was Harlem, a neighbourhood in New York City, that would become the "Mecca of the New Negro," as coined by Alain Locke in 1925.[2] It offered more economic and safe housing opportunities for Black Americans than the South, due to the "demands of war industry coupled with the shutting off of foreign migration."[3] It presented a "democratic chance" for marginalized people to improve their conditions as America evolved from "medieval [...] to modern."[4] With the greatest concentration of "so many diverse elements of Negro life," Harlem entered a period of prosperity that brought artists and audiences North.[5] This eventually created a mythology that had "Whites [...] pouring into Harlem — into Black America — to see, hear, and touch the supposed primitive superior birthright of Black artistry and sexuality."[6] Harlem became notoriously "deviant," "disrupt[ing] the so-called [American] normality of heterosexuality and racial purity."[7] This centre for Afro-American art and the explosion of self-conscious creativity sparked a renaissance rooted in queer Black culture.

Private Parties and the Underground Queer Network

While the Harlem Renaissance was celebrated for its unique ecosystem of arts and culture, the Black queer community contained within continued to be oppressed. Harlem's delights were promoted in ways that allowed the public to consume them without knowing they were rooted in queerness. To thrive, the Black queer community took its institutions and traditions underground, creating networks that could go unnoticed. Private parties were one of the most common functions of the period, "serv[ing] as a safe space in which those experiencing same-sex desire could experiment with their sexuality and meet other like-minded people" while still being able to hide their sexual orientation from those that were not "in the life."[8] Commonly known as "rent parties" or "pay parties," guests were charged an entry fee in exchange for "a night of food, Prohibition Era drinking, dancing and music, while also contributing financially to a fellow neighbour's rent."[9] The parties were often segregated by gender and in some cases, race, to ensure that those attending with a member of the same sex did not raise questions within the larger Harlem community.[10] The curious nature of Harlem was its duality, where queer Black people could experience a "free life" doing "anything [they] wanted" provided they never publicly expressed their attraction to the same sex.[11] "While Black Harlemites may have acknowledged the existence of rent parties, they would not have easily accepted a party of women desiring women," or men desiring men.[12] To protect themselves and those they were with, Black queer people had to abide by the social expectations laid out by dominant White heteronormative society. They had to disguise their feelings in public, not only in the ways they interacted with others, but in how they presented themselves. For example, women rarely wore pants "because they had to come through the streets" to get to the parties, "negotiating not only the police but also Black Harlem."[13]

---

[1] Alain Locke, "The New Negro: An Introduction," in *The New Negro: An Interpretation*, ed. Alain Locke (New York City: Albert and Charles Boni, 1925), 3. ; Ibrahim X. Kendi. *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America*. Bold Type Books, 2017: 259.

[2] Ernest Julius Mitchell II. "'Black Renaissance': A Brief History of the Concept." *African American Literary Studies: New Texts, New Approaches, New Challenges* Vol. 55, no. 4 (2010): 644.

[3] Locke, "The New Negro," 6.

[4] Locke, "The New Negro," 6.

[5] Locke, "The New Negro," 6.

[6] Kendi, *Stamped from the Beginning*, 327.

[7] Thaddeus Russell. "The Color of Discipline: Civil Rights and Black Sexuality." *American Quarterly* 60, no. 1 (March 2008): 101–28 ; Kendi, *Stamped from the Beginning*, 310.

[8] Emma Chen. "Black Face, Queer Space: The Influence of Black Lesbian and Transgender Blues Women of the Harlem Renaissance on Emerging Queer Communities." *Historical Perspectives: Santa Clara University Undergraduate Journal of History* 2, no. 21 (2016): 23 ; Cheryl D. Hicks, "'Bright and Good Looking Colored Girl': Black Women's Sexuality and 'Harmful Intimacy' in Early-Twentieth-Century New York." *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 18, no. 3 (September 2009): 441.

[9] Hicks, "Bright and Good Looking Coloured Girl," 440.

[10] Hicks, "Bright and Good Looking Coloured Girl," 440.

[11] Hicks, "Bright and Good Looking Coloured Girl," 440.

[12] Hicks, "Bright and Good Looking Coloured Girl," 440.

[13] Hicks, "Bright and Good Looking Coloured Girl," 440.

These restrictions on free existence in Harlem were also experienced by female performers of the decade. Many would have private "intimate relationships with other women" while simultaneously maintaining a "professional stage image."[14] They were allowed to be "portrayed as 'explicitly sexual beings'" as long as their desire was aimed towards a member of the opposite sex.[15] If they reflected "queerness" slightly, they were sent to the "'musical underground' [which] foster[ed] a clandestine gay culture that was active but private and nocturnal."[16] In the wake of criticism towards homosexuality and homosexual behaviour, only the performers who refrained from explicitly expressing their queer identity — or if they did, they did so only through coded language — were able to survive. For artists like Ma Rainey who publicly adopted a "queer personae," openly dressed more masculine in the "butch" fashion and wrote and sang songs like *Prove It on Me Blues*, which is considered to be one of the first pieces of lesbian lyricism, the backlash from White mainstream society often meant the end of their careers.[17] One of Paramount's top-selling artists, Ma Rainey was dropped by the recording label only a couple of months after the release of *Prove It on Me Blues* in 1928. The label had even released advertisements encouraging people to buy the new record with a poster featuring Rainey dressed in butch fashion flirting with two women while a police officer looked on, calling it a "scandal."[18] Rainey not only toyed with gender in her attire, but also in the ways that she socialized with women, taking on the masculine role of the established social binary. However, provided women like her maintained an appearance of their assigned gender roles in public, they could do as they wished in private. For women in American society, it was established by rigid patriarchy that "you don't eat" without male approval.[19]



"Prove it on Me Blues" Advertisement, *Chicago Defender*, September 22, 1928. Accessed from "Obscure Queer Blues." Obscure queer blues script & gallery, November 2014. https://queermusicheritage.com/nov2014s.html.

Racializing Sexuality to Maintain Social Order

While women's homosexual behaviours were treated as less of a legitimate threat to the social order because of their low station within the patriarchy, the treatment for gay men, including Black gay men, was much more reactive. Black men were to be viewed as paragons of masculinity who fought daily to uphold the hierarchy and rise through its ranks. After the First World War, perceptions of masculinity and the ideal man had shifted to be much more hegemonic, needing to restore male dominance over the predominantly female workforce that had filled essential roles during the war. Additionally, President Harry S. Truman's decision to desegregate military posts after the war provided a show of potential progress for Black Civil Rights as a reward for their masculine presentations and efforts. In the 1920s, medical and scientific "construction[s] of homosexuality" emerged to try to understand how a man could possibly be attracted to another man.[20] In one model, the dominant binary is perpetuated, believing that homosexuality could only be possible if one of the men experienced a gender inversion, "appropriat[ing] the female gender cultural mode," while the other continued to "perform[...] the masculine role and [didn't] distinguish [between] his relations with men" and women.[21] In response to this betrayal to heteronormative society, homosexual men were further feminized by being described with

[14] Chen, "Black Face, Queer Space," 21.
[15] Chen, "Black Face, Queer Space," 21.
[16] Chen, "Black Face, Queer Space," 21.
[17] Chen, "Black Face, Queer Space," 21-22.
[18] "Prove it on Me Blues" Advertisement, *Chicago Defender*, September 22, 1928.
[19] Hicks, "Bright and Good Looking Coloured Girl," 441.
[20] Kevin J. Mumford "Homosex Changes: Race, Cultural Geography, and the Emergence of the Gay." *American Quarterly* 48, no. 3 (September 1996): 397.
[21] Mumford, "Homosex Changes," 397.

floral words such as "pansy" or "lily." The terms became so popular "in the 1920s and 1930s that they were sometimes simply called 'horticultural lads."[22] By employing this discursive distancing, masculinities were able to separate themselves from homosexuality, an important distinction within the American social hierarchy. Similarly, "racialized gender inversion" was applied to explain why White women would engage in sexual affairs with Black women, claiming that Black women were manly enough that they could be used as a "substitute for the opposite sex" to fulfill a "White women's heterosexual desire."[23] With these explanations for gay and lesbian activity, the dominant binary appeared to remain as legitimate as "homosexuality was heterosexuality; the unnatural was natural."[24]

In a social model of explaining homosexuality, queerness was most often associated with Blackness, by distinguishing works that discussed homosexuality not as homosexual "but rather by locating [them] within another, readily available system of social and spatial hierarchy — race."[25] Homosexual novels found themselves more often in the "coloured section" than anywhere else, inherently "racializ[ing] the homosexual text" and therefore racializing sexuality.[26] This stigmatized link became especially problematic when a "drag dance" was shut down by police in New York City, and after being studied by an "authority on sexual desires," the patrons were labeled as having a kind of "social reverse complexion syndrome."[27] Fearing that this syndrome could spread into the White population, groups like the Citizens' Association of New York refocused their efforts into investigating Harlem's interracial homosexual clubs. "The interracial nature of the encounter[s that would occur in these clubs] add[ed] a second element of transgression to the homosexuality."[28] The Committee of Fourteen report released in 1927 identified Harlem as a hotspot for homosexual behaviours and alerted local police to the presence of "Black/White" homosexual clubs, stigmatizing speakeasies because of their location in African American neighbourhoods and because of the racial mixing they permitted.[29] This led to an increased police presence in New York's identified "sex districts," all of which happened to be where African Americans socialized.[30]

Erasing Black Queerness from Within

With queer activity labeled a sexual disorder, it became crucial for heteronormative Black people to separate themselves from queer culture, thereby giving them a more legitimate claim to a place in society. Popular Black authors W.E.B. Du Bois and Alain Locke both believed "in the power of Black art and literature for racial uplift."[31] However, Locke maintained that Black artists should only "depict themselves positively in order to raise the public reputation of Black people as a whole."[32] Du Bois agreed, arguing that "Harlem's writers [should] avoid scandalous topics or low-life depictions" in order to create a vision of a "respectable Black middle class."[33] Despite being gay himself, Locke's greatest literary work, "The New Negro", an essay that supposedly details the entirety of the Black American experience, includes no mention of sexuality or same-sex desire, erasing the Black gay narrative from this piece of history.[34]

As a new generation of Black queer writers emerged in the 1920s, so did criticisms of Locke's and Du Bois' erasure of the Black queer American experience. Writers such as Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston took a more radical approach to art, writing on topics such as "homosexuality and prostitution" and rejecting Locke's and Du Bois' belief that honest representation was a burden.[35] Calling themselves the "Niggerati," they were "possibly the first known fully antiracist intellectual and artistic group in American history."[36] They rejected class racism, cultural racism, historical racism, gender racism, and even queer racism and sought to help the African American "climb [...] the Racial Mountain" to "discover himself" and the "beauty of his own people."[37] In Hughes' "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain," he describes an "urge within the race towards whiteness," desiring "to be as little negro and as much American as possible."[38] Attempting to persuade people away from assimilation, Hughes' greatest criticism of Locke and Du Bois was that they had been lost to their elitist concept of art and literature and were no

[22] Simon Dickel, Black/Gay (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2011), 90.
[23] Hicks, "Bright and Good Looking Coloured Girl," 447-448.
[24] Hicks, "Bright and Good Looking Coloured Girl," 448.
[25] Mumford, "Homosex Changes," 396.
[26] Mumford, "Homosex Changes," 396.
[27] Mumford, "Homosex Changes," 399.
[28] Dickel, *Black/Gay*, 92.
[29] Mumford, "Homosex Changes," 403.
[30] Mumford, "Homosex Changes," 403.
[31] Dickel, *Black/Gay*, 80.
[32] Dickel, *Black/Gay*, 80.
[33] Dickel, *Black/Gay*, 80-81.
[34] Dickel, *Black/Gay*, 81.
[35] Dickel, *Black/Gay*, 81.
[36] Kendi, *Stamped from the Beginning*, 324.
[37] Langston Hughes. "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain." *NATION* (June 3, 1926): 692.
[38] Hughes, "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain," 692.

longer loyal to the truthful depiction of the African American experience.[39] By evaluating how white they must become for Black people to succeed in the United States, Hughes demonstrates how the dominant White western society has constructed and socialized an oppressive hierarchy that encourages marginalized communities to further oppress themselves, under the illusion that only those who are best assimilated will be rewarded. Hence why the Black community was so resistant to any queer expression that could hurt their progress.

While Hughes' claims were legitimate and fell on desperate ears, DuBois, who had a greater following and stronger literary foundation, found them to be "traitorous."[40] Locke had already begun to write about this new generation of Black artists in a way that maintained his whitewashed view of Black progress. He wrote in "The New Negro" that Black Americans were experiencing a "renewed [sense of] self-respect and self-dependence" separate from African American history, which painted the Niggerati in a negative light, as opposed to how they had established themselves in Hughes's "The Racial Mountain."[41] He also warned that if Black Americans didn't understand and align themselves with "the ideals of American institutions and democracy" they would experience a "more calculated prejudice" and continued paternalism from the dominant race.[42] This perceived threat to their progress was enough to convince many Black Americans that their best chance to demonstrate their loyalty to the social order was to oppress others within their own communities by targeting queer members. The result was the erasure of a representative black queer narrative. The "politically narrow and racially exclusionary" way of American modernism meant that Black writers from the Harlem Renaissance were excluded from modernist anthologies throughout the remainder of the twentieth century. As a result, Niggerati arguments such as those posited by Hughes were suppressed from the historical narrative until the 1970s and the African American Studies movement.[43] While "these 'New Negroes' helped to spark the Renaissance, they had no monopoly on its future".[44]

Repercussions and Conclusion

The key to the survival of the Harlem Renaissance was its ability to remain unseen. As long as Black queer culture practiced sexual repression, remained segregated and underground while its members abided by their assigned social roles in the light of day, it could go on. But when it inevitably intersected with the greater Harlem population, Black queer artists began to experience targeted oppression. At first, this marginalization came from homosexuality being seen as an inherently Black disorder by heteronormative White society. It then became a tool for Black elites to develop a more nuanced social hierarchy, in which homosexuality was illegitimized and criminalized "within the eyes of the Black community."[45] The over policing of predominantly queer and Black neighbourhoods that followed these imposed prejudices and stigmas further instilled internalized racism and homophobia into these marginalized groups. The literary erasure of the Black queer American experience by writers like W.E.B. DuBois and Alain Locke set the tone for further queer oppression within the Black community through Civil Rights texts like *Giovanni's Room and Moynihan's The Negro Family*.

To conclude, in an effort to be awarded civil rights from a dominant population, marginalized groups, like African Americans or queer Americans, will align themselves with the interests of the dominant group by marginalizing weaker minorities within their own communities. The hierarchy that ensues should demonstrate that the oppressors are enlightened and assimilated into the White heteronormative society, worthy of their civil rights. Consequently, those that are oppressed are vulnerable to all of society's plights at the bottom of the hierarchy and any progress that they are caught enjoying is removed both from them and the historical record.

This paper has demonstrated that the "fragility and fluidity" of the Harlem Renaissance's sexuality, biological sex, race and aesthetics categories were unable to survive the pressures of 1920s American masculinity.[46] As a result, the Harlem Renaissance could not continue into the 1930s and Black communities were subject to enduring stigmatization and over policing, which remain persisting challenges today.

[39] Dickel, *Black/Gay*, 81.
[40] Kendi, *Stamped from the Beginning*, 325.
[41] Locke, "The New Negro," 10.
[42] Locke, "The New Negro," 10.
[43] Dickel, *Black/Gay*, 82.
[44] Mitchell, "Black Renaissance" 650.
[45] Dickel, *Black/Gay*, 87.
[46] Dickel, *Black/Gay*, 94-95.

Work Cited

PRIMARY SOURCES

Hughes, Langston. "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain." *NATION* (June 3, 1926): 692-694.

Locke, Alain. "The New Negro: Introduction." In *The New Negro: An Interpretation*, edited by Alain Locke, 3-16. New York City: Albert and Charles Boni, 1925.

"Prove it on Me Blues" Advertisement, *Chicago Defender*, September 22, 1928.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Chen, Emma. "Black Face, Queer Space: The Influence of Black Lesbian and Transgender Blues Women of the Harlem Renaissance on Emerging Queer Communities." *Historical Perspectives: Santa Clara University Undergraduate Journal of History* 2, no. 21 (2016): 19-29. http://scholarcommons.scu.edu/historical-perspectives

Dickel, Simon. *Black/Gay*. Münster: LIT Verlag, 2011.

Hicks, Cheryl D. "'Bright and Good Looking Colored Girl': Black Women's Sexuality and 'Harmful Intimacy' in Early-Twentieth-Century New York." *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 18, no. 3 (September 2009): 418-456. https://www.jstor.org/stable/20542731

Kendi, Ibrahim X. *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America*. Bold Type Books, 2017.

Mitchell II, Ernest Julius. "'Black Renaissance': A Brief History of the Concept." *African American Literary Studies: New Texts, New Approaches, New Challenges* 55, no. 4 (2010): 641–65. https://www.jstor.org/stable/41158720

Mumford, Kevin J. "Homosex Changes: Race, Cultural Geography, and the Emergence of the Gay." *American Quarterly* 48, no. 3 (September 1996): 395-414. https://www.jstor.org/stable/30041687

Russell, Thaddeus. "The Color of Discipline: Civil Rights and Black Sexuality." *American Quarterly* 60, no. 1 (March 2008): 101–28. https://doi.org/10.1353/aq.2008.0000.



Photographer: Henry Deng

An Imposter Among Shakespeare's Fools: *The Tempest's* Trinculo

Lily Polenchuk

ABSTRACT: The plays of William Shakespeare often feature a fool who resembles the historic jester of the Elizabethan era. Overtime, the Shakespearean fool developed into a powerful character who challenges and questions both the other characters in the play as well as the audience. This article analyzes the fool known as Trinculo from Shakespeare's The Tempest who I argue does not amount to the great Shakespearean fool archetype. The criteria for a true Shakespearean fool is drawn from the work of Robert Bell, who studies the progression of Shakespeare's clown character, and the work of Roberta Mullini, who analyzes the traits of Shakespeare's fools. When Trinculo is compared to these outlined standards, such as prophetic ability and powerful speech, he falls short. Trinculo's lacklustre character is especially apparent when compared to King Lear's Fool in King Lear. King Lear's Fool excels in the necessary qualities that Trinculo does not. Rather than serving as mere comedic relief, King Lear's Fool drives the plot forward with his capacity for knowledge and awareness of the audience. Trinculo, on the other hand, embodies Shakespeare's early, underdeveloped clown characters who exist purely to amuse the crowd and nothing more.

KEYWORDS: Shakespeare, The Tempest, English, Humanities

The many characters of William Shakespeare share similarities across his plays but, among them, there is one archetypal character who stands out: The fool. Built on the historic jester of the Elizabethan era, fools in Shakespeare's plays have evolved to be more complicated characters, who leave behind the persona of a simpler jokester. However, in Shakespeare's last play, *The Tempest*, he reverts to creating a simple comedic character. Although Trinculo is a jester, he is not the embodiment of the true Shakespearean fool since he does not meet the necessary criteria laid out by some scholars. According to two such scholars, Robert Bell and Roberta Mullini, Shakespearean fools are given unique traits that set them apart from the simple jesters, whose only purpose is to provide comic relief. The difference in character depth is evident when comparing Trinculo to the Fool in *King Lear*—a fool who is arguably the epitome of what it means to be a Shakespearean fool.

More than just to serve as comedic relief, the Shakespearean fool has key attributes that set him apart from other characters. These attributes, however, have evolved over time. In his article "Motley to the View: The Shakespearean Performance of Folly," Bell writes that, over time, Shakespeare "expanded the clown's role to develop dramatic possibilities and explore the mysteries of folly" (Bell, 48). Bell says the Shakespearean fool makes the audience doubt what they know and makes us question reality "by introducing radically different, even diametrically opposed perspectives" (47). This introduction of differing perspectives is only achievable through powerful speech and rhetoric. As Mullini writes in her article, "Playing the Fool: the Pragmatic Status of Shakespeare's Clowns", Shakespeare gives his fools "extraordinary powers of speech" (Mullini, 102). Mullini continues that Shakespearean fools are not only talented speakers with great wit, they are "endowed with special prophetic values which link the play's society to the Elizabethan audience, to our own world, and backwards to myth" (104). Shakespearean fools tie the audience and reality back to the play with wisdom that applies to our own lives and politics.

Trinculo does not have the aforementioned characteristics of a Shakespearean fool. When Shakespeare first introduces Trinculo in *The Tempest* in Act 2.2, he immediately serves a comedic soliloquy, part of which makes fun of Caliban's appearance (2.2.25-26). The rest of the scene involves a hilarious misunderstanding between Trinculo and Stephano, the latter thinking that together Trinculo and Caliban are a four-legged monster. This interaction leads Stephano and Trinculo to take advantage of a drunk Caliban, which parodies Caliban and Prospero's first meeting. However, in all of his scenes, Trinculo's lines exist mainly as jokes, arguments, and defenses. He has one soliloquy in the play, during which he speaks of the storm and decides to hide with Caliban, a monster who people in England "would give a piece of silver" to look at (2.2.18-42). Trinculo does not exemplify powerful speech like a Shakespearean fool—he only jokes and ridicules. He does not prophesy or impress the audience with ruminations on the mysteries surrounding him. There is only one plausible example of Trinculo giving critique, during which he calls out the Naples' government (3.2.5-18).

Trinculo does not affect the audience in any way that is not comedic. He does not question the plot or the mysteries of the world. He does not introduce exhilarating ideas or thoughts that oppose the main characters. In fact, he has little opportunity to do so, having fewer lines than Alonso. Trinculo makes for a meek comparison when held up to the Fool in *King Lear*, who "illuminates this dark world with mysterious flashes, cryptic yet resonant, including paradoxes and riddles, Biblica travesties, inverted parables, and surrealistic images" (Bell, 59). Trinculo's lines do not resemble Bell's description of Lear's Fool. Unlike Trinculo, Lear's Fool uses unique rhetoric to share wisdom. An example of this is in Act 1.4 when Lear's Fool uses an egg analogy to call Lear foolish for giving his power to Goneril and Regan (1.4.162-169). This language is only one example of how the Shakespearean fool is characteristically "rhetorically rich, semantically ambiguous, ontologically disruptive of the order of the fictional world" (Mullin, 104). While Lear's Fool moves the plot forward, Trinculo is just a bystander. Lear's Fool further demonstrates through the split egg analogy his prophetic foresight: He knows that Lear's actions will contribute to his downfall. An endowment of wit, humour, and wisdom is what Trinculo lacks, and this acts as the dividing line between a regular clown and a Shakespearean fool. Although Trinculo and Lear's Fool are both jesters, the speech of Lear's Fool is astoundingly different from that of Trinculo, and the former's impact within the play is incomparable.

Another main trait of a Shakespearean fool is their ability to break the fourth wall and interact with

the audience—while simultaneously interacting within the fictional setting on the stage. During a performance, Shakespearean fools cross the line between illusion and reality as they please because they are aware of their character. As Mullin describes, the fool is ready to step off the stage and "the awareness they possess of their condition, of their playing the fool, contrasts with the other characters' blindness" (102-104). At no point in *The Tempest* does Trinculo cross the dividing line into our reality. He does not speak to the audience, nor does he imply an awareness of being a fool. Trinculo also does not refer to himself as a jester. In Act 2.2 he reassures Stephano that he is Trinculo and nothing more. However, through Lear's transformation into a fool in *King Lear*, Shakespeare depicts his Fool's self-awareness. The Fool confirms that Lear himself has become a fool, and although the Fool would rather be anyone else, he still would rather not be Lear (1.4.191-192). Lear's Fool knows the character that he embodies, and it influences his words and actions. His awareness allows him to do something Trinculo cannot: Acknowledge reality and intertwine it with his words. In contrast to Trinculo, Lear's Fool directly addresses the audience through monologues and asides (Mullin, 104). Additionally, Trinculo's impact on the play and the audience is weak because he does not contrast with the other characters in *The Tempest*. The main characters are blind to Prospero's plans, including Trinculo. His lines and actions are based on what he knows himself to be: A simple person who lives to serve Alonso, unaware of the real-world crowd watching him.

Although not the least important character in *The Tempest*, Trinculo does not convey important attributes that would make him a true Shakespearean fool. Perhaps intending to capture the essence of his early, underdeveloped fools, Shakespeare brought to life a simple jester. Although entertaining, Trinculo lacks the powerful speech a Shakespearean fool traditionally has, speech such as that of Lear's Fool. Furthermore, Trinculo does not have prophetic power, and his wisdom is ironically folly. Most importantly, Trinculo lacks awareness of who he really is, which hinders him from accessing reality the way that Lear's Fool does. Lear's Fool exemplifies the traits that Trinculo lacks. For reasons unknown, Trinculo is written to be a common jester, one who cannot be included as a true Shakespearean fool.

Work Cited

Bell, Robert H. "Motley to the View: The Shakespearean Performance of Folly." *Southwest Review*, vol. 95, no. 1/2, 2010, pp. 44–62. JSTOR, http://www.jstor.org/stable/43473037. Accessed 7 Aug. 2023.

Mullin, Roberta. "Playing the Fool: the Pragmatic Status of Shakespeare's Clowns." *New Theatre Quarterly*, vol. 1, no. 1, 1985, pp. 98–104., 7 Aug. 2023.

Shakespeare, William. *King Lear* from The Folger Shakespeare. Ed. Barbara Mowat, Paul Werstine, Michael Poston, and Rebecca Niles. Folger Shakespeare Library, 7 Aug. 2023. https://www.folger.edu/explore/shakespeares-works/king-lear/

Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest* from The Folger Shakespeare. Ed. Barbara Mowat, Paul Werstine, Michael Poston, and Rebecca Niles. Folger Shakespeare Library, 7 Aug. 2023. https://www.folger.edu/explore/shakespeares-works/the-tempest/



Photographer: Sevilla Zhou

The Virus Gone Viral: The October 4th Conspiracy, "X", and Post-Truth

Devin Hobbs

ABSTRACT: On October 4th, 2023, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Federal Communications Commission (FCC) conducted a nationwide test of the Emergency Alert System and Wireless Emergency Alerts, broadcasting a message to all consumer cell phones in the United States; This routine test became the catalyst for a baseless conspiracy theory involving 5G, wave frequencies, and zombies within the anti-vaccine community and gained significant traction online.

In the context of a post-truth world, the proliferation of such dangerous misinformation warrants an examination of the role played by social media platforms, particularly "X", in disseminating the October 4th Zombie conspiracy theory. This study explores how social media facilitates the dissemination and perpetuation of groundless theories devoid of objective truth within like-minded communities, and utilizes content analysis, discourse analysis, and an examination of user engagement with October 4th-related content on "X". What is found is that the rise of this conspiracy theory is largely attributed to the nature of the "X" algorithm: whether engaged with positively or negatively, engagement pushes content regardless of the nature of the post and therefore enables the widespread of the conspiracy theory across the platform to be viewed by millions. Thus, these findings bring forth the question of who is responsible for regulating informational versus misinformational discourse if we live in a post-truth era.

KEYWORDS: Twitter, Conspiracy Theories, Post-truth, Misinformation, Algorithims, Media Studies

Research Question and Background

Do you think you would survive a zombie apocalypse? Apparently, it is coming sooner than we might have been expecting.

On October 4th, 2023, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and Federal Communications Commission conducted a test of the Emergency Alert System and Wireless Emergency Alerts by sending a national alert to all consumer cell phones in the United States. This simple test was taken up by those in the anti-vaccination community, and twisted into a wild conspiracy theory that quickly spread amongst their community - that the use of 5G / a new wave frequency in the Emergency Alert System would turn vaccinated citizens into zombies. This theory was taken up by the same community that stormed the Capitol, the same community that swears JFK Jr. is alive, the same community that believes the vaccines will initiate "The Great Replacement". The number of aforementioned conspiracy theories demonstrates that in a post-truth world, it is important to understand how dangerous misinformation is taken up and spread. What role did social media, specifically "X" (formerly "Twitter") play in the spread of the new October 4th Zombie conspiracy theory? How does social media allow these expanding and ongoing theories based on no objective truth to be shared amongst like-minded individuals? Through content analysis, discourse analysis, and the analysis of user engagement with October 4th related content on "X", how can we apply the idea of subjective truth and Post-Truth Politics in understanding the viral nature of the October 4th conspiracy theory online?

Literature Review

Because of how I have based my research around the spread of not only the October 4th conspiracy theory, but other objectively false narratives, it is particularly useful to look into the literature surrounding the presence of other conspiracy theories on "X" and the analyses done in regards to their growth online. It will also prove useful to look into how exactly the "X" algorithm distributes content to users, as well as how the platform claims to regulate misinformation.

Several voices contribute to the idea of 'echo chambers' being of significance to the spread of their respective conspiracy theories on Twitter. Because of the nature of social media itself, including "X", the ability to "follow" or "like" the content and postings of certain users/groups, and reject the content and postings of others, allows each user to aggregate and cluster within "ideologically distinct sub-communities" (Puri et al., 2587). In regards to subjectively developed conspiracy theories, digital media therefore grants likeminded actors of these theories a space wherein they can connect and support each other and their mantras, and intake solely homogenous information and ideas that fulfill their own beliefs (Farokhi). Members of these homogenous groups may have a hard time identifying falsehoods and trickery because the make-believe information is presented in a way that mirrors their beliefs and conforms to their common biases. Therefore, the essence of the 'echo chamber', and its isolating, self-affirming nature, makes it easier to fall for lies - and even when presented with evidence that disproves our own beliefs, we tend to avoid challenging our own beliefs (Metaxas and Finn). Therefore, "this is when we are most susceptible to lies; when they are presented in a way that confirms our own prior beliefs" (Metaxas and Finn, 2). This is all to say that, in regards to the spread of conspiracy via "X", the echoing of falsehood in 'echo chambers' plays a role. It will be interesting to identify the significance of 'echo chambers' in regards to the virality of the new October 4th conspiracy theory.

The emotional appeals of conspiratory narratives were also identified to be a key element in the development and promotion of conspiracy theories online. The highly emotionally charged circumstances of a number of the theories discussed in the literature, including Covid-19 (Puri et al; Gruzd and Mai; Ahmed et al.), Pizzagate (Metaxas and Finn), and the Trucker Convoy (Farokhi), all allow for the deployment of emotionally appealing content. Narratives that make use of emotional appeals tend to be taken up more easily since they prey on vulnerability (Puri et al.), and ultimately, Twitter acts as an ideal venue wherein emotional narratives can be produced and consumed (Farokhi). Additionally, when a community is emotionally charged on an issue, conspiracy is then more likely to be taken up and promoted without skepticism (Metaxas and Finn). I will work to prove in my own research that e motions were certainly key players in the spread of the October 4th zombie conspiracy theory.

Also mentioned across a range of the literature was the leveraging capabilities of celebrities and/or larger accounts, and their potential for both the spread

as well as the debunking of conspiratory content. Popular celebrities and politicians can be instrumental in the widespread dissemination of information, both for or against conspiracy (Puri et al.). While the assistance of influential public authorities and bodies can be the key to the counter action of misinformation (Ahmed et al.), these figures can also act as the oxygen that fuels and expands a conspiracy; the growth granted by users with large reaching potential, like the aforementioned celebrities and politicians, have the ability to build awareness about their respective conspiracy theory, and after the initial boosts from these prominent accounts, the campaigns can be mostly sustained by its less prominent supporters (Gruzd and Mai). Therefore, in my own research, it will be significant to find more popular figureheads of the movement, and identify their role in making the October 4th conspiracy theory of wider significance.

The "X" algorithm is what controls what we see and how we see it, and is based on a variety of components including "location, personal interests, recency, and whether or not the post contains media" ("X-Twitter Algorithm 2023: Explained."). The application uses a core set of features that collects information from posts and user history to create personalized user feeds, and breaks down this process into three steps: Candidate Sourcing, Ranking, and Heuristics, Filters, and Product Features. In the Candidate Sourcing step, the algorithm works to display a mix of content from both In-Network (accounts you follow) and Out-of-Network sources (accounts you don't follow). The second process, Ranking, ranks each post using a machine-learning model that awards each tweet a score with a probability of engagement. The Heuristics, Filters, and Product Features step is used to enable diverse content, and also filters out posts from blocked users, not safe for work content, and posts you have seen already. The new 2023 algorithm emphasizes certain types of content, taking into special account "relevance, recency, variety, and multi-media" ("X-Twitter Algorithm 2023: Explained.") - the metrics that are prioritized push tweets with high numbers of shares, retweets, likes, and replies, contain media, have a CTA to follow the author, is not reported as spam, have one relevant hashtag, doesn't have an external link, and are from a reputable account ("X-Twitter Algorithm 2023: Explained."). Understanding the "X" algorithm will be helpful in understanding how posts regarding the October 4th conspiracy theory gained traction on the platform based on the working of the application itself. Available on the "X" Help Center, the application's goal is stated as wanting "to help enable free expression and conversations, [and] only intervene if content breaks [their] rules ... otherwise, [they] lean on providing [the user] with additional context" ("How We Address Misinformation on X."). Based on their policies, intervention takes place when misleading information has the potential to "shape crisis dynamics and put vulnerable people in harm's way", if content is "significantly and deceptively altered, manipulated, or fabricated", or if the post "undermines the integrity of civic participation" ("How We Address Misinformation on X."). Taking action involves limiting amplification or removing misleading content, as well as working to inform and contextualize "by sharing timely information or credible content from third-party sources"("How We Address Misinformation on X."). The app is also testing different opportunities to share feedback, like with misleading info reporting flow and community notes. Knowing what the app has in place for supposedly addressing misinformation on "X" will prove interesting as we delve into the massive spread of misinformation and conspiracy that took place on the app regardless.

Because of the ongoing, expansive, and collaborative nature of a myriad of conspiracy theories that have developed over previous years, it is important for the ongoing study of how such conspiracy theories gain and maintain prevalence in internet spaces. My own research will contribute to the literature as the latest installment of "X" conspiratory research, making use of but also elaborating on previous works and studies and identifying prior as well as perhaps new methods used to promote October 4th propaganda and the zombie conspiracy theory.

Methodology and Ethics

To conduct this research, I used a mixed method approach including content analysis - quantitatively categorizing the content in posts - and discourse analysis - qualitatively examining the language and what it entails. Data collected for this research came from Twitter/"X", and I identified keywords that were frequently employed in October 4th tweets to collect posts to analyze. I used the phrases "October 4th Emergency Alert" and "Emergency Alert Zombies" in the search bar, and manually searched for content relevant to this study. I then used content analysis to categorize the themes of the messages included and

to evaluate how these posts are suited to appease the "X" algorithm, and thus to determine how the virality of certain posts came to be. I then used discourse analysis to evaluate the discursive rhetoric of tweets and how they invoke certain emotions targeted to intended audiences and what this means in the spread of the conspiracy.

Preliminary Findings

We can begin by taking a look at Spinachbrah's (@basedspinach) post from October 3rd, 2023. Their tweet reads:

> "Turn off your smart phones on October 4th. The Emergency Broadcast System is going to "test" the system using 5G radiation waves. This will activate the mRNA in people who have been vaccinated. And sadly turn some of them into zombies. No tweet's tomorrow, going to call in sick and play Minecraft as the world burns down"

The post garnered a total of 297K views, 150 reposts, 97 quotes, 1.5K likes, and 157 bookmarks. The post clearly lays out what the implications of the conspiracy theory are (5G radiation waves activating mRNA in the vaccine to result in zombies), as well as Spinachbrah's stance on the matter (they will be staying away from their 5G device and therefore Twitter, and will be one of the few that survives while "the world burns down"). Comments beneath the post were supportive (68 supportive out of 113 total), with some users providing further advice - "Turn of[f] your microwave and put your phone inside it if you don't Have a faraday cage." (@praisethechrist)- and others thanking Spinachbrah for the post - "Man I appreciate the heads up you are a real one" (Williamson).

This same mantra seemed to have been taken up by the community who stood behind the conspiracy theory: User Abraxsys (@Abraxsys) posted a screenshot of the same text available in Spinachbrah's post appearing in a number of tweets:

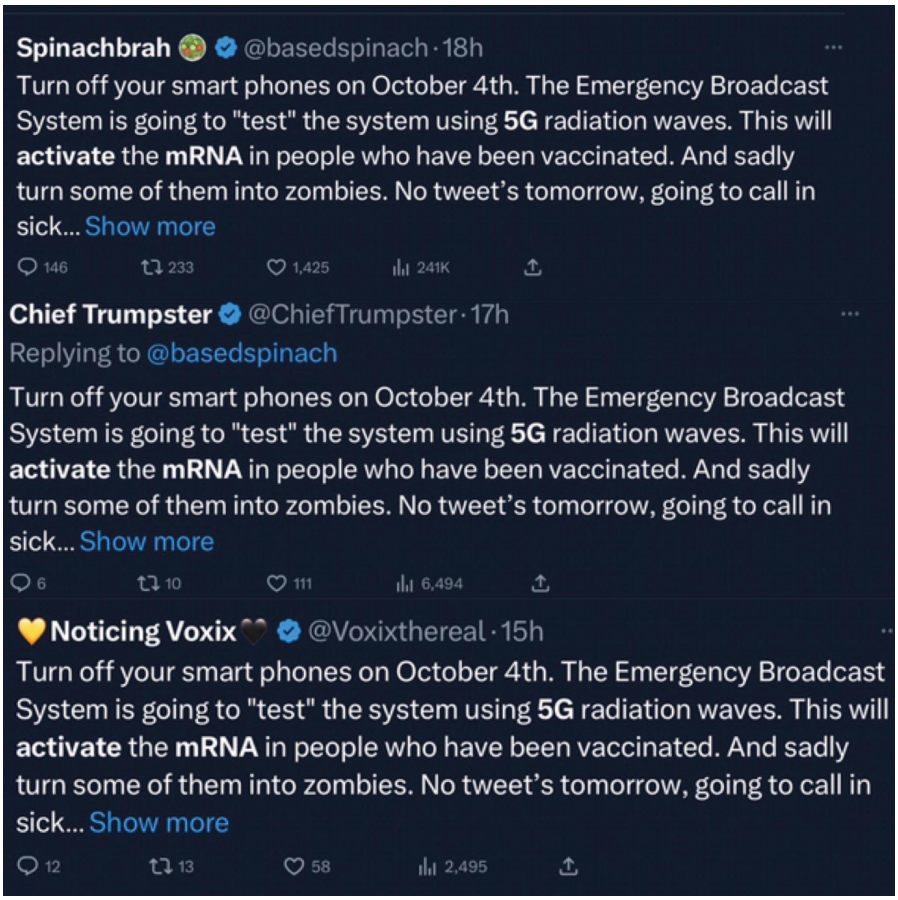


Fig. 1. Screenshot from @Abraxsys' X post

Based on what we know about X's current algorithm, what seemingly took place is that the algorithm took Spinachbrah's highly reacted to post, relevant to the happenings of the day, and recently posted within 24 hours, and pushed this content to like-minded individuals who were probably going to engage with the post. Users not only engaged with the post via reposts, quotes, like, and bookmarks, but rather copied the message and posted it onto their own feeds for their own followers to see - Chief Trumpster posted their tweet to their followers an hour after Spinachbrah, and Noticing Voxix posted their tweet to their audience two hours after Chief Trumpster. This allowed the conspiracy theory to be spread to a wider audience, and as it was copied by more people, to even wider audiences. While Spinachbrah may not have been the one to come up with October 4th conspiracy theory themselves, we can see by the amount of engagement with the three posts depicted above that their post (about 234,500 views ahead of the next most viewed post) acted as a figurehead in the movement to copy and paste this specific message. This allowed the message to be echoed again and again, finding more and more skeptics to continue to echo the message over and over and louder and louder as the algorithm would continue to push content conspiracy theorists wanted to see to their page. None of these posts come with any form of community note, since from what we can infer from the engagement with Spinachbrah's post, it was likely being viewed by users who believed this was the truth. This demonstrates a flaw in the misinformation system of users providing feedback set by X - if the users the content caters to find nothing wrong with the information provided, they are not likely to report it.

Let us also take a look at what ended up being the most popular "X" post amongst the October 4th Conspiracy posts. The tweet belongs to user Gina Shirah (@GinaShirah81815), where she states:

> "Turn off your cell phones on October 4th. The EBS is going to "test" the system using 5G. This will activate the Marburg virus in people who have been vaccinated. And sadly turn some of them into zombies."

The post contains no hashtags, no external links, and no attached media - the post is solely text, but is accompanied by two community notes that state:

> "The EBS does not currently exist; it has been replaced by the Emergency Alert System (EAS)"
> And,
> "While it is true that wireless alerts transmit over cellular networks, the claim that the test will transmit a virus or activate special code is false"

At the time of writing, the tweet has accumulated a whopping 11 million views, 1.2K reposts, 7.1K quotes, 4K likes, and 1.2K bookmarks. Immediately, these statistics entertain the "X" algorithm that prioritizes pushing tweets with large numbers of shares, retweets, likes, and replies. But seemingly, this post did not garner the attention that it did for being supported and believed: the analysis of a small sample size of 200 comments showed that 98% of the replies were denying or ridiculing what Shirah had to say. The replies to Shirah's post included a myriad of gifs, memes, and commentary denouncing the post and conspiracy, including statements such as:

> "Community notes disagrees" (Braga)
> "I respect your sadness threshold! Marburg — hemorrhagic fever that'll have you bleeding from all orifices and kill 25%-90% of the people it infects: not sad. Zombies: sad. Good calibration scale for the next time we get sick or injured: it could be zombies!" (Polaski)
> "This is a joke Tweet, right?" (Smith)

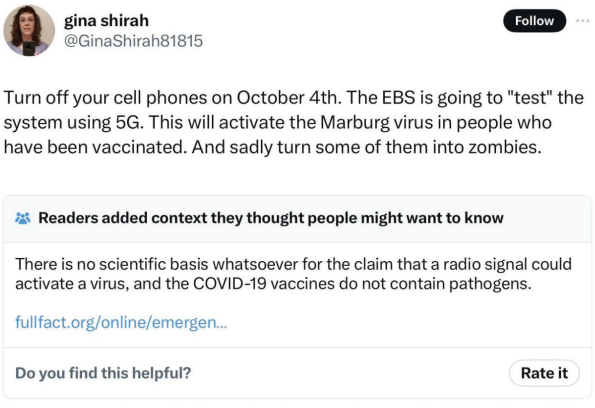


Fig. 2. Screenshot of @GinaShirah81815's X post

While not viral due to support, the post ended up viral nonetheless. Because of the uproar from those against the conspiracy theory who found it humoring or irritating, the post managed to gain enough of the

right data for it to become viral. The overwhelming amount of comments from users dispelling the post allowed the overall visibility of the post to increase, as more and more engagement with the post (whether positive or negative) allowed the post to track well with the "X" algorithm. Here, we see how emotions were vital to the spread of this conspirator's post. Through brief discourse analysis of the aforementioned tweets from commenters on Shirah's post as well as other replies from the 98% of users against the theory, it is evident that the large majority of those engaging with Shirah's post did so to express their frustrations with the conspiracy theory, or to poke fun and laugh at what the post had to say. Their desire to voice their emotions ultimately fed into the nature of the "X" algorithm, pushing Shirah's post into the eyes of 11M viewers - and 11 million "X" users were fed misinformation. While evidently most refuted the misinformation, from our former example it is just as evident that this same misinformation was also taken up and believed, and was given the ability to become immensely widespread through the "X" algorithm. Despite the fact that this conspiracy theory could be categorized as content that is "significantly and deceptively altered, manipulated, or fabricated" ("How We Address Misinformation on X."), all of the aforementioned posts are still up and viewable on the "X" platform.

Conclusion

Ultimately, this research brings forth the question of who is responsible for regulating informational versus misinformational discourse if we live in a post-truth era. This research makes it clear that truth is not taken into account in the virality and spread of narratives on the "X" platform. During a time in which "people can believe whatever they want to believe as long as they *feel* it is right" (Meckley), emotions and personal belief overwhelm the influence of facts and figures, and it is evidently reflected in what is spread through the "X" algorithm. If enough people can get on board with 5G COVID zombies, or even just discuss the theory for that matter, it has the ability to earn its place on the "X" platform. How are we supposed to trust anything we see online?

In this post-truth era filled with fake news and conspiracy, do we need to become our own "fact checkers"? Or, with our algorithms feeding into what *we* think, can we be trusted to be our own voices of reason? Evidently, Gina Shirah finds herself to be correct in her own conspiracies, and if what she *feels* is supposedly right, can we all be certain that what *we* believe is in fact correct? Or do we all risk being in our own right forms of Gina Shirah in a world where "somehow having a wealth of information at our fingertips has made it more difficult to be 'certain' about anything" (Meckley)? We need to be able to separate feelings from fact.

But are we even able to separate emotions from informative discourse? Or did Aristotle curse us when defining the art of rhetoric all those years ago? The undeniable appeal of pathos, or emotions, seems to have found its way to the forefront of the rhetorical trifecta (Aristotle's defined means of persuasion), seemingly outshining ethos and logos as the most appealing appeal in a post-truth society. Are we a more emotionally driven generation, evidenced by these obvious denials of logic from long-established institutions and systems in order to support more emotionally charged claims? How do we learn how to look past the persuasive nature of emotion when algorithms continually feed us with what it thinks is going to appease our emotions the most? Are we not to be persuaded to continually push the content that influences us to *feel* when emotions have been such a key component of persuasion for thousands of years? The post-truth era has capitalized on the art of rhetoric to push its emotionally driven agenda against objective truth, and evidenced in the rise of the October 4th conspiracy is the effects of this drive towards subjectivity through feelings by way of social media and algorithms. Ultimately, let this research be proof that more needs to be done in pursuit of the spread of real, objective truths via "X".

Work Cited

Abraxsys [@Abraxsys]. "Looks like the emergency alert managed to create a few mindless zombies after all..." *ZX*, October 4, 2023, https://x.com/abraxsys/status/1709640697270399204?s=61.

Ahmed, Wasim, et al. "COVID-19 and the 5G Conspiracy Theory: Social Network Analysis of Twitter Data." *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, vol. 22, no. 5, May 2020, https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.2196/19458.

Braga, Ana [@TheAnaBraga]. "Community notes disagrees." X, October 3, 2023, https://x.com/theanabraga/status/1709281191365669107?s=61.

Farokhi, Zeinab. "Making Freedom Great Again: Conspiracy Theories, Affective Nostalgia and Alignment, and The Right-Wing Base Grammars of the #Freeedomconvoy (*)." *Global Media Journal -- Canadian Edition*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2022, pp. 67–92, https://content.ebscohost.com/cds/retrieve?content=AQICAHjIloLM_J-oCztr2keYdV8f1ibHmDucods679W_YPnffAGDN4WRL7lJuyCDjNu6u9I-AAAA2TCB1gYJKoZIhvcNAQcGoIHIMIHFAgEAMIG_BgkqhkiG9w0BBwEwHgYJYIZIAWUDBAEuMBEEDC1hfLEIY-nfVXQpNAIBEICBkbL-secImKC8gS2tYGE9869euAIdYdonr_LrVL054qxSGtfo0_CGdXeT1U72a4-UOHa9SN1bUW6HkXOXyXorTJTJfhfkEh03jH-Dq_seVYJHbm_BQIyPQsw4awzFaDosWkMtmf-BZUQdEtiKnhTKJL_xVoGMCDEJHbI3HS5dpvWE4WqK8XSN79_1eM40w3N5VMI=.

Gruzd, Anatoliy, and Philip Mai. "Going viral: How a single tweet spawned a COVID-19 conspiracy theory on Twitter." *Big Data & Society*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2020, https://doi.org/10.1177/2053951720938405.

Finn, Samantha, and Panagoitis Metaxas. *The Infamous #Pizzagate Conspiracy Theory: Insight from a TwitterTrails Investigation*, 2017, https://repository.wellesley.edu/object/ir300.

"How We Address Misinformation on X." *Twitter*, Twitter, help.twitter.com/en/resources/addressing-misleading-info. Accessed 30 Nov. 2023.

Meckley, Taylor. "Post-Truth Era: What Does It Mean, and Are We Living in One?" *ZU Media*, 4 Nov. 2019, zunews.com/2019/11/post-truth-era-what-does-it-mean-and-are-we-living-in-one/.

Polaski [@josephdrobbins]. "I respect your sadness threshold! Marburg — hemmoraghic fever that'll have you bleeding from all orifices and kill 25%-90% of all the people it infects: not sad. Zombies: sad. Good calibration scale for the next time we get sick or injured: it could always be zombies!." X, October 3, 2023, https://x.com/josephdrobbins/status/1709215485466759528?s=61.

Puri, Neha, et al. "Social Media and vaccine hesitancy: New updates for the era of COVID-19 and globalized infectious diseases." *Human Vaccines & Immunotherapeutics*, vol. 16, no. 11, 2020, pp. 2586–2593, https://doi.org/10.1080/21645515.2020.1780846.

Shiraz, Gina [@GinaShirah81815]. "Turn off your cell phones on October 4th. The EBS is going to "test" the system using 5G. This will activate the Marburg virus in people who have been vaccinated. And sadly turn some of them into zombies". *X*, October 3, 2023, https://x.com/ginashirah81815/status/1708314727422513629?s=61.

Smith, Blaine [@GHBSmith]. "This is a joke Tweet, right?". *X*, October 4, 2023, https://x.com/ghbsmith/status/1709502682455474448?s=61.

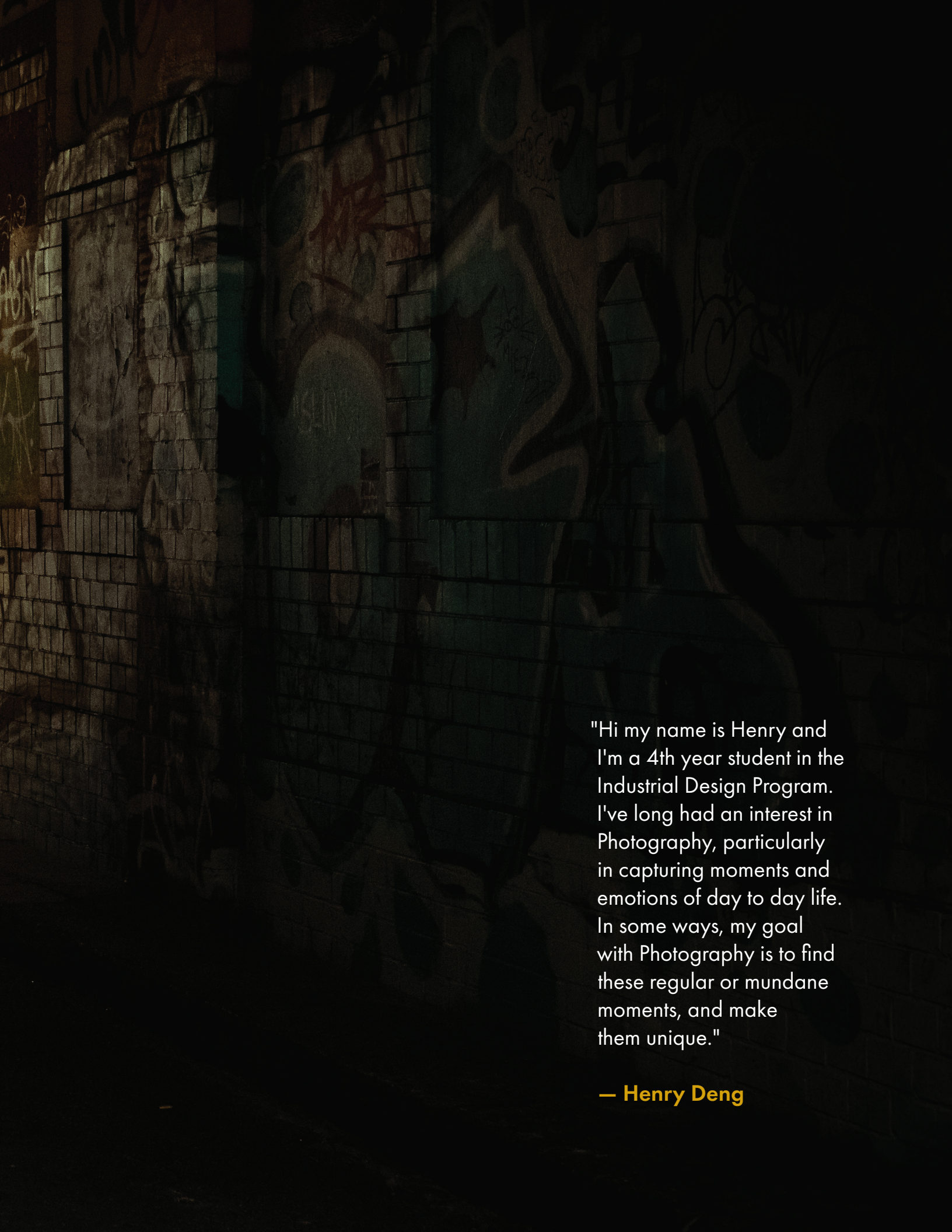
Spinachbrah [@basedspinach]. "Turn off your smart phones on October 4th. The Emergency Broadcast System is going to "test" the system using 5G radiation waves. This will activate the mRNA in people who have been vaccinated. And sadly turn some of them into zombies. No tweet's tomorrow, going to call in sick and play Minecraft as the world burns down". *X*, October 3, 2023, https://x.com/basedspinach/status/1709363673356013730?s=61.

Williamson, Bill [@LongWJohnson]. "Man I appreciate the heads up you are a real one". *X*, October 4, 2023, https://x.com/longwjohnson/status/1709490287599403455?s=61.

"X-Twitter Algorithm 2023: Explained." *Metricool*, 27 Sept. 2023, metricool.com/how-the-twitter-x-algorithm-works-in-2023/#:~:text=The%20Twitter%20algorithm%20is%20a,not%20the%20post%20contains%20media.

@praisethechrist. "Turn of your microwave and put your phone inside it if you dont Have a faraday cage". *X*, October 3, 2023, https://x.com/praisethechrist/status/1709363837051556007?s=61.


Eingänge - Schritt fahren!



"Hi my name is Henry and I'm a 4th year student in the Industrial Design Program. I've long had an interest in Photography, particularly in capturing moments and emotions of day to day life. In some ways, my goal with Photography is to find these regular or mundane moments, and make them unique."

— Henry Deng

Adea Eurydice the "Warrior Queen"?: Source Bias, Illyrian Gender Norms, and the Political Battlefield of the Diadochi Wars

Anna Smythe

ABSTRACT: This paper examines whether or not Adea Eurydice, the teenage Queen of Macedon after the death of Alexander the Great, personally fought in the Battle of Euia. If she did, she would earn the title of 'Warrior Queen.' However, only three extant primary sources cover her involvement in this battle: Justin's Epitome, Diocorus Siculus' Library of History, and a fragment of Duris of Samos' writing. These sources are contradictory and subject to Greek and/or Roman bias, necessitating further investigation into Adea Eurydice's involvement in the Battle of Euia. Thus, I examine Adea Eurydice's political life leading up to the battle and the historical precedent for elite Macedonian women fighting in wars. Then, I look at her Illyrian heritage on her mother's side and how it may have affected her choice and ability to fight. This involves critically examining the Greek and Roman literary sources on Illyrian women and 'Warrior Queens' as well as their modern reception. To explore their validity, I analyze archaeological evidence of Illyrian women's higher social status and of other Macedonian 'Warrior Queens.' Overall, I argue that Adea Eurydice had the ability, precedent, and willingness to fight at Euia, making her a 'Warrior Queen.'

KEYWORDS: Adea Euydice, The Battle of Euia, Macedonian Queens, Macedonia, Illyria, Classics

Introduction

Knowledge of Adea Eurydice, the teenage Macedonian queen who led her army into battle against Alexander the Great's mother, Olympias,[1] is minimal. Named Adea at birth, she took the name Eurydice after she married Philip Arrhidaeus (Arrian *BNJ* 156 F 9.23), her cousin and the brother of the now-late Alexander the Great, who was unable to rule effectively due to health issues (Diodorus, 18.2). Her mother was Cynnane, daughter of Philip II of Macedon and Audata of Illyria, who may have also renamed herself Eurydice (Arrian *BNJ* 156 F 9.22-23), and may have been the daughter of Illyrian King Bardylis.[2] Adea Eurydice engaged in a battle for the throne at Euia against Olympias (Duris BNJ_2 76 F 52), who sought to ensure that her grandson succeeded the throne that she occupied with her husband at that time.[3] After Adea Eurydice's troops deferred to Olympias, which ancient sources such as Diodorus (19.11) attribute to their loyalty to Alexander's mother, she lost. Olympias soon captured her along with her husband and either killed them both (Justin 14.5.10) or killed Philip Arrhidaeus and ordered Adea Eurydice to commit suicide (Diod. 19.11). This article is, in summary, what we know about Adea Eurydice.

In the cases of the more spectacular episodes in the short life of Adea Eurydice, it is especially necessary to critically examine what the sources that talk about her say, and why. Ancient sources that mention Adea Eurydice are largely biased against her in their portrayal. Since the death of Alexander the Great had left the throne without any fully legitimate or capable heir, Hellenistic royal women began to step into increasingly more significant and direct roles within the following Diadochi wars—and Adea Eurydice was no exception. Despite how such fighting and violence was typical of the political scene at that time, the Greek and Roman sources which cover it do so through their own perspectives of gender norms.[4] Specifically, the Roman and especially Greek belief that women were supposed to live mostly within the private sphere of their home and interact as little as possible with the public sphere.[5] Thus, any episode of extremely anti-Greek or anti-Roman values, such as Adea Eurydice's battle against Olympias, may have been exaggerated through hyperbole over their irregular or even barbaric nature for a Greek or Roman audience. In short, it is uncertain whether or not Adea Eurydice ever stepped foot on a battlefield, not to mention whether she ever fought on one.

[1] Elizabeth D. Carney, "Transitional royal women: Kleopatra, sister of Alexander the Great, Adea Eurydike, and Phila," in *The Routledge Companion to Women and Monarchy in the Ancient Mediterranean World*, ed. Elizabeth D. Carney and Sabine Müller (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2020), 325, https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429434105.

[2] Elizabeth D. Carney, *Women and Monarchy in Macedonia* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2000), 57-58.

[3] Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 115-116, 121.

[4] Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 116-117.

[5] Sabine Müller, "Argead Women," in *The Routledge Companion to Women and Monarchy in the Ancient Mediterranean World*, ed. Elizabeth D. Carney, and Sabine Müller (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2020), 295, https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429434105; Elizabeth D. Carney "Women and War in the Greek World," in *A Companion to Greek Warfare*, ed. W. Heckel, F.S. Naiden, E.E. Garvin, and J. Vanderspoel, (Online Wiley Library: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 2021), 341, https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119438847.ch25.

The sources that claim she participated directly in battle attribute her military skills to her mother, Cynnane (Polyaenus, *Stratagems*, 8.60; Duris *BNJ*$_2$ 76 F 52). In an attempt to explain why Cynnane, who was born and raised in Macedonia,[6] would train her daughter in the art of war despite traditional Macedonian gender roles,[7] modern scholars have attributed this to the mother and daughter's Illyrian lineage.[8] This notion is largely based on the example of Queen Teuta,[9] an Illyrian queen who waged war against Rome from 231 to 228 BCE,[10] nearly one century after the death of Adea Eurydice in 317 BCE (Diod. 19.11). It is also based on the general consensus among modern scholars that Illyrian women had a higher social status than their Greek counterparts.[11] However, this assumption fails to take into account the distinct lack of both information on Illyrian women fighting in battles[12] and unbiased extant information about the Illyrians, especially as no Illyrian written histories have survived.[13] Overall, the modern assumption that all Illyrian women were trained in the art of war falls prey to the biases of the sources it relies on. This inspires even more uncertainty when examining the sources on Adea Eurydice and whether or not she actually fought in a battle, which would earn her the title of a 'warrior queen.'

This paper will argue that she likely did fight in the battle against Olympias at Euia, making her a 'warrior queen.' The political climate of the Diadochi Wars that Adea Eurydice grew up in, and reigned during, was conducive to royal women wielding more public authority both on and off the battlefield,[14] which established a Macedonian precedent that Adea Eurydice could have followed. Due to her immediate and direct political and military actions after her marriage, that were successful until her troops deferred from her due to their loyalty to Olympias (Diod. 19.11.2), it seems likely that she did receive military training from Cynnane, as Duris (*BNJ*$_2$ 76 F 52) and Polyaenus (*Strat*. 60.8) allege. Nonetheless, there is no significant literary or archaeological evidence supporting the modern conception that *all* Illyrian women took part in battle, creating uncertainty in Cynnane's ability and desire to train her daughter in the art of war. It is, however, possible that Illyrian royal women were trained in the art of war due to their comparatively higher social status, which archaeological evidence,[15] as well as less-reliable literary sources (Varro, *De Re Rustica*, 2.10.7 and 9; Pseudo-Scylax, *Periplous*, 21), demonstrate.[16] Overall, this combination of circumstances makes it extremely likely that Adea Eurydice did fight on the battlefield at Euia, earning her the title of 'warrior queen.'

The Political Life of Adea Eurydice

Adea Eurydice's entrance into the Macedonian political scene was through her marriage. Cynnane had devised this marriage after the death of Alexander the Great in an attempt to gain as much power for herself and her daughter as possible, as Philip Arrhidaeus was at that time the most eligible heir to the Macedonian throne.[17] This plan did not go unnoticed. Antipater, one of the foremost successors at that time, tried and failed to stop her from reaching Asia, recognizing the threat that she and her daughter posed if they could integrate themselves even more directly into Alexander's family (Polyaen. *Strat*. 6.80). However, it was Alcetas who murdered Cynnane under the order of his brother Perdiccas—the most powerful man (and successor) in Macedonia during the Diadochi Wars, and regent for Philip Arrhidaeus —before she could succeed in arranging the marriage (Arrian *BNJ* 156 F 9.22-23). Upon Cynnane's death,

[6] Jens Bartels, "Cynnane 'The Illyrian'? The Perils of Onomastics," *The Classical Quarterly* 65, no. 1 (2015): 385, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838814000561.
[7] Dolores Miron, "Transmitters and Representatives of Power: Royal Women in Ancient Macedonia." *Ancient Society* 30 (2000): 37-38, http://www.jstor.org/stable/44079805.
[8] Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 58; Adrienne Mayor, "Warrior Women," in *Women in Antiquity* ed. Stephanie Lynn Budin and Jean MacIntosh Turfa (Abingdon: Routledge, 18 Aug 2016), 975-976, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315621425; Rolf Strootman, "Warrior Queens of the Hellenistic World." in *The Public Lives of Ancient Women* (500 BCE–650 CE) (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2023), 25, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004534513_004.
[9] Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 69; Strootman, "Warrior Queens," 37-38.
[10] John Wilkes, *The Illyrians* (Cambridge: Wiley-Blackwell, 1996), 158-159; Strootman, "Warrior Queens," 38.
[11] Wilkes, *The Illyrians*, 110; Aleksandar Stipčević, *The Illyrians : History and Culture*, trans. Stojana Čulić Burton (New Jersey: Noyes Press, 1977), 168.
[12] I could not find a single ancient source which outwardly states that Illyrian women fought in battles, even about Teuta. I will expand upon this in my section on Illyrian women.
[13] Stipčević, *The Illyrians*, 3; Wilkes, *The Illyrians*, 3-4.
[14] Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 116-117.
[15] Katarzyna Minollari, "Red-Figure Vases from Durres – A Reflection of a Local Culture?" *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports* 21 (October 1, 2018): 1030, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jasrep.2016.12.007.
[16] Danijel Dzino, ""Liburni Gens Asiatica": Anatomy Of Classical Stereotype." *Arheološki radovi i rasprave* 18 (2017): 68-72, https://doi.org/10.21857/ygjwrc6rzy.
[17] Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 129.

the Macedonian army that she had brought to Asia and led against Alectas revolted. The army was more loyal to Cynnane and her relationship to the Argead family through her late husband, Amnytas (nephew of Philip II),[18] Philip II, and Alexander the Great, than they were to Alectas or Perdiccas (Polyaen. *Strat*. 6.80). Thus, the Macedonian army rallied in favour of Cynnane and Adea Eurydice's marriage, and Perdiccas was forced to allow Adea Eurydice to marry Philip Arrhidaeus to stop the revolts (Arrian *BNJ* 156 F 9.23). Newly on the throne and only a teenager, Adea Eurydice already had more loyalty from the Macedonian army for her lineage than the army had for the powerful successor and regent, Perdiccas.

The next account we have of Adea Eurydice begins after Perdiccas's death and at the beginning of Antipater's time as regent (Arrian *BNJ* 156 F 9.30-32; Diod. 18.1.2). Similar to how Olympias could act on behalf of her infant grandson, Alexander IV, Adea Eurydice was able to act on behalf of Philip Arrhidaeus, due to his health issues.[19] Thus, free from the influence of her husband, Adea Eurydice was able to wield all the authority at her disposal. She quickly began to consolidate and grow her power. She ordered Pithon and Arrhidaeus (not Philip Arrhidaeus), the current guardians of the kings Philip Arrhidaeus and Alexander IV, not to act without her and began garnering popular support among the Macedonians (Arrian *BNJ* 156 F 9.30-31; Diod. 18.1.1-3). When Antipater was unable to pay the Macedonian army, she instigated a revolt against him which nearly killed him (Arrian *BNJ* 156 F 9.32-33). While Adea Eurydice had been unable to set in motion the death of her political rival, as Cynnane did (Polyaen. *Strat*. 8.60), she too displayed a great ability to gain and use the support of her subjects against the most powerful man in Macedonia, as well as other powerful figures.

It was after the death of Antipater that Adea Eurydice began to display her military prowess in addition to her political prowess. Antipater had appointed Polyperchon as regent before succumbing to illness (Diod. 18.48.4). Polyperchon sought an ally in Olympias, and promised to restore her and her grandson to the throne (Diod. 19.11.2). Thus, two major threats to Adea Eurydice's power were forming a dangerous united front. In response, Adea Eurydice sought her own alliance with Cassander (Diod. 19.11.1). She promised to make him regent through the authority of her husband, the king, as Cassander felt that his father, Antipater, had slighted him by not declaring him regent (Justin 14.5.3). Unfortunately for her, Cassander was preoccupied with war in the Peloponnese (Justin 14.5.5), and Olympias was already on her way to Macedonia with Polyperchon, Aeacides—King of Epirus and Olympias' cousin—and the Epirote army (Diod. 19.11.1-2).[20] With no allies nearby, and a husband unable to act as king on his own, it was necessary for Adea Eurydice, herself, to defend her place on the throne.

The sources that cover the ensuing battle at Euia have differing accounts as to Eurydice's involvement in it. Duris claims that Adea Eurydice led her Macedonian troops wearing traditional Macedonian armour, and even calls this battle "the first war between women" (*BNJ*$_2$ 76 F 52). Justin says that she and her husband "attempted to keep [Olympias] from entering the land" (14.5.9) but that the Macedonian army defected to Olympias out of either humiliation or respect for Philip II and Alexander the Great (14.5.10), and does not expand past that. Diodorus falls somewhere in the middle of these two accounts, and claims that Adea Eurydice led the Macedonian army against their arrival, but that they defected from her as soon as they stood before the opposing army out of respect for Olympias. Thus, there was no battle at all. He is also the only source of these three that says Adea Eurydice fled after her defeat (19.11.2-4), which suggests that she did have a presence on the battlefield at Euia, but only briefly as a military leader, not a fighter.

As a result, only Duris (*BNJ*$_2$ 76 F 52) claims that she fought in a battle like a 'warrior queen'. However, all three sources agree that she was able to successfully order the Macedonian army to fight for her and her husband against the current regent, the grandmother of King Alexander IV, and the King of Epirus with his army. Given how involved Adea Eurydice had been with the Macedonian army since her wedding, this is unsurprising. Adea Eurydice was very public about her political machinations. She started a revolt so dangerous for Antipater that he felt the need to

[16] Danijel Dzino,""Liburni Gens Asiatica": Anatomy Of Classical Stereotype." *Arheološki radovii rasprave* 18 (2017): 68-72, https://doi.org/10.21857/ygjwrc6rzy.
[17] Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 129.
[18] Elizabeth D. Carney, "The Career of Adea-Eurydike," *Historia: Zeitschrift Für Alte Geschichte* 36, no. 4 (1987): 497-498, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4436032.
[19] Carney, "Career," 499.
[20] Carney, "Career," 500.

silence her (Diod. 18.39.4). She garnered such public support that Pithon and Arrhidaeus saw her as a threat to their authority; if Macedonians were so willing to obey her commands, her control over them would be even more potent (Diod. 18.39.1-2; Arrian *BNJ* 156 F 9.30-31). Although it is easy to see her political prowess and to argue her military prowess relating to her influence within the army, none of this demonstrates whether Adea Eurydice took part in the Battle of Euia as Duris (BNJ_2 76 F 52) alleges.[21]

Justin, especially, is outwardly misogynistic toward Adea Eurydice.[22] He claims that her motivation for the battle at Euia is "womanly jealousy" (14.5.2) and is also the only source to give any agency to Philip Arrhidaeus, taking away Adea Eurydice's main justification for acting from the throne so publicly (14.5.2-9). Diodorus, on the other hand, displays less contempt for her. While he describes her participation in the political scene of the Diadochi Wars as interference (18.39.2), he is also the only source to give her a noble death: Adamant about her right to the throne until the end, she stoically took her own life with her girdle rather than with any of the instruments of suicide which her captor, Olympias, provided (19.11.5-7).[23] According to Justin, Olympias simply ordered the execution of Adea Eurydice and Philip Arrhidaeus after the Macedonian troops defected to her (14.5.10). He gives no further details of Adea Eurydice's death.

Significantly, Diodorus also states that Adea Eurydice's death led to public discontent within Macedonia due to Olympias' excessive cruelty toward her prisoners (19.11.5) and that Olympias deserved a cruel death (19.11.7). Therefore, in this passage, Diodorus portrays Adea Eurydice as a noble queen (to a Greek and Roman standard) to make Olympias' actions seem more reprehensible, which contradicts his depiction of Adea Eurydice making the ignoble choice to flee the battle of Euia (19.11.3). Such an inconsistency is unlike Justin, who depicts Adea Eurydice and Olympias both as overreaching women. While Diodorus argues that one of the reasons for Olympias' murder was karma for her treatment of Adea Eurydice in captivity (19.11.7), Justin claims that Olympias "did not rule for long either" because she was "[a]cting more like a woman than a monarch" (14.6.1). Both authors had reason to omit Eurydice's participation in battle: Justin, due to his staunchly Roman view of a woman's place (or lack of one) within politics, and Diodorus, due to how it would make her seem less noble to a Greek and Roman audience.[24] It is thus necessary to examine whether or not Adea Eurydice would have chosen to lead the Macedonian army herself.

Macedonian Women in Battle

In order to examine if there was precedence for Adea Eurydice to engage in battle, we must look beyond the sources that talk about her. There are two main questions to consider in this section: 1.) Were any other Macedonian women engaging in battle during Adea Eurydice's life? and 2.) Did Adea Eurydice actually have the skills to lead an army, that is, did Cynnane actually give her military training (Duris BNJ_2 76 F 52; Polyaen. *Strat*. 8.60)? If Cynnane did indeed have military training, as Polyaenus and Duris claim, it is significantly more likely that she would have passed them down to her daughter. Furthermore, if Adea Eurydice's female contemporaries were taking part in battles, the Macedonian political climate would have been much more conducive to Adea Eurydice either joining in or attempting to push the boundaries of a woman's role in the Diadochi Wars even further.

Similar to their Greek counterparts, non-royal Macedonian women did not partake in battle.[25] However, starting in the late fourth century BCE during the reign of Queen Eurydice, the public roles of royal Macedonian women began to greatly expand, even into a military capacity.[26] Eurydice—who may also have been Illyrian—was the wife of King Amnytas III and mother of Philip II.[27] In the 360s BCE, after the death of Amyntas III, Eurydice successfully aided in the succession of her two sons Perdiccas (not the regent Perdiccas) and Philip II by persuading the Athenian General Iphicrates to force the pretender Pausanias, who had murdered her eldest son Alexander II, off the throne (Aeschines 2.26-29). This is the first known instance of a royal Macedonian woman participating directly in the political and military scene of Macedonia. After this success, she would go on to make public military dedications and may have also funded public infrastructure projects

[21] Carney, "Transitional royal women," 326.
[22] Waldemar Heckel and Pat Wheatley, commentary on Justin, *Epitome of the Philippic History of Pompeius Trogus. Volume 2: The Successors to Alexander the Great* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 197.
[23] Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 137.
[24] Müller, "Argead Women," 295-296; Carney "Women and War," 341.
[25] Miron, "Transmitters," 37-38.
[26] Strootman, "Warrior Queens," 20-21.
[27] Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 41.

such as an Athenian temple to Eucleia Eunomia.[28] Eurydice's political and military success and increasingly public role would set the precedent for other royal Macedonian women to act increasingly publicly in a political and military capacity.[29]

One such woman is Olympias. Similar to Eurydice and Adea Eurydice, Olympias wielded the authority of the throne when the king could not. While Alexander the Great was campaigning in Asia, Olympias oversaw some religious functions in his stead, such as dedicating spoils at Delphi.[30] Olympias also had a role in Antipater's loss of the regency, though it is unclear to what extent.[31] In all, it is clear that she had a significant political role starting from the time of her son's reign.

After the death of Alexander, Olympias acted to ensure the succession of her grandson, Alexander IV during the Diadochi wars, which culminated in her seizing the throne after the Battle of Euia.[32] Significantly, Olympias was such an important political player that Polyperchon willingly gave her the throne, and considered this a better alternative than Adea Eurydice remaining on it (Justin 14.5.1-3; Diod. 18.65.1). Olympias was also significant enough to the Macedonian army that they defected to her from the ruling queen (Justin 14.5.10; Diod. 19.11.2). Duris (*BNJ*$_2$ 76 F 52) is again the only source which claims that she, herself, fought on the battlefield. However, unlike Adea Eurydice's depictions, all three sources agree that Olympias was at least present on the battlefield, as it was her presence and leadership that caused the Macedonian army to switch sides.[33] While on the throne, exerting her military authority, she ordered the slaughter of 100 of Cassander's followers.[34] Thus, Adea Eurydice did have a female contemporary who publicly exerted great political influence and had a military role in the Diadochi Wars during her reign, which established a direct precedent for royal women to assume a role in military leadership. This precedent increases the likelihood that Adea Eurydice would have considered it a possibility for herself.

Furthermore, Cynanne has multiple attestations of her military prowess. Both Duris (*BNJ*$_2$ 76 F 52) and Polyaenus (*Strat*. 8.60) claim that she trained Adea Eurydice in the art of war. This is significant because, unlike Olympias, there are only three surviving sources that depict Cynanne's actions during her life: Arrian, Duris, and Polyaenus. Arrian mentions that Cynnane brought Adea Eurydice to Asia to get married, but Alectas and Perdiccas killed Cynnane before Adea Eurydice could see it happen. Her death then caused the revolts that led to Adea Eurydice's marriage and the war against Perdiccas (*BNJ* 156 F 9.22-23). In essence, Arrian depicts Cynnane largely as the object of others' actions, the results of which affected those around her.

Polyaenus, on the other hand, not only claims that she was "famous for her military knowledge" (*Strat*. 8.60) but also details some of her military exploits. Cynnane "conducted armies, and in the field charged at the head of them" (*Strat*. 8.60) and even fought against the Illyrians in her father's campaign against them.[35] During this campaign, she even slew an Illyrian queen named Caeria. Polyaenus also expands on her passage to Asia with Adea Eurydice. He details how she defeated Antipater—presumably with a group of soldiers or mercenaries which she gathered herself—who tried to stop her from crossing the Strymon, and battled Alectas with the Macedonian troops that she collected and rallied to her cause at the Hellespont. Considering how Cynnane was an extraordinarily successful leader on the battlefield, it is unsurprising that she would be so bold as to take on Antipater, Alectas, and Perdiccas in her goal of regaining and expanding her power and authority (Polyaen. *Strat*. 8.60).[36]

Therefore, as this is one of the two sources on Cynnane's actions during her life that does not treat her like an object or a footnote, and given that the other confirms that Cynnane had the capacity to train her daughter in the art of war (Duris *BNJ*$_2$ 76 F 52), it is probable that Cynnane did indeed train Adea Eurydice to fight and to lead on the battlefield (Polyaen. *Strat*. 8.60). In addition, Argead women had been taking part in military affairs since the reign of Queen Eurydice (Aeschines 2.26-29).[37] Olympias and Cynnane were both contemporaries of Adea Eurydice who wielded great political influence and

[28] Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 43-46.
[29] Müller, "Argead Women," 299.
[30] Miron, "Transmitters," 41; Strootman, "Warrior Queens," 21.
[31] Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 87-88.
[32] Miron, "Transmitters," 36-37; *Carney, Women and Monarchy*, 120.
[33] Carney, "Women and War," 346.
[34] Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 122.
[35] Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 69.
[36] Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 129-130.
[37] Strootman, "Warrior Queens," 20-21.

took on public military roles within the Diadochi Wars, with Cynnane's military participation extending even beyond that. Overall, there was precedence for Adea Eurydice to act militarily in the Diadochi Wars. However, this does not explain why Cynnane would have military capabilities to begin with, as Polyaenus (*Strat*. 8.60) and Duris (*BNJ*$_2$ 76 F 52) allege, nor why she would choose to pass them on to her daughter in a culture where it was not sanctioned for even royal women to fight in battles.[38] Some scholars try to explain this by asserting that all Illyrian women were trained to fight in war, a tradition that Cynnane passed on to Adea Eurydice.[39]

The Modern Concept of Illyrian Warrior Women

The modern conception that all Illyrian women were trained to fight is largely unfounded, but there is evidence that elite Illyrian women could at least hold military leadership roles. This is significant since Adea Eurydice's grandmother, Audata, was likely the daughter of Bardylis, an Illyrian king.[40] Modern scholarship attributes Cynnane's military ability to her mother, Audata.[41] Both of these claims are not based on explicit textual evidence. There are only two sources that talk about Audata: Arrhidaeus, who mentions her in a list of Philip II's wives and calls her Illyrian (557c), and Arrian, who calls her Eurydice, which is why some scholars believe that she changed her name after her marriage (*BNJ* 156 F 9.22).[42] Both sources say that she is the mother of Cynnane and wife of Philip II and very little else. The first scholar to argue that Cynanne was well-versed in combat because of her Illyrian ancestry was Grace Harriet Macurdy, a pioneer in the study of Argead women.[43] Macurdy said that Cynnane "was of the wild, fierce, fighting type of women who flourished among the Illyrian nobility."[44] Macurdy also claims that it was an Illyrian custom for princesses to appear on the battlefield.[45] Although she never directly attributes Cynanne's military education to Audata, the implication is there, as Macurdy believed Audata was the daughter of an Illyrian ruler.[46]

Scholars then expand this argument from it being the custom for Illyrian *princesses* to fight on the battlefield, to *all Illyrian women*[47]—a group that we know extremely little about in modern day.[48] There are two major problems with this argument: First, it relies only on literary evidence from Greek and Roman authors—all of which is biased against Illyrians,[49] and none of which explicitly says that all Illyrian women partake in battle. Second, besides Cynanne, Adea Eurydice, and possibly Eurydice,[50] the only female Illyrians who had a military role, that we know of in modern day, are two queens: Queen Caeria (Polyaen. *Strat*. 8.60) and Queen Teuta (Polybius 2.4.7-2.12.8).

To expand on the first problem, all information about Illyrians from literary sources suffers from the bias of its Greek or Roman authors.[51] This includes sources that assert Illyrian women's higher, barbaric social status in comparison with their Greek and Roman counterparts (Varro, *De Re Rustica*, 2.10.7 and 9; Pseudo-Scylax, *Periplous*, 21),[52] which are key to this argument. Nevertheless, modern scholars do generally agree that Illyrian women did have a higher social status,[53] but it is difficult to determine to what extent this is true due to the great probability that they exaggerate the otherness of the 'barbarian' Illyrians in the face of their own values.[54] An example of this is Polybius' depiction of the Illyrian Queen Teuta (2.4.7-2.12.8), which is expanded upon in the next paragraph. In all, the idea that all Illyrian women partook in battle, which only relies on literary evidence, is based on biased information from cultures that believed women should have a minimal to non-existent role in public life.[55]

As for the second problem, Queen Caeria (who only appears in Polyaen. *Strat*. 8.60) and Queen Teuta[56] are the only instances of Illyrian women acting in a military capacity that we know of, except for Cynnane and Adea Eurydice. The main source for Queen Teuta is Polybius, who uses her reign to demonstrate the opposite of Roman values and

[38] Miron, "Transmitters," 38.
[39] For example: Mayor, "Warrior Women," 975-976
[40] Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 57; Stipčević, *The Illyrians*, 120.
[41] For example: Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 58; Miron, "Transmitters," 39; Müller, "Argead Women," 300; Mayor, "Warrior Women," 975.
[42] Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 58.
[43] Müller, "Argead Women," 299.
[44] Grace Harriet Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens: A Study of Woman-Power in Macedonia, Seleucid Syria, and Ptolemaic Egypt*, ed. David M. Robinson (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1932), 48.
[45] Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 232.
[46] Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 25; Stipčević, *The Illyrians*, 120.
[47] Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 58; Mayor, "Warrior Women," 975-976; Miron, "Transmitters," 39-40 suggests that it could be either all Illyrian women or only royal ones.
[48] Wilkes, *The Illyrians*, 238.
[49] Stipčević, *The Illyrians*, 3; Wilkes, *The Illyrians*, 3-4
[50] Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 41.
[51] Stipčević, *The Illyrians*, 3; Wilkes, *The Illyrians*, 3-4.
[52] Dzino, ""Liburni Gens Asiatica"," 68-72.
[53] Wilkes, *The Illyrians*, 110; Stipčević, *The Illyrians*, 168.
[54] Stipčević, *The Illyrians*, 3; Wilkes, *The Illyrians*, 3-4.
[55] Müller, "Argead Women," 295; Carney "Women and War," 341.
[56] Wilkes, *The Illyrians*, 158-162.

never says that she, personally, fought in a battle (2.4.7-2.12.8).[57] Similar to Justin, Polybius is overtly misogynistic towards Teuta, and claims that she acted "with a woman's natural shortness of view" (2.4.8) during her reign and the war against Rome. Similar to Justin, Polybius not mentioning Teuta fighting could be an act of omission—a woman fighting on the battlefield being too barbaric to write about even when in opposition to the nobility of Rome. Nevertheless, Queen Teuta does show some striking similarities to Cynnane and Adea Eurydice. After the death of her husband, King Agron, Teuta acted as regent for her young stepson, Pinnes.[58] One of her most significant military achievements is that she captured the city of Phoenice (2.5), the most prosperous place in Epirus (2.6.7). She negotiated with foreign powers, such as Epirus (2.6.6, 10-11) and Rome (2.8.7-12).[59] She also waged war with Rome from 231 to 228 BCE,[60] after which Rome forced Teuta to hand over the kingdom to Demetrius of Pharos (2.11.15, 2.12.3).[61] During her short reign, Teuta successfully acted as monarch and displayed great military knowledge—especially for someone who had the kingdom thrust upon her by the death of a relative and lack of an heir (2.12.3).

However, this is not sufficient evidence to support the idea that all Illyrian women participated as fighters in war. Looking only at literary evidence, Macurdy's assertion that all Illyrian female *elite* held military knowledge[62] seems more accurate (even if flawed) than the broader notion that *all* Illyrian women did. Therefore, at the very least, it seems likely that Audata would have had significant knowledge of how to lead in a military capacity to pass onto Cynnane. This, combined with Polyaenus' claim that Cynnane was a renowned warrior, both as a military leader and as a fighter (8.60), furthers this argument and suggests that Audata also had knowledge of how to fight, as well. It also lends credence to Duris' claim that Cynnane taught Adea Eurydice to fight, as well as that Adea Eurydice waged war against Olympias (*BNJ*$_2$ 76 F 52). Furthermore, it is very unlikely that a Macedonian such as Philip taught Cynnane to fight, as no other Macedonian woman had previously engaged in battle as directly as she did, since that was against Macedonian values.[63]

If Illyrian women had a similar social status to Illyrian men, it is logical to assume that royal Illyrian women such as Audata[64] also shared more military power, similar to royal Illyrian men. Teuta's reign and successful military actions support this. However, relying solely on sources such as Polybius, Varro, and Pseudo-Scylax makes for an uncompelling argument, due to the questionable validity of the information that they present.[65] Thus, one method to explore the validity of these written sources, as well as less obviously biased sources such as Polyaenus, is through archaeological supporting evidence.

Warrior Women and Illyrian Women in Archaeology

During the last few decades, archaeologists have increasingly been examining and re-examining the sex of buried soldiers now that sexing methods such as DNA analysis have become standard.[66] For example, in 2004, archaeologists re-examined the skeletons in warrior graves on the acropolis at Orbudad, which Soviet archaeologists found in 1926 and assumed to be male. Archaeologists in 2004 found that at least one skeleton was actually a woman who had been buried with her quiver, arrows, and helmet.[67] Archaeologists have also recently discovered an increasing number of warrior women that sustained physical injury from battle buried across the Eurasian steppes, especially Scythian ones. Warrior women in the steppes were not as rare an occurrence as previously thought: Some cemetery populations are 20 to 37 percent armed women.[68] The burials of armed women are not only in the steppes, however. In Macedonia, the woman partially cremated in Tomb II from the fourth century BCE was buried with various weapons, armour, and a gold and silver shield—a warrior's burial. This tomb is the right place and time for the topic of this paper, and Adea Eurydice is one of the possible identities of the

[57] Amela Bajrić, "Illyrian Queen Teuta and the Illyrians in Polybius's passage on the Roman mission in Illyria." *Vjesnik Arheološkog Muzeja u Zagrebu* 46, no.1 (2014): 23-34, https://hrcak-srce-hr.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/117877.
[58] Stipčević, *The Illyrians*, 49.
[59] Wilkes, *The Illyrians*, 158-160.
[60] Strootman, "Warrior Queens," 38.
[61] Wilkes, *The Illyrians*, 161.
[62] Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 48.
[63] Müller, "Argead Women," 295.
[64] Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 25.
[65] Dzino, ""Liburni Gens Asiatica"," 68-72; Bajrić, "Illyrian Queen Teuta," 52-53.
[66] Mayor, "Warrior Women," 971. This same examination into the sex of buried warriors has not happened to the same extent in the modern areas that ancient Illyrians used to inhabit, at least not in English. This does not negate the possibility of such research and archaeological evidence existing, but does demonstrate that it is an underexplored area.
[67] Mayor, "Warrior Women," 978.
[68] Mayor, "Warrior Women," 971-972.

woman buried in this tomb.[69] However, there is no definitive evidence that it is her, and thus this paper will only use it as an example of how the Greeks and Macedonians were at least aware of the existence of women warriors.

There is also significant archaeological evidence in English that confirms Illyrian women did have a higher social status than their Greek counterparts. Inscriptions in Buthrotum say that Illyrian women could liberate slaves and manage properties.[70] In Durres, the modern-day site of Epidamnos, a prosperous Greek colony in Southern Illyria that allowed non-Greek people to settle in it,[71] multiple red-figure vases depict women in activities and positions that were not culturally appropriate for mainland Greek women at the time. For example, women are commonly depicted in the presence of nude male athletes, which is uncommon in Greek pottery, suggesting that some Illyrian customs had become integrated into the culture of this Greek colony.[72] Also found at Durres is an ivory tablet from the second century AD, when the colony was under Roman control and called Dyrrachium. This tablet details the debts owed to the woman who was buried with it, some of which are upwards of 2000 denarii—about ten times the yearly salary of a contemporary Roman soldier. The discovery that this Illyrian woman had control over her own finances has led archaeologist Eduard Shehi to conclude that Illyrian women could perform business transactions, receive inheritance, and own their own property[73]—similar to the contents of the inscription at Buthrotum.

Conclusion

To conclude, archaeological evidence also suggests that Illyrian women had a higher social status than their Greek counterparts, similar to literary evidence such as Varro, *De Re Rustica* 2.10.7 and 9, Pseudo-Scylax, *Periplous* 21, and Polybius's depiction of Queen Teuta's large military role in the reign of her kingdom (2.4.7-2.12.8). Further research is needed to fully explore whether Illyrian warrior women exist in the archaeological record in order to further examine the modern concept of Illyrian warrior women. Nevertheless, what archaeological evidence does exist furthers the idea that royal Illyrian women participated in battles,[74] as they, too, would have been privy to a higher social status than their royal Greek counterparts.

Thus, Cynnane's mother Audata, being a royal Illyrian,[75] would have also been raised to be able to lead militarily just as Queen Teuta did during her reign. This, in turn, explains how Cynnane was able to lead and fight on the battlefield despite having been raised in the Macedonian court.[76] No Macedonian woman before her is known to have fought on the battlefield, and yet, she excelled there (Polyaen. *Strat*. 8.60). It also explains the parallels between Cynnane and Adea Eurydice's political and military actions; Cynnane very likely did teach her daughter military arts as Duris (*BNJ*$_2$ 76 F 52) and Polyaenus (*Strat*. 60.8) claim. Adea Eurydice was certainly able to watch her mother's actions while she accompanied her to Asia (Arrian *BNJ* 156 F 9.22-23).

Not only was there precedence for Adea Eurydice to choose to fight on the battlefield from her mother and their royal Illyrian ancestry but also a Macedonian one, as elite Argead women such as Eurydice (Aeschines 2.26-29) and Olympias[77] began to take on a greater political and military role. Olympias even appeared on the battlefield during Adea Eurydice's lifetime.[78] Adea Eurydice also displayed a level of confidence around the military to the extent that she was able to convince the Macedonian army to fight against the most powerful Macedonian men of the time—*twice* (Arrian *BNJ* 156 F 9.32-33; Diod. 19.11.2-4). Her military capability is apparent, and she certainly was unafraid of taking risks. Overall, she had the ability, the willingness, and the stage to fight on the battlefield as Duris says she did (*BNJ*$_2$ 76 F 52). Therefore, it is very likely that Adea Eurydice both would have chosen to—and had the ability to—fight in the battle at Euia, which means that despite what ancient sources said or did not say about her, she was in all likelihood a 'warrior queen.'

[69] Mayor, "Warrior Women," 975.
[70] Minollari, "Red-Figure Vases," 1030.
[71] Minollari, "Red-Figure Vases," 1025.
[72] Minollari, "Red-Figure Vases," 1030.
[73] April Holloway, "Ancient Ivory Tablets Reveal High Status of Illyrian Women," *Ancient Origins*, September 2, 2014, https://www.ancient-origins.net/news-history-archaeology/ancient-ivory-tablets-reveal-high-status-illyrian-women-002032.
[74] Marurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 48.
[75] Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, 25.
[76] Bartels, "Cynnane," 385; Miron, "Transmitters," 38.
[77] Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 122.
[78] Carney, "Women and War," 346.

Work Cited

Bajrić, Amela. "Illyrian Queen Teuta and the Illyrians in Polybius's passage on the Roman mission in Illyria." *Vjesnik Arheološkog Muzeja u Zagrebu* 46, no.1 (2014): 29-56. https://hrcak-srce-hr.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/117877.

Bartels, Jens. "Cynnane 'The Illyrian'? The Perils of Onomastics." *The Classical Quarterly* 65, no. 1 (2015): 384–87. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0009838814000561.

Carney, Elizabeth D.. "The Career of Adea-Eurydike." *Historia: Zeitschrift Für Alte Geschichte* 36, no. 4 (1987): 496–502. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4436032.

Carney, Elizabeth D.. "Transitional royal women: Kleopatra, sister of Alexander the Great, Adea Eurydike, and Phila." In *The Routledge Companion to Women and Monarchy in the Ancient Mediterranean World*, edited by Elizabeth D. Carney and Sabine Müller, 321-332. Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2020. Taylor & Francis Group. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429434105.

Carney, Elizabeth D.. *Women and Monarchy in Macedonia*. University of Oklahoma Press, 2000.

Carney, Elizabeth D.. "Women and War in the Greek World." In *A Companion to Greek Warfare*, edited by W. Heckel, F.S. Naiden, E.E. Garvin, and J. Vanderspoel, 339-348. Online Wiley Library: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, 2021. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119438847.ch25.

Dzino, Danijel. ""Liburni Gens Asiatica": Anatomy Of Classical Stereotype." *Arheološki radovii rasprave* 18 (2017): 63-77. https://doi.org/10.21857/ygjwrc6rzy.

Holloway, April. "Ancient Ivory Tablets Reveal High Status of Illyrian Women." *Ancient Origins*, September 2, 2014, https://www.ancient-origins.net/news-history-archaeology/ancient-ivory-tablets-reveal-high-status-illyrian-women-002032.

Macurdy, Grace Harriet. *Hellenistic Queens: A Study of Woman-Power in Macedonia, Seleucid Syria, and Ptolemaic Egypt*. Edited by David M. Robinson. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1932.

Mayor, Adrienne. "Warrior Women." In *Women in Antiquity*, edited by Stephanie Lynn Budin and Jean MacIntosh Turfa, 696-985. Abingdon: Routledge, 2016. Routledge Handbooks Online. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315621425.

Minollari, Katarzyna. "Red-Figure Vases from Durres – A Reflection of a Local Culture?" *Journal of Archaeological Science: Reports* 21 (October 1, 2018): 1025–1034. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jasrep.2016.12.007.

Miron, Dolores. "Transmitters and Representatives of Power: Royal Women in Ancient Macedonia." *Ancient Society* 30 (2000): 35–52. http://www.jstor.org/stable/44079805.

Müller, Sabine. "Argead Women." In *The Routledge Companion to Women and Monarchy in the Ancient Mediterranean World*, edited by Elizabeth D. Carney and Sabine Müller, 294-306. Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2020. Taylor & Francis Group. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429434105.

Stipčević, Aleksandar. *The Illyrians : History and Culture*. Translated by Stojana Čulić Burton. Park Ridge, New Jersey: Noyes Press, 1977.

Strootman, Rolf. "Warrior Queens of the Hellenistic World." In *The Public Lives of Ancient Women (500 BCE–650 CE)*, 18-45. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2023. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004534513_004.

Wilkes, John. *The Illyrians*. Cambridge, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 1996.

Primary Sources

Aeschines. *Aeschines*. Translated by Charles Darwin Adams, Ph.D. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd. 1919. Perseus. Accessed March 19, 2023. https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0002%3Aspeech%3D1.

Athenaeus. *The Learned Banqueters, Volume VI: Books 12-13.594b*. Edited and translated by S. Douglas Olson. Loeb Classical Library 327. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010. DOI: 10.4159/DLCL.atheneus_grammarian-learned_banqueters.2007.

Diodorus Siculus. *Library of History, Volume VII: Books 15.20-16.65*. Translated by Charles L. Sherman. Loeb Classical Library 389. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1952. DOI: 10.4159/DLCL.diodorus_siculus-library_history.1933.

Diodorus Siculus. *Library of History, Volume IX: Books 18-19.65*. Translated by Russel M. Geer. Loeb Classical Library 377. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1947.DOI: 10.4159/DLCL.diodorus_siculus-library_history.1933

Justin. *Epitome of the Philippic History of Pompeius Trogus. Volume 2: The Successors to Alexander the Great*. Translation and appendices by J.C. Yardley. Commentary by Waldemar Heckel and Pat Wheatley. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Polyaenus of Lampsacus. *Polyænus's Stratagems of War; translated from the original Greek*, by R. Shepherd, F.R.S. London: printed for George Nicol, Bookseller To His Majesty, Pall-Mall, M.DCC.XCIII. [1793]. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (accessed February 7, 2023). https://link-gale-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/apps/doc/CW0112612919/ECCO?u=edmo69826&sid=bookmark-ECCO&xid=3067cf83&pg=393.

Pownall, Frances. "Duris of Samos (76)." In *Jacoby Online. Brill's New Jacoby - Second Edition, Part II*, edited by Ian Worthington. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2022. DOI: 10.1163/1873-5363_bnj2_a76.

Pseudo-Scylax. *Periplous*. Translated by Brady Kiesling. ToposText Web Version 3, 2015. Accessed January 29, 2024. https://topostext.org/work/102.

Roller, Duane W.. "L. Flavius Arrianus of Nikomedia (156)" In *Jacoby Online. Brill's New Jacoby, Part II*, edited by Ian Worthington. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2021. http://doi.org/10.1163/1873-5363_bnj_a156.

Varro. *On Agriculture*. Translated by W. D. Hooper, Harrison Boyd Ash. Loeb Classical Library 283. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1934. DOI: 10.4159/DLCL.varro-agriculture.1934



Photographer: Sevilla Zhou

Biting Back at Society: The Menace of the 1970s Lesbian Vampire

Sasza Hinton

ABSTRACT: The myth of the lesbian vampire spiked in popularity throughout the late 1960s and early 1970s, inspiring erotic horror films like Roy Ward Baker's The Vampire Lovers (1970). While the easing censorship regulations allowed the film to depict more overt scenes of sex and violence, it was the second wave of feminism that allowed the film to be as erotic as it was (Baker 556), as the traditional gender role of men was called into question. Protesting for bodily autonomy, the right to express their sexual identities and overall looking for equal opportunities to their male counterparts, the traditionally superior man was under threat by female bonding. Lesbian vampires like Mircalla were unchained to a male figure and were able to liberate other women through their mental strength, physical beauty, and by providing deeper emotional connections than men could. The lesbian vampire presented a reality where women could receive everything from a female partner, rendering the male useless.

KEYWORDS: Vampire, Lesbianism, Horror, Film Studies, Gender Studies, Queer Literature

The Vampire Lovers was one of the most erotic horror films of the 1970s. Based on the 1872 gothic novella *Carmilla*, the film focuses on Mircalla, who later goes by Carmilla, a female vampire who preys upon Eastern European townsfolk, though she favours young female victims. While Universal's 1936 film *Dracula's Daughter* was the first to introduce a filmic adaptation of the lesbian vampire, *The Vampire Lovers* (1970) was revolutionary for its overt display of sexuality. Studio heads for early vampire films were persistent in censoring any images of non-heterosexual relationships. This is why in *Dracula* (1931), the scene fades to black the moment the Count kneels next to Reinfield's body (*Dracula*, 00:17:49-00:18:08) and why in *Dracula's Daughter* (1936), the camera pivots upwards away from Countess Zaleska's victim Lili, who screams as the attack takes place off-screen (*Dracula's Daughter*, 00:35:49-00:35:59). By contrast, film and media professor Dr. Rick Worland notes that *The Vampire Lovers* (1970) consistently borders the line of soft porn (96) through its displays of female nudity and same-sex intimacy. While the vampire films of the 1930s represented "cultural anxieties concerning queerness within society" (Tringali 1), *The Vampire Lovers* (1970) preyed upon the fundamental male fear of the destruction of "concepts of Western Judeo-Christian thought on which civil society [was] built" (Benshoff 117). In an age of sexual revolution, the film represented the threat of female bonding to traditional heteronormative society as Mircalla's influence allows her female followers to question male superiority.

A heterosexual model of gender disequilibrium is quickly cemented within the first 20 minutes of the film. As dancing couples cross the film screen, it is evident that each pair consists of a man and a woman, "disallowing the possibility of a relationship between two (same sex) equals" (Benshoff 121). Laura, for instance, spends the entire evening dancing with her boyfriend Carl, only leaving if a higher-ranking male, such as her uncle, Austrian General Spielsdorf, calls her over. The power dynamic between the sexes favours the male characters. As such, female characters must show respect towards the male characters and act according to their decisions. Emma Morton, for example, must leave the party early at Mr. Morton's request. While Laura asks if Emma truly must leave her birthday party at such an early hour, Mr. Morton responds for his daughter, insisting that they must go home due to the long journey (*The Vampire Lovers*, 00:08:30-00:08:53). To go further, Mircalla's mother seeks forgiveness from her dance partner, General Spielsdorf, when she must promptly leave the party due to news of a sick relative (*The Vampire Lovers*, 00:12:30-00:13:12). An apology that Mr. Morton did not owe General Spielsdorf as a man, but Mircalla's mother must give as a woman. She's also very timid in asking if her daughter may stay with his family, as it is not her place to be making requests when he holds the power of decision. This original, unthreatened state of the film universe is representative of heterosexual supremacy. The male is independent, powerful, and strong and, as such, superior to the weak and compliant women who must submit to him.

However, this power dynamic shifts as Mircalla, a woman unbound to a male figure, uses her sexuality to lure in victims and gain loyal servants (Baker 555). While the male characters are physically strong and can command their women, maids, and children, Mircalla "can dominate purely through mental strength" (Ellinger 35) and her sexuality. She is highly aware of her attractive figure, as her appearance at the ball had men lining up to dance with her (*The Vampire Lovers*, 00:10:26), and she uses this to her advantage. For instance, after Mademoiselle Perrodot hears Emma's scream, she runs to the room to see

what has happened. Mircalla quickly walks in with a brooch, assuring the two women that the sharp pin on the jewellery caused the marks on Emma's chest. This quick thinking allows Mircalla to continue going undetected, while also allowing her to enchant Mademoiselle Perrodot to be her willing slave by placing the brooch on her. After they spend the night together, the bond between the pair is cemented (*The Vampire Lovers*, 00:50:15-00:53:12). The relationship between Mircalla and Mademoiselle Perrodot is one involving same-sex intimacy, threating the traditional heterosexual relationship as it removes the male figure in sexual relations. After engaging in this intimacy, Mademoiselle Perrodot is defiant towards Renton, the butler, not accepting any of his advice about Emma's illness, and snapping at him for trying to take charge (*The Vampire Lovers*, 01:03:02-01:03:06). Mircalla, now referred to as "Carmilla", is much stronger with her female companion and, the two go on to overthrow the power dynamic in the house. The vampire goes undetected by the butler, as his suspicions turn toward the maid. When he confesses these suspicions to Mircalla, she uses it as a chance to seduce him, resulting in his removal of the garlic flowers from Emma's room, along with the cross on her neck. Then, as he no longer serves a purpose, Mircalla kills him before they engage intimately (*The Vampire Lovers*, 01:13:57-01:19:25). "In turning to each other, [Mircalla and Mademoiselle Perrodot] triumph over and destroy men themselves" (Zimmerman 433). The lesbian vampire uses her bodily autonomy to gain power over the male individual, though she is uninterested in him as a sexual partner. Homosexual attraction is used to strengthen her schemes and allow other women to remove themselves from their male counterparts. The heterosexual male is thus unable to combat female autonomy or regain his role as the sexual partner, as noted by the defiance towards Renton and his subsequent death. The male character has no way to overpower this kind of female bond and agency, and thus, his superiority is called into question.

When representing lesbian romance within the vampire film, supernatural elements are expected to make an appearance as justification for why a woman would want to be with another woman as opposed to a man. Be it hypnosis, paralysis, compulsion, or any other form of violent supernatural force, this is what is supposed to draw in the female victim. Zimmermann explains this expectation by stating that it is not a lack on the part of the male as they simply cannot compete with the supernatural forces of the vampire (Zimmermann 436). Zimmermann continues, suggesting that Mircalla's powers over Laura, "easily attracted [her] to a 'perverse' form of sexuality" (Zimmerman 435) as Cole's offering of "life through... his sexual potency (symbolized by sperm) cannot compete with the vampire who sucks away her life" (Zimmerman 436). However, the lesbian vampire is alluring even without her supernatural powers. Mircalla not only provided the sexual allure that a woman would usually seek out through men (as discussed in the previous paragraph), but she also provided her victims with more feminine care (Ellinger 39). This is especially visible in her relationship with Emma, while the two had several sensual exchanges, they also had moments of genuine care for one another. These include but are not limited to Emma holding 'Carmilla' who seemed distraught when the funeral service went by (*The Vampire Lovers*, 00:45:34-00:46:35), how 'Carmilla' would read aloud a chapter from Emma's fairy tale book before bed, even though she thought they were ridiculous (*The Vampire Lovers*, 00:40:19-00:40:31) and 'Carmilla' attempting to bring Emma with her, valuing the young women too much to kill or to leave her (*The Vampire Lovers*, 1:20:37-1:20:41). This female bond is not easily replicated by the male, and as such the attraction between two women can be much stronger even without the use of supernatural forces. With that being said, the male is once again removed from the encounter, threatening his position as a lover, a husband and even a father if women can be happy with someone of the same sex.

To quell any of the male anxieties that had been brought to life on the screen, the lesbian vampire had to be destroyed at the end so that the heteronormative way of life could return (Baker 558). Mircalla is stabbed in the heart in her own grave, then promptly beheaded to ensure that she is dead and will no longer threaten the male's position within the film's universe (*The Vampire Lovers*, 1:28:11-1:29:09). When Mircalla is stabbed, Emma screams as if she has been struck by the stake as well. She then is taken into Carl's arms so he can comfort and protect her from further harm (*The Vampire Lovers*, 1:28:16-1:28:20). This shows a return to the male figure, as Emma is removed from her homosexual lover and left with Carl, a man who she does believe to be handsome, and perhaps she will marry to uphold the heterosexual way of life. However, that is entirely speculative of a viewer who has only watched the first film. The male characters living at the end of the film are then proper men who follow the rules set out by the heteronormative code that is embedded within

their society as well as ours, while the death of the female vampire acts as a removal of 'evil' or the 'bad' as she challenged the preconceived normalcy.

Challenging the traditional role of the male in heteronormative society, Mircalla's influence allows her female followers to temporarily question male superiority. While the second wave of feminism allowed women to seek more equal opportunities and brought forward shifts in gender roles and sexual identities, there was still a counter-culture full of doubts. Rooted deeply in conservative values, there was fear regarding the changes that role of the 'male' would undertake now that lesbianism had taken to mainstream media and may threaten the male presence in a relationship. These masculine fears are ever present within the lesbian vampire genre that blew up in the 1970s, as the vampire served as a symbol of sexuality. These fears were explored, often through the vilification of homosexual women, while the moral hero remained the male who is built around older, conservative Western views. There was little room for the new culture of the second wave of feminism to seep into working media. Women were not searching to overpower men and lesbians were not focused on stealing women away or coercing them. Everyone was simply looking for an equal opportunity to survive, and to be who they are.



Work Cited

Baker, David. "Seduced and Abandoned: Lesbian Vampires on Screen 1968–74." *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, vol. 26, no. 4, 2012, pp. 553–563. *EBSCOhost*, https://doi.org/10.1080/10304312.2012.698035.

Benshoff, Harry M. "The Monster and the Homosexual." *Dread of Difference: Gender and the Horror Film*, 2nd ed., University of Texas Press, 2015, pp. 116–141. *EBSCOhost*, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=cat03710a&AN=alb.8155947&site=eds- live&scope=site.

Dracula. Directed by Tod Browning and Karl Freund, performances by Bela Lugosi and Dwight Frye, Universal; Pictures, 1931. *Google Drive*, uploaded by Dr. Liz Czach, https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B6xQqEQfCmu_VVFrWVQ0YXVqYm8/view?usp=sharing&re sourcekey=0-nm_DjUFZeRXSwjoQsbhaJg

Dracula's Daughter. Directed by Lambert Hillyer, performances by Gloria Holden and Edward Van Sloan, Universal Pictures, 1936. *Google Drive*, uploaded by Dr. Liz Czach, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xJfFKErWUwJgOCNrlo8-5_DhsGOeLoaU/view?usp=sharing

Ellinger, Kat. "Vampyros Lesbos." *Daughters of Darkness*, Liverpool University Press, 2020, pp. 31–56. *JSTOR*, https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv13842qn.

"'For the Dead Travel Fast': Vampirism and Cinema." *You Remind Me of the Frame – A Film Blog*, 15 Oct. 2020, http://www.youremindmeoftheframe.ca/2020/10/for-the-dead-travel-fast-vampirism-and-cinema/.

Lilek, Brooke. "Horrors of Society: The Reflection of Societal Fears in American Horror Films". *Digital Literature Review*, vol. 7, Apr. 2020, doi:10.33043/DLR.7.0.%p.

Tringali, William A. *Not Just Dead, But Gay! Queerness and the Vampire*. 2016. Bridgewater State University, Honours Thesis. *Bridgewater State Virtual Commons*, https://vc.bridgew.edu/honors_proj/138/

The Vampire Lovers. Directed by Roy Ward Baker, performances by Ingrid Pitt and Madeline Smith, Hammer Film Productions, 1970. *Google Drive*, uploaded by Dr. Liz Czach, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pebYzwMnb0QprnC1o8MhzynVS5Z5nvQe/view?usp=sharing

Worland, Rick. *The Horror Film: An Introduction*. Blackwell Publishing, 2008.

Zimmerman, Bonnie. "Daughters of Darkness: The Lesbian Vampire on Film." *Dread of Difference: Gender and the Horror Film*, 2nd ed., University of Texas Press, 2015, pp. 430–438. *EBSCOhost*, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=cat03710a&AN=alb.8155947&site=eds-live&scope=site.



Photographer: Henry Deng

‘Our resident genius’: The Tommy Banks Show, the CanCon era, and Edmonton’s shot to cultural relevancy

Emily Williams

ABSTRACT: Tommy Banks is popularly considered a founder of the Edmonton arts scene and one item on his long list of accomplishments was a nationally broadcasted television show, filmed out of Edmonton. *The Tommy Banks Show* ran for over a decade, highlighting Canadian talent and bringing world-class acts to Edmonton from 1968 to 1983. During the nation-building and Canadian Content era, this show put Edmonton on a national stage. This paper explores how *The Tommy Banks Show* helped put Edmonton on the map as an up-in-coming, culturally relevant metropolis within Canada. Looking at the dynamics of regionalism, Western exceptionalism, and the commercial success of the show, I explain how Banks' show was used as cultural capital in a successful bid for an independent television station in Edmonton. This is not only an important piece of local history, it is also a way of understanding the Canadian Content era in a prairie context. The legacy of *The Tommy Banks Show* has left its mark on the region in that it enabled talented people to gather in Edmonton and allowed Edmontonians to see the city as a place that was culturally important.

KEYWORDS: Canadian Broadcasting, Edmonton History, Tommy Banks, CBC, ITV, CRTC, Canadian History, Urban History, Local History, Broadcasting History

Introduction

Tommy Banks is remembered as a Juno award-winning jazz musician, Liberal Canadian senator, and television and radio personality. He was a staunch advocate for the arts, involved in the campaign to construct the Francis Winspear Centre for Music in Edmonton.[1] As a musician and bandleader, he performed for the likes of Queen Elizabeth II and President Ronald Reagan and directed ceremonies for the Olympics, Commonwealth Games, and EXPO '86. But most Canadians were first introduced to Banks through his nationally syndicated talk-variety show. *The Tommy Banks Show* ran for over a decade, highlighting Canadian talent and bringing world-class acts to Edmonton from 1968 to 1983.[2] The show was produced during a period of heightened nationalism, with a focus on producing and preserving Canadian Content.[3] During this period, *The Tommy Banks Show* helped to put Edmonton on the map as an up-in-coming, culturally relevant metropolis within Canada. First, this paper will explore how the show's national commercial success interacted with the dynamics of regionalism and Canadian Content requirements in the context of the nation-building era. This will set the stage for exploring how *The Tommy Banks Show* was understood as a Western Canadian cultural product by Banks himself and his fans across the country. Lastly, this paper unveils how the success and local lens of the show was used as cultural capital in a successful bid for an independent television station in Edmonton. This analysis was conducted using primary sources from the Archives of Alberta, newspaper articles, and literature on Canadian broadcasting.

The timeline of *The Tommy Banks Show* is rather convoluted, with a variety of stations, filming locations, and show names over the course of a decade and a half. Things started at CBC Edmonton, when the station was looking for a host for a one-hour talk show called *Around Town*.[4] When a host still had not been found with only 24 hours left before airtime, they turned to the bandleader to fill in: Tommy Banks.[5] Despite having no television experience at the time, he was a natural — and so the role stuck. A year later *Around Town* was renamed to *The Tommy Banks Show*. The format was a talk-variety style show, consisting of a mix of interviews and performances. Guests would perform, Banks would interview them — sometimes interviewing several guests at once — and the band would perform with Banks at the piano. Banks' role as bandleader-host was a unique arrangement that blended well. Banks wasn't just a television personality, but also a veteran musician, bandleader, producer, and agent who knew the business inside and out. In 1974, the show made the switch to ITV, Edmonton's third television station — Banks was instrumental to its

[1] Mackay, "Tommy Banks, 81, Was a Musical Virtuoso, TV Star and Passionate Edmontonian Who Became a Senator."
[2] The Canadian Press, "Legendary Edmonton Jazz Pianist, Ex-Senator Tommy Banks Dead at 81."
[3] Litt, "The Massey Commission, Americanization, and Canadian Cultural Nationalism."
[4] Mackay, "Tommy Banks, 81, Was a Musical Virtuoso, TV Star and Passionate Edmontonian Who Became a Senator."
[5] Neufeld, "'Restless Creative Spirit': Tommy Banks Remembered."

bid and establishment of the third television station in Edmonton. The show eventually switched back to CBC for its last three years under the name *Tommy Banks Live*.[6]

This research is important, because it is a small slice of largely untold history of a major player in Edmonton's arts scene and the ripple effects this work had. Beyond a local context, it adds to a body of literature on Canadian broadcasting history which remains very small.[7] The ways that local markets had to compete for television stations and national programming produced outside of Canada's major urban centres tells us about how even during a period of tremendous growth and enthusiasm for Canadian cultural content, doing a show like Banks' outside of Toronto or Montreal was an uphill battle. The show, however, retains a legacy and impact on the collective memory of Edmonton.

The Nation-Building Project, Regionalism, and the Rise of Television

In 1951, the Massey Commission concluded that broadcasting in Canada had contributed to a sense of national unity and warned against the threat of American cultural imperialism.[8] In other words, it established broadcasting as a matter of national interest and part of an ongoing nation-building project. The Commission emerged in the post-war period during a time of increased nationalism. It sought to lay out a path to protecting and creating distinct Canadian cultural products. As the public broadcaster of Canada, Canadian Content has always been entrenched in CBC's mandate.[9] However, this was also a period of changing technology with the rise of television. As a result, the CBC's budget was increased to expand into television production.[10] There was a rapid expansion of TV stations across the country from the 1950s to mid-1970s. Hayday describes how during the latter half of this expansion, anxieties about Americanization had grown and alongside those worries came the rollout of the new Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) quotas for television content.[11] New stations had to figure out how they would abide by CanCon (Canadian Content) requirements while also hooking in viewers with popular and expensive American shows like Sesame Street.

There has also been some limited scholarship in how this expansion of broadcasting and reinvigorated focus on Canadian contexts manifested itself in different regions of Canada. Ali argues that the strong mandate of creating a national culture in broadcasting came at the expense of localism.[12] Local markets like Edmonton were slow to get stations and had to compete with other cities.[13] Marquis discusses the 1969 cancellation of one CBC television program broadcast out of Halifax, *Don Messer's Jubilee*, which resulted in a series of protests related to preserving Canadian Content, Maritime regionalism, CBC elitism, and Canadian folk culture among other concerns.[14] The folksy Canadiana show was considered low culture that appealed to increasingly older demographics during a time when broadcasters were trying to capture younger audiences. "By 1968, both the CBC and CTV were planning 'think young' musical variety shows"[15] — and *The Tommy Banks Show* fit the bill. This literature suggests that the creation of Banks' show in 1968 represented a shift in the public broadcaster's focus, but also notes the attachment that could develop between audiences and regional television shows during a time of heightened Canadian nationalism.



Figure 1: Juliette — Canada's "first lady of song" — sings with the Tommy Banks Band. Still taken from "Tommy Banks Show #12," 17 December 1974, PR1993.0378/1957, box V, Tommy Banks fonds, Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton.

[6] Mackay, "Tommy Banks, 81, Was a Musical Virtuoso, TV Star and Passionate Edmontonian Who Became a Senator."
[7] Hayday, "Brought To You by the Letters C, R, T, and C," 100.
[8] Ali, "A Broadcast System in Whose Interest?," 284.
[9] Hayday, 118.
[10] Litt, 379.
[11] Hayday, 98.
[12] Ali, 283.
[13] Ali, 290; Stewart and Hull, *Canadian Television Policy and the Board of Broadcast Governors, 1958-1968 : Canadian Television Policy and the BBG*, 121.
[14] Marquis, "The Folk Fight Back," 228.
[15] Marquis, 237.

De Sousa argues that this period was not only a time of nation-building, but also one of emerging regionalism.[16] By the end of the 1960s, the CBC was beginning to officially recognize the importance of local and regional representations.[17] Shows that took place in the rural prairie provinces like *Jake and the Kid* could not only capture regional pride, but also nation-wide attention through an enduring "pastoral myth in the Canadian imagination."[18] While it was not a work of fiction, this raises the question about whether Banks' show also captured any Western myths or contributed to an imagined community for Edmontonians or Western Canadians.

One episode of *The Tommy Banks Show* examined for this paper demonstrates the nationalistic and regional flavours of Canada.[19] Right off the bat, Canadian acts are highlighted in Banks' opening remarks. Juliette Cavazzi — a fellow CBC personality known as simply "Juliette" on stage — was introduced as the "biggest star in television that there has ever been in this country" and the "First Lady of Song in Canada." Later, the DeFranco family — a three-hit-wonder quintet reminiscent of The Jackson 5 and The Osmond Brothers — were introduced as being from Welland, Ontario. During their interview, Banks noted that he thought this was the first time the country had the chance to meet the family on television — who by this time had experienced significant commercial success. The show's regional aspect is also explored through humour. This is exemplified when comedian Jack Eagle quips about liking Edmonton because it's full of people who look like him — "little, short, adorable fat guys." His act also features jokes about how Banff first got its name from a skiing accident and Easterners not knowing what a chinook is. A barrier to more extensive analysis of the show's content itself is the difficulty in accessing these records. No full episodes exist online —although there is a clip of Banks and Wayne Gretzky playing table hockey on the show.[20] More recordings likely exist in CBC and ITV archives; however, scholars have widely noted the inaccessibility and difficulty in accessing these records.[21]

A Nationally Syndicated Western Canadian Product

The Tommy Banks Show was watched across the country, but it was understood as a Western Canadian product (which was far from typical at the time — particularly for the CBC). Newspaper coverage of the show demonstrates that in many ways, the defining characteristic of *The Tommy Banks Show* was that it was filmed in Edmonton. In a special 1971 edition of *Billboard* magazine focused on CanCon, here is how the journalist starts their feature on Banks:

> The CBC in Canada has always operated on a fail-safe principle in programming — the consensus being that Toronto and Montreal have the moxy and the manpower to determine TV dinner menu for the country. It was never openly admitted, but the underlying philosophy was simply that network stations and studios outside Canada's two largest cities only had enough going for them to take care of parochial interests. The giants in the East had a much higher calling. Tommy Banks is doing his damnedest to turn things around…in a budding metropolis thousands of miles away from where the action is supposed to be, Edmonton, Alberta.[22]

The author applauds the free-form style of the show as well, noting that it is a marked difference from the CBC's typical "stale" and highly structured format. That same year, *The Edmonton Journal* published a series of reviews of Banks' show as it expanded to national audiences.[23] They each make a point of noting the anomaly of a national show coming out of Edmonton. A *Toronto Star* reviewer seemed pleasantly surprised with the calibre of the show, noting that it was "at least as good as any existing Toronto-based variety productions and far superior to most." The *Vancouver Sun* writer had a positive review as well, but hoped Banks would be able to find enough talent to come to Edmonton. And perhaps most striking, a review from *Toronto Telegram's* Roy Shields expressed great confusion over the show's location:

[16] De Sousa, "Reconstructing an Imagined Community," 135.
[17] De Sousa, 137.
[18] De Sousa, 138.
[19] "Tommy Banks Show #12," 17 December 1974, PR1993.0378/1957, box V, Tommy Banks fonds, Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton.
[20] KidThunder10, YouTube. "Wayne Gretzky Plays Table Hockey with Tommy Banks plus Interview."
[21] Nichol, ""Canada Lives Here," 75.
[22] "Tommy Banks Aids CBC In Building Pop Shows."
[23] "Banks Gets Favourable Reviews."

> There is probably a reason for the CBC to bring us a variety-cum-talk show out of Edmonton Saturday nights. But for the moment it escapes me. Let's see? It's cheap? They couldn't think of anything else to do? Tommy needs the work? Edmonton is in Canada too? It's where it's really at?

The answer of course, is that Edmonton was Banks' home, and he was not willing to relocate — but Banks might also say that Edmonton in fact was 'where it's really at.'

The way the show was perceived as Western can also be understood by looking at letters from fans.[25] One letter from Mrs. Aikenhead from Melfort, Saskatchewan said that in protest of *The Tommy Banks Show* being discontinued from CBC, she wrote a letter to Prime Minister Trudeau's office.[26] She expressed that this letter was written in defence of the West — "It has long been my personal feeling that Westerners should have voice in what CBC beams out at us as a captive audience!" Another letter from a Miss Bellafonte from Pembrooke, Ontario showcases the way the show represented Western Canada for Eastern audiences. Bellafonte writes that she once gone "out west" to see her uncle and she would like to move out there because there are "good friendly people in the west" unlike Pembrooke.[27]

In addition to being understood as Western, the show was seen as an asset to Edmonton and a way of bringing stars to the region. It was recognized that Banks had an influence on which artists came to town and that his show was an attractive force for the scene. Mr. Tissen from Leduc, Alberta writes Banks bemoaning that the great Johnny Rodriguez had yet to perform in Edmonton and he was growing bored of seeing the likes of Charlie Pride, Waylon Jennings, and Johnny Cash — adding, "there is nothing wrong with them but it would be nice to see some new artists in the area." Banks was seen as a representative of the arts, someone with connections and knowledge about how to get "big acts" to come to Edmonton. Comments expressing gratitude for this were common:

> Give him the big budget and let him bring in the stars…Chalk me up as a Tommy Banks fan! He has done so much for Edmonton.
> I moved to Vancouver from Edmonton two months ago (after nine years) and I wanted you to know how much I have enjoyed your show (and how much I miss it now!)…I hope Edmonton realizes how lucky it is to have such a talented, warm individual such as yourself!
> I enjoy your program, and am very proud (as are thousands of other Edmontonions, I'm sure) of the talent you bring to our town.

Edmontonians recognized the way the show brought in big names and how uncommon it was to have a successful national program in a city like theirs. These feelings were echoed in the obituaries written in 2018, when Banks passed, and describe the way the show cemented his ongoing reputation as a founder of the Edmonton arts scene.[28]

[24] "Banks Gets Favourable Reviews."
[25] "I.T.V. Tommy Banks Show - fan mail", 1975, PR1993.0378/284, box 8, folder 284, Tommy Banks fonds, Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton. Banks kept careful records of his fan mail, with carbon copies of his typed reply attached to each one.
[26] The future of the show was also raised in a House of Commons debate in 1973. See "CBC Tommy Banks Show - mentioned in House of Commons Hansard", 1973, PR1993.0378/284, box 8, folder 269, Tommy Banks fonds, Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton.
[27] One potential thing of note from this letter is that Miss Bellafonte identifies herself as Indigenous to Banks, adding that she enjoyed watching some "smart indians" on his show.
[28] Faulder, "Tommy Banks."





Figure 2 and 3: Tony DeFranco and the DeFranco Family performing on The Tommy Banks Show Dec 17, 1974. Stills taken from "Tommy Banks Show #12," 17 December 1974, PR1993.0378/1957, box V, Tommy Banks fonds, Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton.

Banks framed this success through a language of Western exceptionalism. In the application to the CRTC for the ITV station, Banks addressed the committee noting how the show has been the product of exceptional effort and the Edmonton arts community shares this hardworking attribute, allowing it to punch above its weight:

> *[The Tommy Banks Show]* didn't happen because somebody in Toronto said 'Hey, let's do a talk-variety show out of Edmonton.' It happened because some people here said 'We think we can do that,' and we did it against sometimes seemingly insurmountable obstacles.[29]

For Banks, part of the bid was an intention to increase financial investment in the region to help retain talent. He noted that the prairies "produce a disproportionately high representation of genuinely creative and workmanlike talent", but that talent has to leave the region "to be heard and seen."[30] While in the United States, everyone has to move to Los Angeles to pursue a career in television, Banks asserted that Canada was trying to do things differently — with a greater sense of regionalism and decentralization than its American counterpart. Indeed, the CBC's ongoing challenge is to represent Canada's diversity and unity — creating programming that is relevant to all Canadians while balancing both regional and national representation.[31]



Figure 4: A typical multi-person interview set-up on the show. Pictured: Shield and Yarnell, Jack Carter, Freda Payne, Nipsey Russell, and Tommy Banks. "B/W Photograph, T. Banks and television show guest. 8 x 10", n.d., PR1993.378/2062, box 23, Tommy Banks fonds, Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton.

However, the credit for starting the first nationally syndicated television show out of Edmonton cannot be credited to the CBC's regional values. In a local interview,[32] Banks said that when the CBC decided they wanted the show to make the jump from local to national programming, the expectation was that they pack up and move to Toronto. Banks and his team refused;

> We had no interest in moving to Toronto. It's just not the kind of place I wanted to live. That was beside the point. We had this Quixotic hyper-Canadian Edmonton pride thing going, like Mickey Rooney: We can do it here! So they guffawed and harumphed and said they'd get back to us tomorrow. We were staying across the street. We waited on tenterhooks that night, and the next morning they said, OK, yeah, you can do it.

Indeed, Banks consistently made a choice to stay in Edmonton, despite being presented with opportunities to do great things elsewhere — but he chose to try and do those very same things in Edmonton.[33]

Banks, however, would not give himself all the credit for Edmonton's cultural rise. He asserted that Edmonton had an up-in-coming arts scene in his early career before the show, noting that "there has always been a disproportionately high level of musical activity in Edmonton."[34] Perhaps it can be said that Banks' success can be attributed to the fact that he saw in Edmonton what others didn't; the city had an untapped potential to be a cultural hub — Edmonton just needed someone to take a chance on it. By capitalizing on Edmonton's up-and-coming-ness Banks served as an Edmonton recruiter and arts ambassador.

[29] "Edmonton Video Ltd - application for third television service in Edmonton", 1971, PR1993.0378/259, box 7, folder 259, Tommy Banks fonds, Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton, 37.
[30] Edmonton Video Ltd, 32.
[31] Gatrell and Gatrell, "Comments on Canadian Regionalism and the Media," 14.
[32] Ross, "RIP Tommy Banks." Before Banks' passing, local arts journalist Mike Ross conducted a series of interviews with him for a book about the Edmonton music community. While the book has yet to be published, Ross wrote up an obituary using the interviews on his blog.
[33] Faulder, "'Tommy Banks.'"; Lefebvre, "Tommy Banks."
[34] Ross, "RIP Tommy Banks."

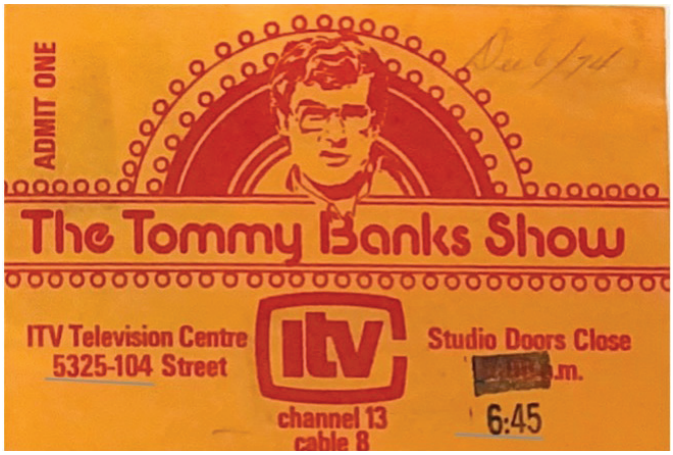


Figure 5: A ticket to ITV's Tommy Banks Show, filmed with a live studio audience every weeknight. "Tommy Banks Show Photo," Dec 6, 1974, PR2005.0334/481, box 17, Tommy Banks fonds, Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton.

Local programming and independent television: the ITV era

Banks switched from CBC to ITV in 1974, allowing his show to go from airing once a week for half an hour, to every weeknight for an hour. The swap allowed Banks to have not only more airtime, but also more creative freedom and opportunity to engage in the business side of the show — as he was also a shareholder and director for the station.[35] Indeed, Banks was a key player in the station's development. He was heavily involved in the application process, and *The Tommy Banks Show* was used as cultural capital in the bid for the proposed independent station. It was understood ITV won out over the other proposals for the third television station in Edmonton specifically because of its focus on local programming,[36] and Banks' involvement proved that they could find a way to make this commercially viable too.

There was, however, some doubt about the scale to which their proposal planned to balance commercial viability and regional focus. Banks contended that his show's first priority was always marketability — and that the show did not claim to educate the rest of Canada about Western culture.[37] Indeed, the talk-variety show showcased talent from across the country, and still contained a sizable portion of American talent to reel in viewership. However, it is clear from the letters and newspaper coverage of the show that it was considered a Western Canadian product — and a commercially successful one at that. This underlying assumption that this show produced in Edmonton was an anomaly or a contradiction plays out in the application hearing. The chairman asks numerous questions about how much of the success of the show can be attributed to Banks' personality.[38] He asks how Banks' health is (implying that he as an individual is central to the proposal) and he presses about how the station will make money with a focus on local programming. In response to the last question Banks makes a case for the commercial viability of national and regional content. Despite being a realist in understanding the allure of American talents, Banks reveals himself as a firm believer in the Canadian Content mission:

> The reflection of the fabric of the country does very much contain itself in other parts of our program application…can we talk about Canada's history? Can we talk about the history of the west? Can we talk about Canadian and western Canadian things and have people enjoy watching them…the answer is absolutely yes.[39]

The committee must have found these answers convincing or reassuring, because this proposal won out over the others due to this local focus.[40]

The ITV proposal represented more than just a third television station for Edmonton. For the applicants, it represented fulfilling national and regional obligations in the CanCon era and was part of the nation-building project. Wendell Wilks, proposed managing director, said that for him, the application represented an *obligation* to produce quality programs in Western Canada. While many stations were following the Canadian Content regulations, only 50 percent of prime-time television (6 p.m. to midnight) had to be Canadian and peak prime time hours between 8 and 10 p.m. were often filled with American programs. Wilks bemoaned that many Edmontonians could not find a Canadian program when they most watch television and promised to remedy that. For him, this was a way to give the city the local content that it had been denied and fulfilled a regional vision of success: "let me dream a little — maybe we might even develop stars in Western Canada as have our Quebec counterparts."[41] Their ambitious proposal also included addressing the problem of inadequate

[35] Elliot, "Tommy Banks Takes a 10-Times Gamble."
[36] Butters, "For CITV: Sunday, It's Lights, Camera, ACTION!"
[37] Edmonton Video Ltd, 73.
[38] Edmonton Video Ltd, 72.
[39] Edmonton Video Ltd, 73.
[40] Butters, "For CITV: Sunday, It's Lights, Camera, ACTION!"
[41] Edmonton Video Ltd, 26.

hardware, noting that there were no camera booms or cranes in the region — a fact he said, that gets laughs when told to folks in Toronto.[42] In fact, several years later in 1975 the only camera crane in Western Canada was being used on *The Tommy Banks Show*.[43] The station and the show were both seen as ways to put Edmonton on the map culturally, and better serve the local community by highlighting existing talent — part of the proposal was also that Banks would produce TV specials highlighting the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra.

Conclusion

The Tommy Banks Show and the man described as Edmonton's "resident genius"[44] serve as a case study to understand the peak of the CanCon era in a regional prairie context. It's clear from reading through obituaries that Banks and his show represent for many Edmontonians a golden period and a coming-of-age for the city's cultural scene. Understanding the ways this local history fits into the broader nation-building project and broadcasting policies across Canada shows us the ways in which national and regional dynamics interact. In 1991, the Broadcasting Act was amended to replace the aim of national unity with cultural sovereignty, an objective which Filion argues remains vague.[45] This was the last time the act was amended. But the commercial viability of producing Canadian Content continues to decline in a world where media can be made anywhere, often for less. The way we consume content has changed also drastically; until recently, no serious attempts to bring CanCon regulations into the world of streaming had been made.[46] While technology, regulations, and political winds often change, something that remains constant is that the media we consume is closely tied to the way we understand ourselves and connect to one another. The legacy of Banks' show has left its mark on the prairies — in that it enabled talented people to gather in Edmonton, and allowed Edmontonians to see the city as a place that was culturally important.

[42] Edmonton Video Ltd, 34.
[43] Lefebvre, "Tommy Banks."
[44] Tommy Banks Aids CBC In Building Pop Shows," 46.
[45] Filion, "Broadcasting and Cultural Identity," 461.
[46] Pugh, "A New Streaming Bill Is Close to Becoming Law in Canada. Here's How It Works."

Work Cited

Ali, Christopher. "A Broadcast System in Whose Interest? Tracing the Origins of Broadcast Localism in Canadian and Australian Television Policy, 1950–1963." *International Communication Gazette* 74, no. 3 (June 2012): 277–97. https://doi.org/10.1177/1748048511432608.

Billboard. "Tommy Banks Aids CBC In Building Pop Shows." September 30, 1972.

Butters, Brian. "For CITV: Sunday, It's Lights, Camera, ACTION!" *Edmonton Journal*, August 30, 1974.

The Canadian Press. "Legendary Edmonton Jazz Pianist, Ex-Senator Tommy Banks Dead at 81." CBC News, January 26, 2018. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/tommy-banks-obit-1.4504961.

De Sousa, Grace. "Reconstructing an Imagined Community: The Politics of Regional and National Identity in CBC Radio's Jake and the Kid Revival (1969-1970)." *Journal of Radio Studies* 6, no. 1 (1999): 134–49.

Edmonton Journal. "Banks Gets Favourable Reviews." April 23, 1971.

Elliot, Anne. "Tommy Banks Takes a 10-Times Gamble." *Edmonton Journal*, July 6, 1974. Google Books.

Faulder, Liane. "Tommy Banks: Edmonton's Favourite Son Loved His City Well." Edmonton Journal, January 26, 2018. https://edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/tommy-banks-musician-former-senator-dead-at-81.

Filion, Michel. "Broadcasting and Cultural Identity: The Canadian Experience." *Media, Culture & Society* 18, no. 3 (July 1, 1996): 447–67. https://doi.org/10.1177/016344396018003005.

Gatrell, Jay D., and Jonathan D. Gatrell. "Comments on Canadian Regionalism and the Media." *The Geographical Bulletin* 39, no. 1 (May 1, 1997): 7–15.

Hayday, Matthew. "Brought To You by the Letters C, R, T, and C: Sesame Street and Canadian Nationalism." *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association / Revue de La Société Historique Du Canada* 27, no. 1 (2016): 95–137. https://doi.org/10.7202/1040526ar.

KidThunder10. "Wayne Gretzky Plays Table Hockey with Tommy Banks plus Interview." YouTube video. 2009. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QmhRbwpUm4o.

Lefebvre, Elaine. "Tommy Banks." *The Gateway*, February 13, 1975.

Litt, Paul. "The Massey Commission, Americanization, and Canadian Cultural Nationalism." *Queen's Quarterly* 98, no. 2 (Summer 1991): 375–87.

Mackay, Susan. "Tommy Banks, 81, Was a Musical Virtuoso, TV Star and Passionate Edmontonian Who Became a Senator." *The Globe and Mail*, February 16, 2018. https://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/music/tommy-banks-81-was-a-jazz-virtuoso-and-passionate-edmontonian-who-became-a-senator/article38011681/.

Marquis, Greg. "The Folk Fight Back: Protesting the Cancellation of Don Messer's Jubilee in 1969." *Canadian Historical Review* 103, no. 2 (June 2022): 228–51. https://doi.org/10.3138/chr-2020-0009.
Mazerolle, John. "Your Latest Questions about Bill C-18 and the Blocking of Canadian News Answered." CBC News, August 3, 2023. https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/c-18-your-questions-answered-1.6925260.

Mazerolle, John. "Your Latest Questions about Bill C-18 and the Blocking of Canadian News Answered." CBC News, August 3, 2023. https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/c-18-your-questions-answered-1.6925260.

Neufeld, Lydia. "'Restless Creative Spirit': Tommy Banks Remembered." CBC, January 26, 2018. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/edmonton-tommy-banks-senator-jazz-musician-dead-1.4505558.

Nichol, Jessica. "'Canada Lives Here:' Situating the CBC Digital Archives within the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's Archival Landscape." University of Manitoba, 2017. (Open access content. Open access content; open access). chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://mspace.lib.umanitoba.ca/server/api/core/bitstreams/df6c2942-45f1-4e26-9a66-729a75c699e7/content.

Pugh, Joseph. "A New Streaming Bill Is Close to Becoming Law in Canada. Here's How It Works." CBC News, March 3, 2023. https://www.cbc.ca/news/entertainment/bill-c-11-explained-1.6759878.

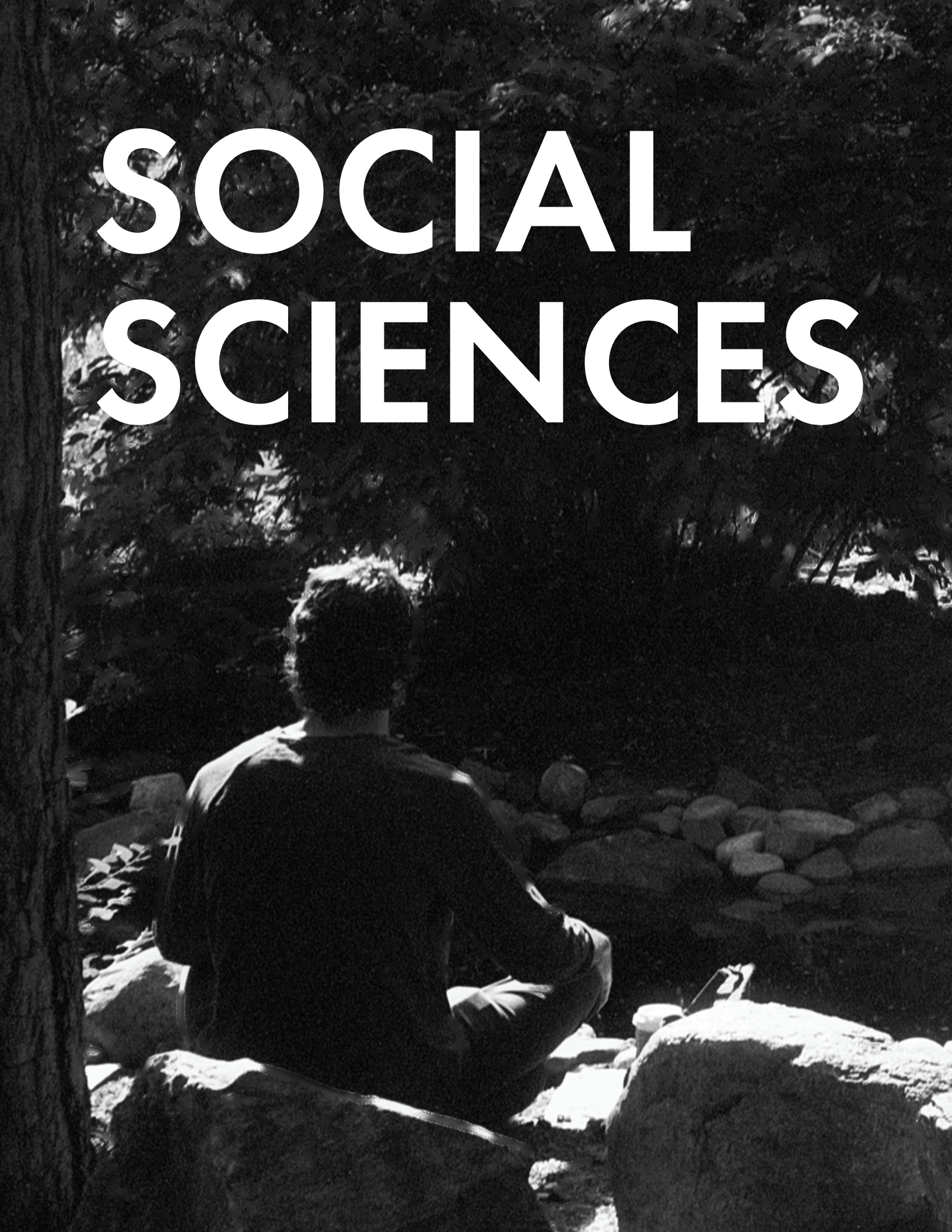
Ross, Mike. "RIP Tommy Banks: Godfather of Edmonton Music." *Gig City* (blog), January 26, 2018. https://www.gigcity.ca/2018/01/26/rip-tommy-banks-godfather-of-edmonton-music/.

Tommy Banks fonds, Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton. https://searchprovincialarchives.alberta.ca/tommy-banks-radio-television-and-film-series



Photographer: Henry Deng

SOCIAL SCIENCES





Photographer: Jienan Chen



Feven Worede

Social Sciences

Section Editor



Photographer: Henry Deng

Masculinities in Immigration Detention Centres

Crime as a Result of the Institutional Victimization of Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants in Multicultural Liberal Democracies

Haven Rice

ABSTRACT: A great tool to grow an empire, detention camps have been historically used and abused as a subordination tactic by all of the most powerful empires, most notably by Germany's Nazi Regime in the Second World War. Commonly thought to have been born and died in history, they are a mostly forgotten piece of the past. Many would be shocked to discover that there is a secret world of institutions that disregard international human rights law in order to prioritize their national goals, where refugees, asylum seekers and migrants are the primary victims. Systems for migrancy and immigration detention have emerged in the wake of globalization, seeking asylum from conflicts, natural disasters or financial insecurity, or simply searching for better economic opportunities, education or reunion with family. Multicultural liberal democracies use detention centres to enforce their racialized and gendered penal power and establish a national hierarchy where poor, young men of colour are the most marginalized. This paper critically examines the victimization of male refugees, asylum seekers and migrants by neo-colonial masculinities in Canadian, American and British immigration detention centres and how these experiences create offenders through the victim-offender overlap.

KEYWORDS: Masculinity, Immigration, Victimization, Marginalization History, Racialization, Detention Centres, Immigration Detention, Mulitcultural Liberal Democracy, Government Policy, Canadian Policy, American Policy, British Policy

Introduction

A great tool to grow an empire, detention camps have been historically used and abused as a subordination tactic by all of the most powerful empires, most notably by Germany's Nazi Regime in the Second World War. Commonly thought to have been born and died in history, they are a mostly forgotten piece of the past. With the belief that humanity has turned a new leaf by subscribing to human rights conventions and building an indestructible saviour complex, the continued existence of detention camps, especially in the developed world, seems impossible. Many would be shocked to discover that there is a secret world of institutions that disregard international human rights law in order to prioritize their national goals, where refugees, asylum seekers and migrants are the primary victims.

Systems for migrancy and immigration detention have emerged in the wake of globalization, with the increasing flow of refugees and immigrants seeking asylum from conflicts, natural disasters or financial insecurity, or simply searching for better economic opportunities, education or reunion with family (Bosworth, 2019). "Multicultural liberal democracies" use detention centres to enforce their racialized and gendered penal power and establish a national hierarchy where "poor, young men of colour" are the most marginalized and victimized (Bosworth & Turnbull, 2015, pp. 61-62). This dynamic is constructed by the collision of neo-colonial masculinity and migrant masculinity, the first trying to subordinate the latter by instilling issues of "belonging and dignity," and a lost "sense of self and [their] rights as human beings" (Bosworth & Turnbull, 2015, pp. 61-62). As proposed by the theory of "the victim-offender overlap," which is the concept that a victim is more likely to offend and an offender more likely to be victimized, migrant men are more likely to offend as a result of their experiences in immigration detention centres (Bucerius et al., 2021, pp. 149). This paper will critically examine the victimization of male refugees, asylum seekers and migrants by neo-colonial masculinities in Canadian, American and British immigration detention centres and how these experiences create offenders through the victim-offender overlap.

"I Didn't Feel Like a Human in There" (Human Rights Watch [HRW] & Amnesty International, 2021)

Victimization in Detention Centres and the Masculinities Responsible

Migrancy institutions are complex systems constructed by the presentation of various types of migrants and the receiving nation's responses to them. Immigration detention centres (also known as immigration removal centres or IRCs) are intended to be "administrative, non-punitive measure[s] used as a last resort" to control the mobility of those considered flight risks, however they have evolved into a tool to help with "unwanted migration" (Lindley, 2020). Consequently, the "boundaries between immigration and criminal justice" have been blurred, as detainees are denied their liberties and agency, criminalized and kept in prison-like conditions, making them out to be "dangerous and guilty of something" (Bosworth & Turnbull, 2015).

In Canada, the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) is in charge of the immigration detention system and has "sweeping police powers" to arrest and detain any foreign nationals without the need of a warrant (HRW & Amnesty International, 2021). As long as the CBSA official has reasonable grounds to believe that a person is inadmissible to Canada or is considered a danger, security risk, criminal or flight risk, they can be arrested with no charge, and held in an IRC, a provincial jail, or another similar facility (like a local or provincial police cell, port of entry, RCMP detachment, etc.) (HRW & Amnesty International, 2021). Those that are detained under the Immigation and Refugee Protection Act, are "refugee claimants; victims of armed conflicts or torture; victims of smuggling and human trafficking; or even children" and many do not speak one of the official languages of service (Canadian Red Cross, n.d.). Foreign nationals and permanent residents that are suspected by the CBSA can be detained at any time, no matter how long they have been living in or visiting Canada (Canadian Red Cross, n.d.). The process is similar in other countries, including the United States and the United Kingdom. Between 2016 and 2020, 88 per cent of detainees were held because they were believed to be flight risks, meaning that the CBSA suspected they would "not appear for a hearing or for [their] removal from the country" (HRW & Amnesty International, 2021).

Migrants that are sent to provincial jails are housed with those "awaiting criminal court proceedings or serving criminal sentences of up to two years" (HRW & Amnesty International, 2021). Here

they are criminalized and dehumanized, treated as "unwanted and unwelcome" by both the guards and the other inmates, and subjected to violence and sometimes solitary confinement (Bosworth & Turnbull, 2015; HRW & Amnesty International, 2021). After appearing at a "detention review hearing" within 48 hours of their detention, those that aren't released to community supervision remain in custody to await another hearing within seven days (HRW & Amnesty, 2021). Thereafter, their only opportunity for release comes every 30 days (HRW & Amnesty, 2021). One of the greatest concerns of immigration detainment is that "there is no statutory limit on a period of detention," meaning that migrants can be detained indefinitely (Bosworth & Turnbull, 2015). In the case of Abdirahmaan Warssama, a Somalian refugee who had received a ministerial permit to remain in Canada in 1989, he was detained as a flight risk in maximum security jails from 2010 to 2015 and finally released after 76 detention review hearings (HRW & Amnesty, 2021). He described his time in detainment as "torture," where he was "humiliat[ed] and degrad[ed]" through "stripsearche[s], assault[s and] robbe[ries], and was "denied warm clothing[,] health care" and safe living conditions (HRW & Amnesty, 2021). The uncertainty of release is "traumatizing and re-traumatizing" and leads to "severe mental health deterioration," suicidal thoughts and attempts, and even death (HRW & Amnesty International, 2021).

Where immigration detention systems fail is in the ways that they are not predictable, nor transparent. Punishment is non-defendable and illegitimate, as it denies people their rights, no longer recognizing them as "equal before the law" (Bosworth, 2019). These unjust institutions are developed by neo-colonial masculinities, extending their purpose from border control administration to the deliberate construction of "a 'hostile environment' to immigration," in the hopes of deterring unwanted foreign arrivals (Bosworth, 2019). Bilgiç's neo-colonial masculinity theory discusses the "mutually constitutive relationship" between masculinity and sovereignty, where the state has been masculinized to legitimize many binaries ("heterosexual/homosexual, [...] state/society, citizen/non-citizen"), where "the heterosexual man" represents statehood and sovereignty (Bilgiç, 2018). This identification with the state subscribes to the "imperialist white-supremacist capitalist patriarch[al]" ideals of social hierarchy, where "the heterosexual man" is considered to be the most authoritative and dominant (Hooks, 2004; Bilgiç, 2018). Thus, neo-colonial masculinity is a form of hegemonic masculinity, where, by dictating these oppressive structures, hegemonic men are able to perpetuate their supremacy and domination over women and non-hegemonic men (men that are feminized or aren't white, cisgendered, middle class or able). This demonstrates that immigration detention systems are both gendered and racialized, acting in whichever way will best benefit the "imperialist white-supremacist capitalist patriarchy" (Hooks, 2004). However, neo-colonial masculinity is also a form of complicit masculinity, in the way that it benefits from the patriarchal dividend, while not necessarily displaying hegemonic masculinity. This can be seen in the ways that these liberal democratic states have not altered legislation to make the immigration detention environment less hostile and more hospitable, even after being exposed for their violations of international human rights laws (HRW & Amnesty International, 2021). For example, one of U.S. President Joe Biden's promises during his 2020 campaign was to "'end for-profit detention centers,' as part of his immigration platform," and in April 2022, he did issue an order to end the use of private prisons (Leach & Hafter, 2022). However, facilities that were closed by this order are simply being refilled by another detained population as Biden has realized the gains they provide, especially as the number of people in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) custody has been rising (Leach & Hafter, 2022). Biden's initial order may have reflected well on his government, but it continues to profit through private contracting that isn't widely publicized. This tension between national progress and human rights is demonstrated in the "Anglo Model," where states expand immigration detention to be indefinite, private and offshore so as to preserve their national identity as liberal democracies that respect human rights (Mainwaring & Cook, 2019). Through this display of subordinate masculinity, which indirectly perpetuates hegemonic structures, these states are able to reap the benefits of their status as liberal democracies but also of the hidden oppressive systems that run them.

Systemic oppression constructed by neo-colonial masculinity is enforced by border security in their "emotional performances of sovereignty" when facing different groups of migrants and recognizing them as either regular or "irregular migrants" (Bilgiç, 2018). Colonial constructs inform the emotional reactions

that masculinities have when they encounter their "other" (Bilgiç, 2018). At this point, two forms of neo-colonial masculinity begin to interact, offering three possible reactions to the perception of migrants. When a migrant is perceived to be a "feeling subject [...] in need of help, protection and guidance," a border security agent may respond in a humanitarian way, displaying the compassion of a "bourgeois-rational masculinity" (Bilgiç, 2018). This "migrant-centred approach" focuses on migrants' well-being, developing a White saviour complex that seeks to help the perceived "other" and "save" the "lower life" (Bilgiç, 2018). If a migrant is deemed the subject of disgust or fear, the reaction is most commonly a reproduction of "a neo-colonial gendered and racialized power hierarchy" which demonstrates a "European sovereign masculinity" that has been "culturally and historically produced" (Bilgiç, 2018). In this case, a "bourgeois-rational masculinity" will "animalize" an "irregular migrant," associating them with being unclean or physically ugly (Bilgiç, 2018). By employing discursive distancing to separate the "hygienic 'White' self and the 'disgusting', animalized, other," these agents are able to promote their hegemonic identities (Bilgiç, 2018). Detainees are treated like animals or slaves and in some cases even caged at night and controlled in the day in order to instill the oppressive hierarchy within the migrants (H, 2014). To maintain the hierarchy and a population to dominate, the White self cannot get rid of the colonized other; rather they must build systemically oppressive institutions to subordinate people. This systemic marginalization is shown in the higher proportion of African, Caribbean and Asian immigrant detainees and the length of their detention in Canadian centres, compared to that of South American and Mexican, European and American detainees (HRW & Amnesty International, 2021). The table below indicates that Black detainees make up as much as 54 percent of the population in custody for upwards of three months, 59 percent of those detained for six months or more, and 68 percent of those detained beyond nine months (HRW & Amnesty International, 2021). With immigration from Asia making up 62 percent of Canada's recent immigrant population, Black migrants are overrepresented in the country's immigration detainment centres (Statistics Canada, 2022).

Finally, if a migrant is the subject of fear, they will most likely be met with a "citizen-warrior masculinity," which views the "irregular migrant" as a threat to their community's existence and relies on aggressiveness to protect the "White political body" (Bilgiç, 2018). This form of sovereign masculinity is not above death as a means to secure borders, and detention centres allow for these masculinities to leave unwanted migrants to die (Bilgiç, 2018).

With every encounter between border security and a "stranger," the borderscapes (an articulation of the border as "a fluid and constructed space") of the protected nation are negotiated to better define the wanted and unwanted. Border security must differentiate between what is good and trusted by the community and what is bad and threatening, like a "virus" to the health of the nation. These decisions are made through the emotional performances of neo-colonial masculinity, a historically and colonially informed heteropatriarchal hierarchy that subordinates thousands of migrants, perpetrating mass human rights violations under the guise of progressive liberal democracies.

Recouping a Respectable Masculine Identity

Perpetration by Migrants as a Result of their Victimization

Migrants as perpetrators is a very under-researched field, especially in regards to those that have been detained in IRCs. As a result, this component of the paper is more theory-based. The immigration structures of liberal democracies have a traumatizing effect on masculinities, as they move vulnerable populations from one place of uncertainty to another. Removal or deportation remains a possibility until the migrant is able to obtain citizenship. Residency permits, refuge or asylum aren't always granted and job, housing and food security are never guaranteed. Liberal democracies may be safer and have better economic opportunities, but their systemically

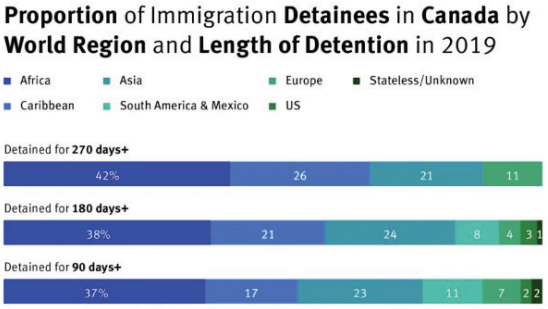


Table 1 (HRW & Amnesty International, 2021)

oppressive societies make it difficult for outsiders to build a life. In the face of this daunting immigration process, it could be suggested that migrants are likely to commit crimes according to the victim-offender overlap, as they are repeatedly victimized, both by the conditions they have escaped, and those forced upon them by that process. Most often, these victim-offenders are young, racial-minority adult males who are unemployed and uneducated and have had adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) such as neglect or substance abuse that also contribute to their subscription to the cycle of violence (Bucerius et al., 2021, pp. 150). The transition from one social structure to another can be difficult for men as they adapt to the "fluidity of masculinity between cultures and over time," especially in regards to patriarchal men who are used to being the breadwinner (Charsley & Wray, 2015). As hegemonic masculinities are forced to confront the shifting domestic powers that are "erod[ing] their ability to exert patriarchal privilege," men may have issues with "social impotency and psychological emasculation," resulting in a sense of "lost value because they are no longer the masters of their own families" (Charsley & Wray, 2015). Other migrant men may feel "humiliated" when they are denied asylum, unable to work or establish and maintain a family and forced to rely on charities, friends, family and the state to survive (Charsley & Wray, 2015). These tensions of emasculation, infantilization, humiliation and shame "related to their perceived lack of power" may manifest themselves as adverse behaviours (Allsopp, 2017). In this case, the migrant becomes a perpetrator simply by attempting "to recoup some form of respectable masculine identity" that fits both their own standards and those of the new nation (Charsley & Wray, 2015). In addition, in the case of men having to rely on their wives to provide for the family when they can't, or if the man has had to rely on his wife in order to immigrate through spousal migration, he may react by engaging in intimate terrorism (IT), in order to reassert power and control in the relationship (Charsley & Wray, 2015). IT is a form of intimate partner violence (IPV) that is about intimidation, coercion and control, and is more long-term, constant and violent than IPV.

The masculine attempt to reclaim one's masculinity as a patriarchal figure after it has been torn down by an oppressive racialized and gendered system where a migrant can be repeatedly victimized can lead to perpetration, as dictated by the victim-offender overlap. This is especially true for refugee claimants who seek to escape the dangerous conditions of their home countries and upon arrival in their country of refuge, are detained and then repeatedly criminalized and dehumanized. Men already struggle to find an "acceptable and effective way [...] to express distress [...] powerlessness." This is especially true for migrant men who lack social power and therefore "the result of their conduct may be self-defeating, furnishing only new opportunities for misunderstanding and stigmatization" (Charsley & Wray, 2015). Without seeking out treatment, or finding an outlet to talk about their feelings and experiences, men will grow more frustrated and seek out less productive outlets, such as substance abuse or crime (Charsley & Wray, 2015).

While migrants do commit crime, not enough data exists to directly link the conditions of the immigration system to the increase or decrease of perpetration. As well, in many migrant receiving countries, the average age of citizens is older than the average age of refugees, which leads to the development of negative stereotypes of the dangerous "strong young male" as the face of the refugee crisis (Allsopp, 2017). In actuality, refugees commit less crime than citizens per capita, out of the fear of deportation (Gopalakrishnan, 2017).

Conclusion

In conclusion, neo-colonial masculinity operates as a perpetrator by developing performances that guarantees the perpetual dominance of an "imperialist white-supremacist capitalist patriarchy" by disguising oppressive immigration systems under the guise of progressive liberal democracies (Bilgiç, 2018). These systems result in the victimization of innocent migrants, refugees and asylum seekers who have been identified as the "irregular other" by colonially informed prejudices (Bilgiç, 2018). While not enough research exists to come to a factual conclusion, the victimization experienced by migrants in IRCs and in the immigration system could subscribe to the victim-offender overlap and result in migrants becoming perpetrators. The extent of perpetration and victimization in immigration detention centres is a violation of international human rights law and is used to advance a racist agenda which, if left unchecked, will continue to reproduce explicitly racist immigration paradigms into a contemporary immigration framework.





Deng, Henry, PassingGlimpses, Photograph, 2023.

Work Cited

Allsopp, J. (2017). Agent, Victim, Soldier, Son: Intersecting Masculinities in the European 'Refugee Crisis'. In J. Freedman, Z. Kivilcim, N. O. Baklacioglu (Eds.), *A Gendered Approach to the Syrian Refugee Crisis* (pp. 155-174). Routledge Studies in Development, Mobilities and Migration. Routledge Taylor Francis Group.

Bilgiç, A. (2018). Migrant Encounters with Neo-Colonial Masculinity: Producing European Sovereignty Through Emotions. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 20(4), 542-562. https://doi.org/10.1080/14616742.2018.1489206

Bosworth, M. (2019). Immigration Detention, Punishment and the Transformation of Justice. *Social and Legal Studies*, 28(1), 81-99. https://doi.org/10.1177/0964663917747341

Bosworth, M., & Turnbull, S. (2015). Immigration Detention and the Expansion of Penal Power in the United Kingdom. In K. Reiter & A. Koenig (Eds.), *Extreme Punishment: Comparative Studies in Detention, Incarceration and Solitary Confinement* (pp. 50-67). Palgrave Studies in Prisons and Penology. DOI: 10.1057/9781137441157_4

Canadian Red Cross. (n.d.). *Who are immigration detainees?* Retrieved December 11, 2022, from https://www.redcross.ca/how-we-help/migrant-and-refugee-services/promoting-the-rights-of-immigration-detainees/who-are-immigration-detainees#:~:text=People%20detained%20under%20the%20Immigration,human%20trafficking%3B%20or%20even%20children.

Charsley, K. & Wray, H. (2015). Introduction: The Invisible (Migrant) Man. *Men and Masculinities 18*(4), 403-423. https://doi.org/10.1177/1097184X15575109

Bucerius, S. M., Jones, D. J., Kohl, A. & Haggerty, K. D. (2021). Addressing the Victim–Offender Overlap: Advancing Evidence-Based Research to Better Service Criminally Involved People with Victimization Histories. *Victims & Offenders*, *16*(1), 148-163. DOI: 10.1080/15564886.2020.1787283

Gopalakrishnan, M. (2017, April 10). *Are refugees more likely to commit crimes?* DW. https://www.dw.com/en/are-refugees-more-criminal-than-the-average-german-citizen/a-38371284

H. (2014, October 14). *Animals or Slaves? Memories of a Migrant Detention Centre.* openDemocracy. https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/5050/animals-or-slaves-memories-of-migrant-detention-centre/

Hooks, B. (2004). Understanding Patriarchy. In bell hooks (Eds.), The Will to Change: Men, Masculinity and Love (pp. 17–33). Washington Square Press.

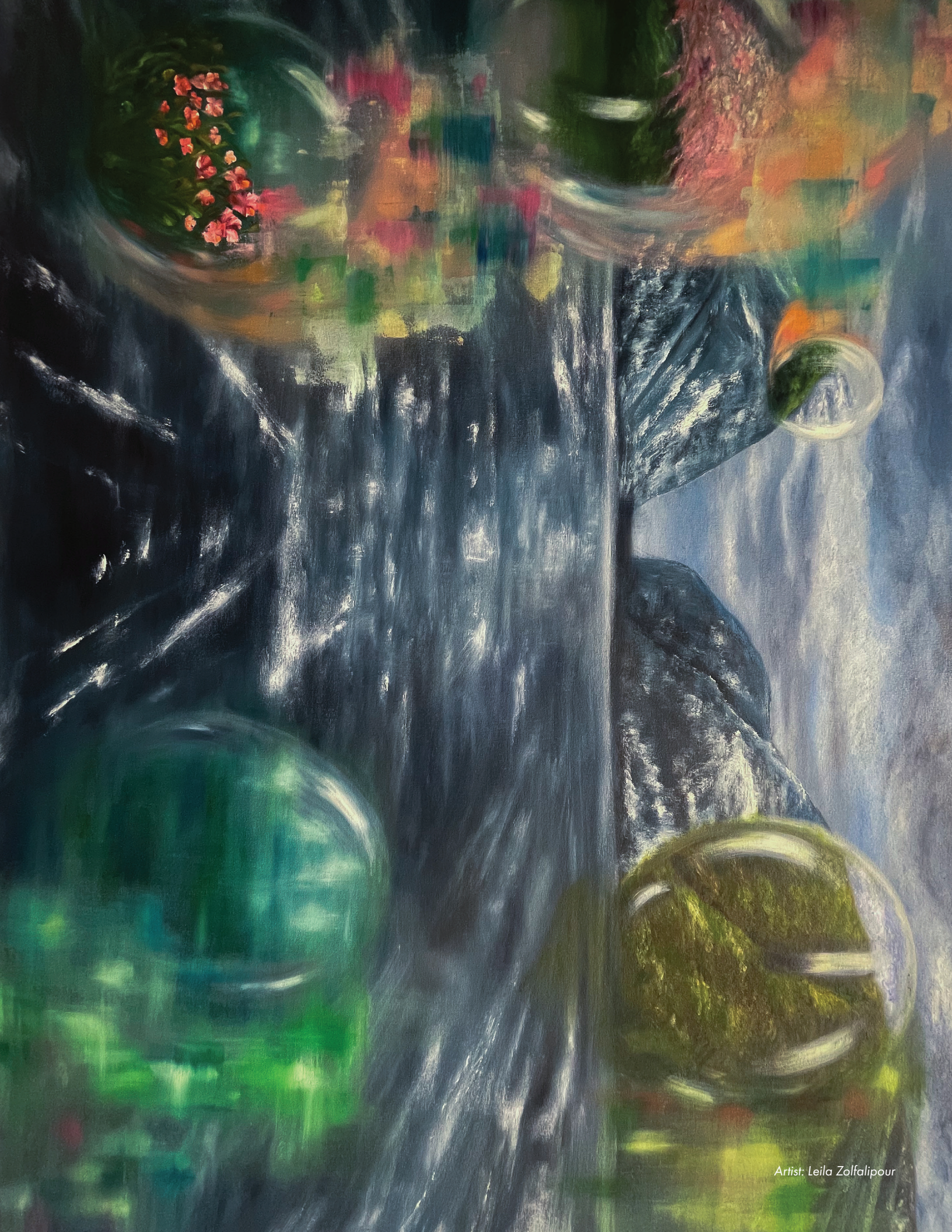
Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International. (2021). *"I Didn't Feel Like a Human in There." Immigration Detention in Canada and its Impact on Mental Health.* https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/06/17/i-didnt-feel-human-there/immigration-detention-canada-and-its-impact-mental

Leach, J. & Hafter, H. (2022, March 31). Under Biden, Private Detention Isn't Ending - It's Changing Form. *In These Times*. https://inthesetimes.com/article/biden-private-detention-prisons-immigration-ice

Lindley, Anna. (2020). What are we afraid of? Exploring risk and immigration detention. *Migration Studies 9*(1), 90-114. https://doi.org/10.1093/migration/mnaa021

Mainwaring, C. & Cook, M. L. (2019). Immigration Detention: An Anglo Model. *Migration Studies 7*(4), 455-476. https://doi.org/10.1093/migration/mny015

Statistics Canada. (2022). *Immigrants make up the largest share of the population in over 150 years and continue to shape who we are as Canadians*. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/221026/dq221026a-eng.htm



Artist: Leila Zolfalipour

Say It Like You Mean It: Critical Response Intervention Through a Community Accountability Model of Apology

Navneet Chand

ABSTRACT: There is power and meaningfulness that the act of apology can hold for those with experiences of sexual violence who wish to receive an apology from the perpetrator of the violence committed against them. The perpetration of sexual violence does not occur in a vacuum; there is a communal context in which sexual violence is perpetuated. This paper asks: how can a critical response intervention based in a community accountability model of apology present a transformative alternative to conventional models of perpetrator apology that do not adequately support those who have experienced sexual violence? I argue that the communal context needs to be placed in conversation with the act of apology by a perpetrator of sexual violence, not as a means of dispersing the weight of wrongdoing away from the perpetrator but strengthening the need for keeping perpetrators accountable by adopting a community accountability model of apology.

In 2019, the American playwright V (formerly known as Eve Ensler) published a book entitled *The Apology*, in which V speaks to her experience of sexual violence perpetrated by her father. Central to V's perspective sharing in her work involves explaining her relationship to the idea of apology for sexual violence and how she struggled to accept the fact that her father never apologized to her, even though that is what she greatly wanted to have. V's perpetrator died over thirty years ago, but her yearning for an apology for her experience of sexual violence has continued. Her work has interrogated this desire for an apology as someone who has experienced sexual violence. However, not just any apology; rather, an apology that precisely aims to confront the profound harm enacted by a perpetrator of sexual violence and honours the needs of the victim (Bioneers, 2019).

It is from this basis of V's work that I recognize my own fascination of the power and meaningfulness that the act of apology can hold for those with experiences of sexual violence who wish to receive an apology from the perpetrator of the violence committed against them. V's experience is important to note at the premise of this work as it is indicative of the few published voices that start and end with the longing for an apology. This article aims to consider why there are considerations in an apology for sexual violence perpetration that need to be made beyond this conventional end point in this conversation. I recognize that the perpetration of sexual violence does not occur in a vacuum; there is a communal context in which sexual violence is perpetuated. Communal context, or community context, refers to the immediate physical location and the network of individuals that surround both the perpetrator and victim of sexual violence. As such, this paper asks: how can a critical response intervention based in a community accountability model of apology present a transformative alternative to conventional models of perpetrator apology that do not adequately support those who have experienced sexual violence? I argue that the communal context needs to be placed in conversation with the act of apology by a perpetrator of sexual violence—not as a means of dispersing the weight of wrongdoing away from the perpetrator—but towards strengthening the need for keeping perpetrators accountable by adopting a community accountability model of apology. This argument will be made in response to the central question of this paper by utilizing scholarship concerning three dimensions of a community accountability model of apology: first, understanding the communal context as a site coded by sexual violence perpetration and therefore an involved part of apology; next, contextualizing the ongoing need for meaningful perpetrator apology to victims of sexual violence; lastly, bringing into conversation the community context as a transformative medium through which a perpetrator is held accountable by ensuring that an apology is issued. This paper will then contend with two counterpoints: firstly, the fear that a community accountability model of apology may replicate the shortcomings of a restorative model of community-based justice; and secondly, that too much weight is placed on the influence of an apology when alternative methods of support should be considered instead for people who have experienced sexual violence. My responses to these points will lead to the recognition that the model forwarded in this article overcomes the shortcomings of a strictly restorative model and develops an approach that aligns with those seeking an apology, instead of suggesting a blanket solution for diverse types of sexual violence support.

By better understanding the role of the communal context in relation to the perpetration of sexual violence in community spaces, the responsibility

placed upon the community and its people to respond to a culture of sexual violence can be clarified. This understanding can help elucidate how community members can keep perpetrators accountable within the communal environment. In a 2002 article, scholar Sherene Razack shares the experience of Pamela George in 1995, a Saulteaux woman who faced sexual violence and was murdered by two white male perpetrators (p. 123-124). The perpetrators faced minimal culpability for their actions under the Canadian legal system (p. 126). Razack posits this to be a result informed by their racial and colonial spatial relation to a community space where their violence could be hidden and protected, termed by Razack as a "respectable space" (p.127), which is seen as the perpetrators disclosed their involvement to multiple members of their own community (p. 124). Whereas, the site of their sexual violence perpetration, is termed by Razack as a "degenerate space" external to perpetrators' own community in which they are protected and where they do not have to remain to face community accountability for the harm they caused (p.127). These two perpetrators can be characterized by their mobility privilege, which is the privilege to be able to traverse back-and-forth from respectable space to degenerate space. They can return to their own community in which their perpetration is coded as part of a racial Other outside of the community and not a concern for the community itself (p. 127). Sociological researcher Kristin Lozanski adds to an understanding of this privileged community construction by explaining that sexual violence is coded as reality beyond the community contexts in which individuals actualize themselves "as liberal and tolerant against the irrational perpetrators of violence." However, these individuals positioned in communities of privilege fail to recognize how their communal context is defined by exclusion and non-recognition of violence perpetrated within their own space (Lozanski, 2007, p. 311). From these understandings, it is difficult to fathom the contextualization of the community context as a neutral site or entity. It can be rather understood as an environmental context in which the perpetration of sexual violence may become normalized if an appropriate interventional response is not considered. This intervention can be a critical response based in a community accountability model, which demands apology from perpetrators in their own community; where the community upholds their responsibility in deconstructing itself as a location of sexual violence perpetration.

Why is the medium of an apology the element to which a community accountability model should be applied as a critical response intervention to better support those who have experienced sexual violence? There are individuals with experiences of sexual violence who possess an ongoing need in their journeys of healing to receive meaningful apologies from their perpetrators. It is in recognizing this desire—for some, not all victims of sexual violence—that the power of an apology cannot be ruled out as a supportive resource in their healing process. Writer and psychotherapist Lori Gottlieb (2018) explains that there must be space held for perpetrator apologies to occur so that accountability for perpetrating sexual violence can be taken up by perpetrators to validate the experience of the victim as one that deserves to be addressed. Gottlieb notes that perpetrators who apologize need to take ownership by admitting to the complete impact of their violent acts instead of minimizing the severity of their actions. The apology is foremost for the person who has experienced sexual violence to hear the perpetrator taking responsibility for the depth of the inflicted pain; something that they may have waited for years to hear (para. 8). The article from writer Katy Schneider (2018) expands on the nature of meaningful apologies as those that decentralize the objective of the perpetrator to absolve themselves of the guilt that they deserve to have burden them. Schnieder recounts that the apology they received from their perpetrator was impactful to have and "can be a terrific, addictive relief even if it comes ten years too late" (para. 21). Both Gottlieb and Schneider's work exhibit reasoning for the power that an apology can have when it is done with intention to prioritize supporting the person who has experienced sexual violence. It is in keeping the perpetrator accountable to forming a meaningful apology that the community accountability model appears as a critical response intervention to help ensure that there is space held for the apology to occur and be part of the ongoing process of one's healing journey from sexual violence. An apology can be made more meaningful, particularly when affirmed on a community level, through action such as perpetrators making financial restitution to those whom they have harmed to help them alleviate the financial burden of the journey in healing from sexual violence at their own pace. Alternatively, community level affirmation of an apology may look like a network of individuals taking responsibility to

ensure that the victim of sexual violence perpetration has their physical boundaries in the community adhered to by the perpetrator. Perpetrator apology does not have to be restricted to a single, universal form for it to be meaningful. Listening to what the victims of sexual violence are seeking themselves from an apology is necessary to center in a community accountability model of apology.

It has been established that both the communal context and the element of apology are significant entities to be considered thoughtfully together in a community accountability model of apology. There must also be a valuing of this critical response intervention as a viable and transformative model that could be realistically implemented. Establishing a more meaningful apology for those that have experienced sexual violence involves the use of a community-affirmed accountability design. Scholar of Chicana and Chicano studies, Ana Clarissa Rojas Durazo (2011) shares their experience engaging in a difficult yet transformative healing experience in a university classroom community where they engaged with a student who was a perpetrator of sexual violence. Durazo defines community accountability as a "practice of imagining, creating, and applying alternative responses from and within communities," which helped the university classroom collectively provide space where the perpetrator could self-determine the action they would take (p. 79). Durazo also notes that "accountability is not the pursuit of redemption or forgiveness" and what accountability looked like in this university classroom community context did not take up the element of apology to achieve these ends (p. 85). This recounting of a complex community accountability process by Durazo presents an intriguing context to which I would suggest a greater valuing of the partially considered accountability principles from Communities Against Rape and Abuse, specifically concerning the prioritization of the survivor (Bierria et al., 2016). Such a refocus could have made the element of apology a more viable consideration through community accountability (p. 251). It is in cases like this that a community accountability model of apology can take a transformative hold in shifting conversations. The model shifts conversations from just performing the function of providing space to understanding the need for the perpetrator to step back and consider what needs to be secured for the victim of sexual violence. The transformative aspect of a community accountability model of apology rests in encouraging a more focused community effort to hold perpetrators accountable by centering the needs of those with experiences of sexual violence in structuring a meaningful apology.

A primary counterargument to consider in this discussion of whether a community accountability model of apology would realistically present a viable transformative option as a critical response intervention involves addressing the current limitations of restorative models of justice. Durazo (2011) explains that a restorative model of justice attempts to present an alternative form of justice against state-based criminalization tactics that fail to genuinely represent the needs of those experiencing sexual violence while individualizing punishment for perpetrators without addressing the context of harm in which the perpetration occurred (p. 78). However, work from the organization INCITE! notes that gaps in a restorative model of justice involve communities that may fall short of adequately holding perpetrators accountable for their actions and may fail to properly account for and protect the needs of the victims of sexual violence in the community. In turn, those who have experienced sexual violence are not being centered in the community's attempt to hold perpetrators accountable, thus making any hope of obtaining a meaningful apology unlikely and more likely a point of re-traumatization for the victim to engage in such an uncaring communal process (para. 27). If these are the negative consequences being seen from a restorative model of justice that attempts to employ a format of community accountability work similar to the one suggested through my critical response intervention, what chance is there for the same outcomes to not be replicated in a community accountability model of apology? My rebuttal is that what makes the community accountability model of apology different than a restorative model of justice is that my critical response intervention is foundationally informed on securing agency for the victim of sexual violence through meaningful apology rather than making apology an afterthought of community engagement. Meaningful apology can be secured by structuring the community to hold perpetrators of sexual violence accountable through the intentional formation of apologies, the needs of the victims of sexual violence remain integral to these efforts. Communities are engaging with perpetrators specifically to decide what labour is needed to recognize and work towards mitigating ongoing harm against those who have experienced

sexual violence, thereby decentralizing and challenging perpetrators to significantly address the aftermath of their violence.

The second counterpoint that needs to be contended with suggests that a community accountability model that centers on the element of apology cannot be enough to provide those who have experienced sexual violence with the meaningful support they are seeking. This argument holds that individuals with experiences of sexual violence should be considered in community interventions that regard more long-term solutions of providing support and care for the healing processes being undertaken instead of attempting to develop meaningful formations within the limited nature of apologies. Reporter Neda Ulaby (2017) argues that the body of weak public apologies for sexual violence has "morphed into something of an apologia subgenre" that performs apology for the wider community to help absolve the perpetrator instead of centering the victim of sexual violence (para. 4). Even Schneider (2018) notes that good apologies are too few and far between, as they are overshadowed by many bad apologies from perpetrators of sexual violence. Those who have experienced sexual violence are often let down by the apologies that they may have been seeking for years and were expecting more from in their healing process. I would respond to this position by stating that apologies do not have to be limited by the perception of them being an inadequate response from a perpetrator, especially with the implementation of a community accountability model in the formation of this apology. The objective of this critical response intervention is to recognize the existing value that apologies hold for those with experiences of sexual violence. It is too subjective of an element to assume that apologies cannot have ong-term and inherently meaningful or supportive results for those on their journeys of healing from sexual violence. I find it valuable here to also incorporate the work of scholar Sharon Marcus into this rebuttal, where the linguistic reality of sexual violence cannot be denied yet it can be worked into linguistically intentional apologies that interrupt narratives that see "rape as the fixed reality of women's lives" (1992, p. 387; 389). Rather, by having a critical response intervention of a community accountability model of apology, the element of apology can be given the attention it deserves to properly craft apology structures that equate to the level of impact it may have for those with experiences of sexual violence.

Through this paper, careful considerations have been made to address how a critical response intervention based in a community accountability model of apology presents a transformative alternative to conventional models of perpetrator apology for those who have experienced sexual violence. By incorporating a thorough analysis of how communal contexts code sexual violence, how perpetrator apologies can provide significant support to victims of sexual violence, and how a communal accountability to apology can transform the agency and significance given to the needs of victims, it has been made evident that a critical response intervention based in a community accountability model of apology can effectively intervene in our culture of sexual violence. Formulating an argument for this critical response intervention through the scholarship that has been examined in this paper has been done with continual consideration that this interventional model has not been designed to support the needs of every individual that has experienced sexual violence. Rather, the argument presented offers a more meaningful, intentional, and transformative point of communal recourse to help those seeking an apology for their experiences of sexual violence have their needs better accounted for along their paths of healing.

Work Cited

Bierria, A., & Colbert, E., Ibarra, X., Kigvamasud'Vashti, T., & Maulana, S. (2016). Taking risks:: Implementing grassroots community accountability strategies. In *Color of Violence: The INCITE! Anthology*. (pp. 250-266). South End Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1220mvs.32

Bioneers. (No date provided). The power of apology: How Eve Ensler healed by inventing her own. *Bioneers*. https://bioneers.org/the-power-of-apology-eve-ensler-ze0z1912/

Durazo, A. C. R. (2011). In our hands: Community accountability as pedagogical strategy. *Social Justice 37*(4), 76-100. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41478936

Gottlieb, L. (2018, November 2). Dear therapist: Is it possible to apologize for a sexual assault? *The Atlantic*. https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2018/11/sexual-assault-apologize/573502/

INCITE! (No date provided). Dangerous intersections. http://www.incite-national.org/page/dangerous-intersections

Lozanski, K. (2007). Violence in independent travel to India: Unpacking patriarchy and neocolonialism. *Tourist Studies 7*(3), 295-315. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468797608092514

Marcus, S. (1992). Fighting bodies, fighting words: A theory and politics of rape prevention. (p. 385-403). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.7916/D85B0BSG

Razack, S. (2002). Gendered racial violence and spatialized justice: The murder of Pamela George. In S. Razack, M. Smith, & S. Thobani (Eds.), *Race, Space, and the Law: Unmapping a White Settler Society* (pp. 120-156). Between The Lines. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0829320100006384

Schneider, K. (2018, July 17). When men decide it's time to say sorry. *The Cut*. https://www.thecut.com/2018/07/when-men-decide-its-time-to-say-sorry.html

Ulaby, N. (2017, November 22). How to apologize for sexual harassment (hint: it takes more than 'sorry'). NPR. https://www.npr.org/2017/11/22/565913664/how-to-apologize-for-sexual-harassment-hint-it-takes-more-than-sorry



Photographer: Jienan Chen

Translating Violence: Exploring the Relationship between Regional Masculinity, the Combatant Male and the Perpetration of Sexual Crimes during times of Conflict.

Christian Perez

ABSTRACT: This paper examines the relationship between regional concepts of manhood and the experience of wartime sexual violence for the sub-group that is highly at risk of victimization and its perpetration, the combatant male. The violence witnessed by sub-Saharan Africa in the wake of its independence movements and the instability caused by rival factions not only displayed incidents of sexual violence but also highlighted the social value tied to "manhood" by these regions and their populations such that the concept of masculinity was weaponized at that time. Additionally, this paper explores the more intimate sphere of the combatant's unit and group dynamics to discuss the formation of "hyper-masculinities" that drive its members to increased aggression and the employment of harmful actions, such as sexual crimes, as a mark of manliness. As such, this paper argues that the idea of the "hegemonic male" and the social value tied to such men present a twin-edge opportunity where committing sexual crimes serves to increase the prestige of the perpetrator while at the same time, inflicting harm upon its victim with consequences beyond the initial incident of violence. Insights and data were drawn from existing literature on masculinities and the experience of militarized persons, with the intent of adding to existing knowledge on masculinity.

Coinciding with the demands for recruitment and maintaining a healthy stock of fighting men, the use of slogans and phrases such as "It's a real man's world" (1960) points towards a general understanding of combat as male-gendered undertaking and suggests that the capability of unleashing violence is also congruent with adventure and the expectations of the roles expected of men. Indeed, this connection is grounded by the experience of conflicts in the Central African region as militant groups, predominantly male in makeup and sub-state in nature, and their engagements in violence are related to the concept of the male as dominating, violently valorous, and capable of coercive force (Schulz, 2018; Maringira, 2021). This relationship between men and combat is driven by discourse as much as action, where men frame themselves as a moral force (Messerschmidt, 2015) and subsequently draw upon a society-wide consensus of manhood for legitimacy. Maringira (2021) study on ex-fighters from Zimbabawe, for example, reveals that paramilitary men generally regard themselves as *real men* as they have endured hardship and participated in combat compared to the uninitiated civilian population. In short, regional understandings of what it means to be a man – a term called *regional masculinity* (Cohen, 2005) - are intimately linked to connotations of conflict and a person's experience with it. Literature, however, provides evidence that this process of relating violence to masculinity renders those men who engage in combat, the *combatant male*, vulnerable to committing and being made victims of sexual violence due to the emphasis on male dominance and inviolability as integral to the conception of manhood (Harway & Steel, 2015; Schulz, 2018). Effectively, this relation of dominance to manliness combines with the dire environment of a region in conflict translating regional conventions on masculinity into the primacy of dominating power and its pursuit to the point of harm, which Cohen (2005) equates to an extreme *hypermasculinity* (Cohen, 2005). Thus, on the one hand, the region's construction of manhood affords men high status but, on the other hand, the expectations of a man ought to be relative to that status also leaves them vulnerable to degradations

weaponized to target their status as men such as beingpublicly humiliated by being made subject to coercion or sexual victimization (Maringira 2021; Schulz, 2018).

Cases of wartime sexual victimization by and against men represent a uniquely double-edged phenomenon since its harmful and lasting consequences for victims coincide with the status-strengthening effects it has on perpetrators and the bonds between groups involved in armed violence (Cohen, 2013). Thus, narratives of violence, together with its methods and logic for perpetration, are influenced in no small part by those region's definitions of masculinity. Excellent work, particularly on the victimization of women and the role of discourse on power and its translation to violence, has provided nuanced insights into the consequences and the social realities of conflict (Maringira, 2021; Bains, 2014). The study of the male experience, however, is in some regards under-represented despite being a fertile ground for examination given the current order of conflict and war as a masculine - at least in terms of participating actors – domain. In this case, not only is there a gap in academic understanding but the lack of analysis and the resulting actions born of study, such as advocacy or education, may even contribute to the harm as is the case of neglected male survivors (Touquet et al., 2020). Thus, this paper analyzes the experience of victimization and perpetration of sexual during in the post-colonial conflicts of sub-Saharan Africa while integrating existing knowledge on masculinities to determine their effect on the combatant male. First, an exploration of Connell's definition of masculinity will introduce the social spheres that define and maintain them while providing the foundation for this paper's perspective on the relationship between masculinity and the risk of perpetration as well as victimization. Second, a summary of regional conflicts in post-colonial, sub-Saharan Africa will contextualize the experience of the perpetration of and victimization through sexual crimes. Recognizing their complexity in terms of their scale, historical background, and political consequences, this paper acknowledges the need for a multi-faceted examination to gain a true understanding of these conflicts. Although this paper is too narrow in scope to comprehensively tackle the discourses on masculinity and its relation to conflict-driven sexual violence, this work asserts to that case studies of these conflicts offer insights the continued discourse on masculinities. Therefore, this paper argues that cultural concepts of masculinity are intimately linked to the combatant male sub-group and their experience with sexual war crimes as the shape the nature of perpetration while serving as a lens through which victimized men interpret their experience.

Experience and Discourse of Masculinity

Existing literature suggests that masculinity and its expression are complex and intimately tied to their environment (Connell, 2005), such that understanding masculinity cannot be isolated from the social context in which it is performed. Culturally specific, masculinities can thus be realized not as a concrete definition per se, but rather as a series of "positions" adopted by individual actors relative to their surroundings. Connell (2005) emphasized the prevalence of the idealized hegemonic male figure, playing the role of an elite compared to other social actors and is bulwarked in this position by its capacity to enforce its will and its construction as a protector for those beneath its influence. For example, the Northern Ugandan context generally relates masculinity to the role of a "provider" (Schulz, 2018, p. III6) to their families and those men who adhere to this script, therefore, are deserving of respect from their community. Stoebenau et al. (2023) note that where men are expected to be decision-makers and to hold authority, this deference for the male position is intimately linked to their success in providing for their families, through financial or security means, and those able to do so are lauded as "leaders" (p. 2405) in their community. On the other hand, Connell (2005) frames the rise of Al-Qaeda as an iteration of "protest masculinity" (p. 849) against the West, championing local values and coinciding with the subjective experience of Afghanistan in the 1980s ("Osama bin Laden", n.d.). Both concepts present the male subject to their immediate audience not only as an ideal to be performed but also place expectations on actors such that failure to perform may pose significant social consequences; thus, embodying one's social role becomes a necessity for all actors, especially for men whose role may be understood as hegemonic.

Expanding on this framework of masculinity, the concept may be best understood as a tiered process where each *sphere* influences the other, as well as the understanding of masculinity in that context. Drawing from Connell (2005), these arenas of

interaction are categorized into the intimate, or *local sphere*, and the cultural, also known as the *regional sphere*. In the latter, the broad cultural-level constructions of manhood help in defining the societal expectations of and rewards for masculinity. With these definitions set, they then penetrate into the community and family level, the *local sphere*, and are solidified therein since the impact of a man's behaviours and adherence to these scripts may be immediately felt and judged by those closest to him. Together, these two spheres serve to not only define an environment's understanding of manhood but also reinforce and maintain the expectations tied to those definitions. In some extreme cases like the Acholi in Northern Uganda, the dichotomy and resulting exclusivity of roles and behaviours between the sexes is such that victims of sexual violence may be stigmatized due to their inability to protect their inviolability as men and are therefore regarded to be "feminized" (Schulz, 2018, p. II05). This paper maintains that strict adherence to cultural notions of masculinity does not render men inviolable, indeed, this paper aims to discuss the duality of assuming such roles. Instead, the literature suggests that masculine expression is affected both by local and regional definitions that generate complex and intimate consequences for the actors involved.

Escalation into Hypermasculine Expression in the Local Sphere

The *combatant male* does not operate alone. Instead, paramilitary units consist of fighters pledged towards their selected cause or in pursuit of their independent group agenda (Kaunert et al., 2023). As mentioned, the *local* sphere burrows acceptable constructions from the broader social environment and cements the scripts for those constructions' performance effectively adding a layer of nuance and can very much heighten their expression. To the combatant-male, this local sphere takes the shape of the paramilitary units they are a part of.

Given the stress of conflict and the necessity for group cohesion to maintain effectiveness (Cohen, 2013), the combatant-male's general experience is to be constantly surrounded by their co-fighters and continually immersed in an environment that emphasizes the group's objectives and its uniqueness. In practical terms, the combatant-male is under sustained pressure to not only conform but to prove his alignment with his peers in a social circle that demands escalating displays of hegemonic masculine behaviour; thus, generating a positive feedback loop celebrating violence and idealizing traditionally masculine values to such an extent as to frame the combatant-male as a more worthy being compared to the non-combatant civilian (Maringira 2021; Dashiell, 2022).

At this level, performance and one's capacity for action play a central role (Harway and Steel, 2015) in fostering an environment where achievement and prestige are pursuable through aggression and hypermasculine behaviour. For example, the inducements available to the combatant male, such as the issuance of medals, serve to distinguish one for their accomplishment on the one hand; while on the other hand, these accolades are directly linked to their achievements in combat and their capacity for violence. The local sphere is such that the combatant male is challenged to aspire toward an idealized manhood (Messerschmidt, 2015) that is both dominant in nature and is set apart from society at large. Effectively encouraging a disconnection between the combatant and non-participants in conflict, this local sphere at the unit level renders the combatant-male increasingly vulnerable to behaving aggressively and perpetrating violence, from verbally abusing, to beating, to sexually victimizing their enemies, prisoners, or those they deem as lesser (Maringira, 2021; Cohen, 2013).

Experience of Conflict in sub-Saharan Africa

The experience of regional conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa provides fertile grounds for examining the ties between cultural notions of masculinity and its effects on the perpetration of sexual crimes. Following Musuveni's rise to power in Uganda in the late 1980s, elements of his party's military wing, the National Resistance Army (NRA), enacted reprisal campaigns in regions that were previously sympathetic to then-president Milton Obote (Bains, 2014). Within the stated aims of the NRA to prevent the outbreak of rebellion and consolidate their gains, a trend of individuals exploiting this mandate emerged. Schulz (2018) finds that although women were disproportionately affected by these reprisals, the male victims were more carefully selected for victimization by NRA fighters; for example, victims were mostly married and had families at the time of their victimization and were beaten in front

of, as well as forced to witness the abuse of, their families. Existing literature points towards a logic of perpetration, where the victimizing of persons is framed as a decisive tool to instill fear, thus achieving their objectives of exerting control, through the displacement of their victims' status as men in the eyes of their community (Cohen, 2013). Simultaneously, they may enhance their own status as hegemonic males capable of inflicting violence with impunity (Bains, 2014; Maringira, 2021). Most unfortunately, because these male victims were made subject to abuse and are viewed as powerless owing to their inability to resist, the stigma of victimization remains not only as a traumatic event for survivors but confers a significant loss of status with consequences such as the dissolution of their families and their exile from their villages (Schulz, 2018).

In the same vein, the Sierra Leone Civil War of the late 1990s to early 2000s witnessed the fighting between the militant Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and forces loyal to then-President Momah (Momodu, 2017). Despite its official stance of strict adherence to their disciplinary codes, the prevalence of "bush marriages" (Marks, 2013, p.77) among RUF fighters and their families points towards an atmosphere of coercion where female victims are faced with choosing between unions at gunpoint or sexual victimization; indeed, a majority women within the RUF reported their introduction to the group as violent capture followed by rape supporting the view of sexual victimization as a tool of recruitment for combat-participating groups (Cohen, 2013; Marks, 2013). Although press-ganging is not a novel phenomenon and is, unfortunately, yet another consequence of conflict as militant groups struggle to maintain their pool of manpower (Cohen, 2013), it is most insidious in the Sierra Leone experience as it harms women through sexual slavery while also expecting them to integrate with their captors over time. This is a paradoxical case because the men of the RUF went to great lengths to account for the welfare of these women, particularly regarding food housing, and security against the advances of co-fighters (Marks, 2013) after initial contact. The pressure to present an image of control even in a time of conflict and chaos remains important to the RUF men as their ability to access and provide for their coercively or violently procured partners is intimately tied to their sense of worth.

Discussion

This paper presents the local sphere as the environment for refining and reinforcing constructions of masculinity, while its translation into the perpetration of crime is tied intimately to the definitions of manhood specific to the regions in which those crimes occur. The genesis of this phenomenon, therefore, most likely stems from the regional, or more aptly, cultural sphere that directly inspires the consequences and perpetration of these sexual crimes during periods of conflict. Operating within these cultural constraints and definitions, the local sphere and the individual may add nuance and transform the script into a more heightened version. In short, it is the culture-wide idealization of a hegemonic male figure in the region of sub-Saharan Africa that plays the most significant role in defining the experience of perpetrators and victims of sexual war crimes alike.

Regional understandings of masculinity have layered consequences for male victims that remain all too salient for them beyond the instance of victimization. Returning to the case study of Northern Uganda, the traditional masculine narrative of heteronormativity (Dashiell, 2022), to be subjected to sexual violence relegates the victim to the role of an inferior (Messerschmidt, 2015) with connotations of being passive or deficient. Evidence from interviews with victimized men (Schulz, 2018) supports this conclusion as the survivors claim that they were not only humiliated by their ordeal, but also their wives abandoned them as they could not "live with a fellow woman" (p. III6).

In the view of both victim and community, these men fell short of the standard of manhood during a most critical time. Being victimized, then, drives a rift between the victim and those within his intimate sphere as it leads to the latter distrusting the former in his ability to perform the associated tasks demanded from a traditionally male figure. In this context of conflict, the increased demands on a masculine protector to provide and care for their community is dramatically contrasted with their violation and unsuccessful resistance, weakening his claim to the dependence of his family and community and uprooting his very status as a man in their view (Messerschmidt, 2015). This is very much a case of regional definitions of masculinity trickling into the more intimate and salient local sphere. In the end, this results in

the assumption of the victim's unassertive and traditionally feminized position in relation to his perpetrator and strikes at the heart of the intersecting meanings of masculinity (Schulz, 2018) to utterly disassemble the victim's image of what his society would consider a man.

Likewise, regional understandings of masculinity provide the logic for perpetration. Sexual violence, in this context, is weaponizable and highly destructive. In its extreme form, the strategic violation of an enemy's male population may even be pursued to drain them of their social capital, thereby rendering them unable to resist, as was the case in Northern Uganda. To he who perpetrates the sexual abuse, deploying this specific "central technique" (Cohen, 2013, p. 463) of violence serves as a mark of victory since he can impose his will in humiliating the victim in a culturally traumatic and relevant way.

Literature also points to the strengthening effects of perpetration on the social bonds between the men committing these crimes. The phenomenon of "combat socialization" (Cohen, 2013, p.461), which is underpinned by a dire need for building rapport in the context of combat, creates group loyalties and acts as a perverse medium for building trust since the social processes of group rape also represent a rite of passage which label the perpetrator as accepting of and trusting in his new social sphere. The intensity and enthusiasm for perpetration are directly related to the individual combatant-male's niche and role in the group's overall dynamics because committing sexual violence secures his reputation as an authoritative male figure. To perpetrate sexual violence directly signals to his peers the perpetrator's power and the reach of his violent influence (Schulz, 2018), which frames him as valuable and, most importantly, committed against the group's enemies. Thus, despite his terrible actions, the perpetrator's fellow combatant-males regard him as a dependable and superior figure (Messerschmidt, 2015).

Finally, the combined effects of a hypermasculine local sphere, bolstered by the regional constructions of masculinity, place the combatant male, already at risk of perpetrating, at risk of being victimized also. To Dashiell (2022), the combatant male's extensive exposure to masculinity encourages him to mask his victimization experience to retain his gender capital as a militarized masculine figure. Reconstructing their victimization experience as an assault (Violence as Heterosexism and Dominance, para. 4), or as a fraternal practical joke (Discussions and Conclusions section, para. 3) in the case of lesser sexual breaches, the damage to the combatant-male's masculine status is mitigated by framing his experience as an instance that is to be expected from his environment. On the contrary, the power politics (Maringira, 2021) exhibited in hypermasculine subgroups even promotes the combatant male's vulnerable state as a kind of vetting process (Dashiell, 2022) because to withstand and endure violence is especially praised. Thus, the combatant male is made to carefully navigate his victimization experience or else suffer the consequences of failing to embody the qualities of the "superior hegemonic male figure" (Messerschmidt, 2015, p. 174) that are the requisites for his peers' regard and recognition (Cohen, 2013).

Conclusion

In conclusion, regional and local masculinities are intimately linked to the priming of the combatant male to perpetrate sexual crimes and the victimization of men in times of war. This paper aimed to provide insight into the male experience of conflict in these regions, delving into how combat-participating men navigated their social reality. In analyzing regional masculinities, a foundation for culture-wide core beliefs of what manhood is meant to be is presented as what ultimately shapes the local sphere and its concept of masculinity.

Consequently, the local sphere creates meanings unique to specific male subcultures and their aims in combat that influence the manner, rationale and experience of perpetrating violence or being subject to it. In the end, the culturally significant definition, both greater and intimate, of what a "man" is determiner of the nature of the combatant-male's encounters with sexual war crimes.

Work Cited

Baines, E. (2014). Forced Marriages as a Political Project: Sexual Rules and Relations in the Lord's Resistance Army. *Journal of Peace Research, 51*(3), 405-417. https://doi org/10.1177/0022343313519666

Cohen, D. K. (2013). Explaining Rape during Civil Wars: Cross-National Evidence (1980- 2009). *The American Political Science Review, 107*(3), 461-477. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055413000221

Connell, R. W., & Messerschmidt, J. W. (2005). Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept. *Gender and Society, 19*(6), 829 – 859. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243205278639

Dashiell, S. (2022). Deconstructing Gender Capital Involving Conversations of Male Military Sexual Trauma on Reddit. *Sexuality and Culture: An Interdisciplinary Journal, 1-17*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12119-022-10029z

Federal Bureau of Investigation. (n.d.). Osama bin Laden. https://www.fbi.gov/history/famous-cases/osama-bin-laden

Harway, M., & Steel, J. H. (2015). Studying Masculinity and Sexual Assault Across Organizational Culture Groups: Understanding Perpetrators. *Psychology of Men & Masculinities, 16*(4), 374-378. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0039694

Kaunert, C., Leonard, S., & MacKenzie, A. (2023). Far-Right Foreign Fighters and Ukraine: A Blind Spot for the European Union? *New Journal of European Criminal Law, 14*(2), 247-266. https://doi.org/10.1177/20322844231164089.

Maringira, G. (2021). Soldiers, Masculinities, and Violence: War and Politics. *Current Anthropology, 62*(S23), S103-S111. https://doi.org/10.1086/711687

Marks, Z. (2014). Sexual Violence in Sierra Leone's Civil War: 'Virgination', Rape and Marriage. *African Affairs*, 113(450), 67-87. https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adt070

Messerschmidt, J. W. (2015). Presidents: Bush and Obama. In *Masculinities in the Making: From the Local to the Global* (pp. 145-179). Rowman and Littlefield.

Momodu., S. (2017, January 17). The Sierra Leone Civil War (1992-2002). BLACKPAST. https://www.blackpast.org/global-african-history/sierra-leone-civil-war-1991-2002/National Army Museum, Study Collection. (1960). *It's a real man's life Join the Regular Army*. https://collection.nam.ac.uk/detail.php?acc=1985-11-60-8.

Schulz, P. (2018). Displacement from gendered personhood: Sexual violence and masculinities in northern Uganda. *International Affairs, 94*(5), 1011-1119. https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiy146

Stoebenau, K., Bingenheimer, J.B., Kyegombe, N., Datar, R., & Ddumba-Nyanzi, I. (2023). Development of the Gender Roles and Male Provision Expectations Scale. *Archives of Sexual Behaviour, 52*(6), 2403-2419. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-022-02479-1

Touquet, H., Chynoweth, S., Martin, S., Reis, C., Myrttinen, H., Schulz, P., Turner, L. & Duriesmith, D. (2020). From 'It Rarely Happens' to "It's Worse For Men': Dispelling Misconceptions about Sexual Violence against Men and Boys in Conflict and Displacement. *Journal for Humanitarian Affairs, 2*(3), 25-34. https://doi.org/107227/JHA.049



Photographer: Jienan Chen

From 'Mothers of the Nation' to 'Enemies of the State': How the 'Unfit' Indigenous Mother Holds the Power to Cultural Revolution

Cori Balsdon

ABSTRACT: This paper explores how the colonial construction of Indigenous women as 'unfit' mothers of 'inferior' status justifies state interference in their lives, perpetuates other harmful stereotypes within the public consciousness and blames Indigenous mothers for their life conditions. Sterilization is but one weapon used by the Canadian state to violate Indigenous women's right to reproductive autonomy, both historically and at present. Recent Canadian reports investigate Indigenous women's claims to forced tubal ligation procedures and how coercion within colonial institutions stripped them of their power and identity through the removal of choice. Multiple class-action lawsuits are currently underway in Canada, where the voices of Indigenous women who have suffered the intergenerational impacts of colonialism in their daily lives and at the hands of western medical institutions are demanding justice and recognition of their basic human rights. Despite at least five generations of state-directed violence against them, Indigenous mothers continue to resist colonization of their bodies, land, and communities. Through reconnecting to their past, present, and future, Indigenous mothers are remembering their inherent roles and responsibilities as mothers of the nation. They have never forgotten their power nor their role as protectors of their people. They have always resisted. I aim to amplify the voices of Indigenous women in a country that has silenced them for too long and acknowledge that I by no means am interpreting their work through my point of view – I am giving them the space they deserve.

KEYWORDS: Indigenous women's contributions, Motherhood, Settler-colonialism, Eugenics, Sterilization, Indigenous Resurgence

It wasn't until university that I learned about Canada's dark history of genocide against Indigenous populations, a colonial agenda centered on the acquisition of Indigenous land and assimilation the complete erasure of Indigenous peoples. When European settlers arrived on Turtle Island, they discovered egalitarian communities led by strong, powerful women. These women were honoured as life-givers. They protected their cultures to ensure their survival for future generations. The settlers recognized that access to the new lands and resources necessitated the absolute disempowerment of Indigenous women, especially in their ability to reproduce Indigenous populations as 'mothers of the nation'. The demonization of Indigenous motherhood is an ongoing and intentional strategy of assimilation employed by the settler colonial state to justify the aggressive and inhumane policies implemented to regulate, control, and diminish Indigenous populations. The respected community status of Indigenous mothers threatened the dominant settler ideology of a patriarchal social structure defined by male dominance and control over women within the nuclear family unit.

This paper explores how the colonial construction of Indigenous women as 'unfit' mothers of 'inferior' status justifies state interference in their lives, perpetuates other harmful stereotypes within the public consciousness, and blames Indigenous mothers for their life conditions. Sterilization is but one weapon used by the Canadian state to violate Indigenous women's right to reproductive autonomy, both historically and at present. Recent Canadian reports investigate Indigenous women's claims of forced tubal ligation procedures and how coercion within colonial institutions stripped them of their power and identity through the removal of choice. Multiple class-action lawsuits are currently underway in Canada, where the voices of Indigenous women who have suffered the intergenerational impacts of colonialism in their daily lives and at the hands of Western medical institutions are demanding justice and recognition of their basic human rights.

Despite at least five generations of state-directed violence against them, Indigenous mothers continue to resist colonization of their bodies, land, and communities. Through reconnecting to their past, present, and future, Indigenous mothers are remembering their inherent roles and responsibilities as mothers of the nation. They have never forgotten their power nor their role as protectors of their people. They have always resisted. This paper seeks to amplify the voices of Indigenous women in a country that has silenced them for too long, excluding their experiences from public consciousness. This paper is possible only through the voices and tireless work of Indigenous women.

This paper utilizes what Bourgeois (2017) calls an "Indigenous feminist anti-oppression framework" (p. 255) that seeks to end all forms of violence and domination by highlighting the experiences and knowledge of Indigenous women and respecting them as experts in their own lives. This framework recognizes the intersectional oppressions affecting Indigenous women's lives, including colonialism, racism, and patriarchy, and seeks to decolonize them collectively (Bourgeois, 2017). The term 'Indigenous' is used throughout this work as a politically acceptable umbrella term to refer to the original peoples of Turtle Island. This term homogenizes the diversity of cultures, languages, social, political, legal, and economic structures that exist across these lands; therefore, specificity will be used as much as possible because it matters.

Traditional Indigenous Motherhood

To understand the disempowerment of Indigenous mothers requires the understanding that at one time, Indigenous mothers held great power. Spirituality is fundamentally interwoven throughout most Indigenous societies and strongly influences culture. A Nation's Creation Story provides instructions on how individuals are connected and their responsibilities to the world around them. Many Indigenous Creation Stories are women-centered and teach of the role women play in bringing spirituality to their people (Anderson, 2016). The Haudenosaunee creation story of Sky Woman describes how a pregnant woman falls from the sky and collaborates with the birds and animals to create the earth and new life. The Lakota tells the tale of White Buffalo Women, who brought the sacred pipe and ceremony to the people. Many tribes understood the "primary potency in the universe [as] female" and this understanding informs all aspects of tribal culture (Anderson, 2016, p. 47).

Indigenous women were revered in their roles as creators, as the givers of life, and as intermediaries between life on earth and the spirit world. Anderson

(2016) quotes Betty Lavedure, a Seneca woman, as saying:

> They say that medicine people have certain requirements, near-death experiences. Some even have out-of-body experiences. Go into the spirit world and they have constant communication with the spirits. But the woman does this each time she gives birth. It's a near-death experience (p. 50)

It is important to note, however, that even women who did not physically give birth were still honoured for their roles in mothering. Renée Elizabeth Mzinegiizhigo-Kwe Bédard (2006), an Anishnaabe woman of the Marten Clan from Dokis First Nation, explains that:

> Some of the most important mothers are women in our families and communities who do not have biological children of their own, but take on the role of aunties, grannies, and even adoptee mothers… In Anishinaabe communities, mother, auntie, and grannie are fluid and interchangeable roles, not biologically-defined identities. I was surrounded by aunties and older sisters who were all mothers to me (pp.73-74)

Matrilineal societies, then, reflect the respect that Indigenous worldviews reserved for the roles and responsibilities held by women,creating a social structure that protected women and children. Lavell-Harvard & Lavell (2006) note that traditional matrilineal societies required the husband to leave his home and join his wife's extended family. Children belonged to their mother's clan, with children receiving education from their mother and her family. In this way, women were not dependent on their spouses, which protected them from becoming vulnerable to violence, abuse, or domination at the hands of others (Lavell-Harvard & Lavell 2006).

Indigenous women were further empowered by the rich and varied protocols, practices, and ceremonies surrounding the sacred events of menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth, and child-rearing. Menstruation was considered by many nations as a time of incredible feminine power, a time where women gathered, shared, learned, and cleansed (Gaudet & Caron-Bourbonnais, 2015). Pregnancy was a sacred, celebrated time, where special care was given to expectant mothers from all members of the community (Brant, 2014, p. 47). Indigenous children were viewed as gifts, and women were given the responsibility of "teaching, nurturing, and leading" the children (Bédard, 2006, p. 72). It is evident that Indigenous mothers held the highest degree of respect within their communities and Indigenous cultures reproduced and reinforced this respect through their laws and social norms.

European Misogyny and the Displacement of Indigenous Matriarchy

Across the ocean, however, very different creation stories were being told. Unlike the stories of Indigenous societies, the Judeo-Christian creation story of settler society is male-centered. The creator is a male authority figure who rules over all beings, rather than being interconnected with them. It is from this dominant narrative that patriarchy emerged, creating a "patriarchal consciousness" where male-centered versions of creation and authority came to shape much of our world today (Anderson, 2016, p.48). The church played a fundamental role in the values held by European society, specifically in its perceptions of women and their bodies. Negative female bodily perceptions were blamed for society's ills and reinforced the oppression of women by establishing their inferiority. Ralstin-Lewis (2005) notes how post-Civil War America saw a resurging belief that women, because of their sexual organs, were vulnerable to insanity and nervous disorders, situating their bodies as sites of weakness. Menstruation was not viewed as a manifestation of female power, but rather as a "manifestation of female sin, contamination, and inferiority… a 'curse'" (Anderson, 2016, p. 52). These representations of women's inherent biological inferiority were normalized and internalized by men and women alike, necessary ills for the ongoing success of the patriarchal family structure.

European societies were fundamentally misogynistic, a term that literally translates to *hatred* (miso) *woman* (gyne). This hatred infected not only biological understandings of the time but contaminated understandings of social structure as well. Smith (2003) recognizes how the English witch hunts targeted women who were single, widowed, or healers- those most independent from patriarchal authority and whose existence deviated from what a 'good' woman was supposed to represent. For those women who were married, the relationship between

husband and wife often mirrored that of "master and servant," (Eberts, 2017, p. 79) where marital rape and wife beating were legalized laws in 18th and 19th century Upper Canada (Anderson, 2016). These social practices further normalized the European heteropatriarchal nuclear family structure and followed settlers in their westward colonization.

The presence of Indigenous women in powerful, influential positions posed a direct threat to patriarchal societal structures. Brant (2014) notes how settler women were in awe of the egalitarian societies of Indigenous nations, which drew a sharp contrast to patriarchal societies. The existence of egalitarianism threatened the legitimacy of settler colonial male dominance and ownership over white women (Smith, 2003). The community status of Indigenous mothers in pre-contact societies was interpreted as a direct threat to the well-being of colonial society as strong women would give birth to strong nations. The more Indigenous peoples there were, the more land they would claim. Settlers recognized what Catherine Martin, a Mi'kmaq woman from Nova Scotia, knew: "In order to break down and destroy a culture, you have to get to the root of it. The heart of Aboriginal cultures is the women, as givers of life" (Anderson, 2016, p.46). And so began the strategic demonization of Indigenous motherhood.

One strategy employed by the state to demonize Indigenous motherhood was the creation of the inferior, 'unfit' mother stereotype, a deliberate strategy of the state to justify the seizure of Indigenous land and resources. Portrayed as 'uncivilized' and in need of being saved, the 'savage Indian' was assumed to lack any political or social organization and was therefore in need of a white saviour. This blatant act of racism was furthered by specifically attacking Indigenous motherhood. The state blamed Indigenous women for their children's social and medical problems, citing "inadequate native mothering practices" as the main reason that Indigenous communities were being ravaged by health crises (Cull, 2006, p. 143). No mention of the detrimental socioeconomic effects of segregation, oppression, and discrimination by the state need to be made when 'unfit' Indigenous mothering is the socially accepted source of all ills. The 'unfit' mother stereotype laid the groundwork for state justification of the increasingly aggressive tactics employed to disempower Indigenous mothers that we continue to see today (Cull, 2006).

A brief examination of state-mandated policies is necessary here to provide the context of the historical foundations leading to the disempowered state of Indigenous mothers today. The *Indian Act of 1876* was an assimilative policy that explicitly designated Indigenous peoples as wards of the state (Cull, 2006). The act defines who is or is not an 'Indian,' stealing the very autonomy and dignity of self-identity from Indigenous peoples, under the premise of their uncivilized *need* for state governance. The state's assimilationist agenda viewed the birth of every Indigenous child as a violation of its goal to exterminate Indigenous peoples. "With this type of ethos in place, the Aboriginal mother became, whether explicitly stated or not, an 'enemy of the state'" (Cull, 2006, p. 144).

To protect itself from such 'enemies', the state implemented policies that fractured matrilineal societies. *The Indian Act* led many Indigenous peoples to internalize hierarchical ideology through forced patriarchal structures, accepting physical abuse as a means of maintaining hierarchy and normalizing the submission of women to men (Smith, 2005). Anderson (2016) recognizes that the protection offered to women and children through matrilineal structures was lost when nuclear family structures were introduced. Women and children became dependent on and vulnerable to the male head of household (Anderson, 2016). The enforcement of European patrilineal family values was fundamental to the conquest strategy. The nuclear family changed kinship systems, enforced male authority, demanded female fidelity, and eliminated the right to divorce. "Eroding the position of Aboriginal women as caregivers, nurturers and equal members of the community inflamed the false colonial perception that Aboriginal women were somehow worthless and free to be exploited" (Boyer & Bartlett, 2017, p.6).

The establishment of residential schools further denigrated the value of Indigenous mothers through the forced removal of their children from their homes, a targeted attempt to 'kill the Indian in the child.' This deliberate process that initiated a multi-generational cycle of family disruption has been recognized as cultural genocide by international law. The impacts of residential schools have been well-documented and include "high suicide rates, sexual exploitation, substance use and abuse, poverty, compromised educational attainment, and chronic unemployment" (Cull, 2006, p. 144). The removal

of Indigenous children from their families continued with the sixties scoop, a dark period in Canadian history when Indigenous children were apprehended and relocated to distant places with non-Indigenous families. An entire generation of Indigenous children were lost (Cull, 2006). As these social pathologies are cumulative and inevitably affect the lived realities of many contemporary Indigenous mothers, any woman struggling with her health and well-being is often blamed for her life conditions without any consideration of historical context or understanding of her unique experiences. Indigenous motherhood continues to be demonized through media and other public representations of the 'unfit' mother, legitimizing increased surveillance and interference of state actors in their lives.

State-legislated 'child welfare' programs continue to remove Indigenous children from their homes, with almost three times more Aboriginal children and youth currently in state care than at the height of the residential school era (Cull, 2006). The acquisition of funding in exchange for Indigenous children drove state involvement in child welfare apprehensions, supported by evidence that in times when there was no funding available, there was little concern or interest in the 'well-being' of Indigenous children. The image of the 'unfit' mother continues to justify child apprehensions, often in cases coded under 'neglect' or 'abuse,' where Indigenous mothers continue to be measured and judged against the standards of a "white, middle-class nuclear family… [and] the more she deviates from that norm, the more vulnerable she is to state observation and intervention" (Cull, 2006, p. 146). The continued removal of Indigenous children perpetuates a colonial assimilationist agenda that still seeks to exterminate Indigenous people, thus reducing federal government obligations and increasing the availability of Indigenous lands (Eberts, 2017). The irony of this system lies in the public awareness that Indigenous children have experienced extreme forms of abuse, and even death, at the hands of government and religious organizations, yet these institutions remain relatively sheltered and immune to the scrutiny experienced by Indigenous mothers every day.

Impacts of Colonization on Indigenous Women's Health and Wellbeing

Colonization, or the ongoing displacement, subjugation, and elimination of Indigenous peoples, is a major determinant of Indigenous mother's reproductive health. An understanding of the effects that historical and contemporary racist policies have on shaping the lives of Indigenous mothers today, their overall health and well-being, as well as their access to health-care is critical when discussing health disparities of Indigenous women. The prevalence of high infant mortality rates, maternal morbidity, mortality, and the overall poorer health of Indigenous women is intimately linked to the undermining of traditional midwifery, the evacuation of pregnant women in remote communities to give birth far away from home and often alone, Indigenous 'birth alerts' and the previously discussed rampant racism in child welfare interventions with Indigenous families (Allan & Smylie, 2018).

Not only were these policies created by institutions that continue to be male-dominated and reflect male values, but most health policies and institutions continue to perpetuate a 'guardian and ward' model in their operations, adopting a paternalistic essence like that of the *Indian Act*, maintaining severe divisions of power between Indigenous women and healthcare providers (Boyer & Bartlett, 2017). Many Indigenous women experience poverty, poor housing, and poor physical and mental health, which is then compounded by the detrimental, internalized effects of racism and systemic discrimination. By ignoring colonialism as a major determinant of Indigenous women's health, Brown et. al (2011) notes how dominant explanatory models 'blame the victims.' For example, Indigenous mothers are often blamed for not having good nutrition or not accessing prenatal healthcare during pregnancy rather than recognizing how restricted access to traditional foods, loss of traditional land, the destruction of wildlife and fish habitats, the challenges of rural transportation and a life of poverty cause poor nutrition and create barriers to accessing healthcare.

But the very foundations of colonialism rely on the hierarchy of the dominant, white class and the subsequent subjugation of 'other.' It is with this understanding that I offer a brief explanation of the European eugenics movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Eugenic ideologies emerged from the belief that the social ills of a society- poverty, illness, and social problems generally- were a result of the innate traits of the poor rather than as consequences of social organization (Stote, 2012). This belief led to a practice referred to

as 'selective reproduction,' or the regulation of human reproduction as a method to improve the capacities of humans by "allowing differential reproduction of superior people to prevail over those designated as inferior" (Ralstin-Lewis, 2005, p.74). Racist and sexist ideologies have sentenced Indigenous women to an existence of inferiority, and this marginalized status is precisely what justified a century of horrific and dehumanizing reproductive violence against them. State-legislated policies sanctioned forced sterilizations of Indigenous women. The Sexual Sterilization Acts were passed in Alberta (1928-1972) and British Columbia (1933-1973). An appointed eugenics board was granted the power to assess women's mental capacity and if they deemed her 'mentally unfit,' a forced tubal ligation was ordered (Clarke, 2021). In 1937, an amendment to the act removed the requirement of patient consent. Indigenous women, for the numerous historical and cultural reasons previously examined, have always existed outside of the dominant society's definitions of 'fit,' whether in motherhood or mental capacity. Again, we see how this Eurocentric judgement of Indigenous inferiority plays into colonial aims, as the board also held the authority to transfer Indigenous women's land to federal or provincial bodies in the case she was deemed 'mentally unfit' (Clarke, 2021). Indeed, there are accounts that the government offered doctors cash incentives for every Indigenous woman he sterilized, regardless of her consent (Pegoraro, 2015).

Perhaps most shocking is that the Sexual Sterilization Act of BC allowed any residential school principal to permit the sterilization of any Indigenous child under his care. Documented in both the Provincial Training School in Red Deer, Alberta, and the Ponoka Mental Hospital, sterilizations often occurred to entire groups of Indigenous children as they reached puberty (Pegoraro, 2015). Pegoraro (2015) quotes a Cowichan woman who was sterilized in 1952 at the King's Daughters Clinic of Duncan in BC:

> Doctor Goodbrand kept trying to do that operation on me when he learned that I was going to marry into a chief's family. He kept saying to me, 'Sarah, you don't want to marry Freddy. If you do, I'll have to fix you.' I tried to avoid him after that, but the Indian Affairs people told me he was the only doctor I was allowed to see. So, after I delivered my baby, Doctor Goodbrand put me under again, and when I woke up he had done the operation on me. I couldn't have any more children after that (p. 162)

Canada's history of forced sterilizations of Indigenous populations was a poignant attempt to destroy the ability of Indigenous mothers from producing the next generation of Indigenous peoples. As givers of life, Indigenous women continue to stand in the way of government and corporate takeovers of Indigenous land, a continual threat to colonial conquest. "In the colonial imagination, Native women are indeed 'better dead than pregnant'" (Smith, 2005, p. 107).

The genocidal attack on Indigenous mothers is not a thing of the past. A 2017 external report examining the claims of multiple Indigenous women being coerced into tubal ligations at a Saskatoon hospital "emphasized pervasive systemic racism within [the Saskatchewan Health Region]" (McKenzie et. al, 2022, p. 1042). Every Indigenous woman interviewed in the report "clearly felt stressed and under much duress from being coerced to have a tubal ligation *while in labour* (emphasis mine), which added more stress to the usual stress of childbirth" (Boyer & Bartlett, 2017, p.2). Two overarching themes became apparent from Boyer and Bartlett's (2017) interviews: "feeling invisible, profiled and powerless, and experiencing coercion" (p.2). As one woman shared, "It was just, like, we're going to do this… I wasn't told anything, no explanation that it was permanent" (p. 17). In another woman's experience, the coercion was long-term and unrelenting, stating that "all through my fifth pregnancy she [the doctor] kept bringing up [tubal ligation]; and I was dreading to see her" (p. 20). The report found that most women felt they had lost a sense of their womanhood: "Something's been taken away from me, and this is a gift. The doctor took away my gift" (p. 21). Boyer and Bartlett (2017) also found that many women had adopted self-destructive behaviours to cope with their feelings of powerlessness: "I know it's bad to isolate myself, but I stay home because it's where I feel safe. No one is judging me and telling me to kill myself" (p. 22). Most women experienced negative impacts on their personal relationships: "We swept it [the tubal ligation] under the rug. Like I was no good to him anymore; or something…" (p. 22). Many women were at higher risk for health problems due to their aversion to accessing healthcare: "I don't go to the doctor, especially a gynecologist… the fear is so- I don't know if I can overcome it" (p. 23).

The Report of the Standing Committee on Human Rights (2022) on forced and coerced sterilizations of Indigenous women similarly describes that their sterilizations lacked free, prior, and informed consent, including "medical staff seeking consent for the procedure at inappropriate times; threatening patients; misinforming patients about the necessity, or the effects, of sterilization; and, in some cases, not requesting consent at all" (Senate, 2022). According to the UN, forced and coerced tubal ligation procedures are recognized as genocide, defined as a form of torture by the Criminal Code of Canada, yet the only tangible outcome of any of the reports has been *one formal apology* from the Saskatoon Health Region and small policy changes. The government has yet to implement any legislation that would prevent or criminalize future sterilizations (Clarke, 2021).

Presently, a class-action lawsuit has been launched by more than 100 Indigenous women subjected to forced or coerced sterilizations, alleging that their Charter Rights were breached (McKenzie et. al, 2022). At 14 years old, Morningstar Mercredi was raped in Fort McMurray, Alberta and became pregnant. She slipped on the ice and started spotting, so she went to the emergency room (Kirkup, 2018):

> The doctor performed surgery on me and when I awoke, I had no baby and what the doctor told me- I don't know why but I will never forget this- he said, 'Your chances of getting pregnant will be less than that of the average woman.'

Mercredi attempted to end her life six months later and struggled with drug and alcohol misuse for years afterward. She shares, "absolutely the substance abuse was linked to my suicidal depression and the trauma of that event… my life from that point on making choices that were shame-based."

Others didn't survive their experience of coerced sterilization. A woman named Pam decided to speak out about her daughter who died by suicide 10 months after a tubal ligation in Winnipeg in 2009. Pam's daughter believed that having the procedure would get her other children out of foster care. Pam reflects, "I guess I can say she was bullied to death" (Kirkup, 2018).

Clarke (2021) notes that in the USA, 'temporary forms of sterilization' in the form of Norplant, DepoProvera, and intrauterine devices (IUD's) are "prescribed more to, and encouraged for, Indigenous women… and that medical documents '[construct] the identity of young Indigenous women as an 'at risk' population in need of 'reproductive regulation'" (p. 145). Studies in Canadian hospitals confirm the same racist discourse, with findings that doctors made statements that Indigenous women were "less cooperative," had "excessive pregnancies," and were "too lazy" to take a daily birth control pill, when compared to non-Indigenous women (Clarke, 2015, p. 145).

Similar racist ideologies appear in conversations between social workers and Indigenous youth within the foster care system. In McKenzie et al.'s (2022) research, collaborators "raised concerns about youth in group homes, foster homes, and other contexts being pressured to terminate pregnancies and/or being prescribed long-term contraceptives without being meaningfully involved in the decision-making process" (p. 1041). Another collaborator felt that social workers often suggest abortion to youth in foster care who are pregnant as the only option, failing to provide any form of healthy reproductive information or support to those considering motherhood (McKenzie et. al, 2022). Other women claim they were "[blackmailed]… into having abortions," encouraged by healthcare providers to terminate their pregnancies in exchange for more access to their children or to secure their release from foster care (Kirkup, 2018). The systemic discrimination against Indigenous women's reproductive rights within the healthcare system is insidious. The policies toward sterilization and population control may have evolved over time, but the underlying racism within state institutions and practiced by state representatives continue to shape the reproductive lives of Indigenous women. As more Indigenous women speak out, public awareness is increasing, and people want answers, accountability, and change. But Indigenous women aren't waiting around for settler folk to figure themselves out- they reclaim their motherhood every day.

The Resurgence of Indigenous Motherhood

Indigenous mothers are still here. By remembering where they come from, Indigenous women can integrate the stories and teachings held sacred and protected by their grandmothers into their

contemporary lives. In various ways, Indigenous women contribute to the continued transmission of this knowledge to ensure the survival of their cultures. "They continue to engage in the practices taught to them by their mothers, grandmothers, and aunts, while in turn teaching their own daughters, granddaughters and nieces" (Kermoal, N., 2016, p. 111). In remembering their roles as life-givers, Indigenous women reclaim their power. Shirley Bear, a Mingwon/ Maliseet woman asserts, "Women are powerful because they birth the whole world" (Anderson, 2016, p. 141). Returning to traditional birth practices with traditional midwives and medicines is resistance. Leanne Simpson (Anderson, 2016) insists:

> Self-determination begins in the womb. If more of our babies were born into the hands of Indigenous midwives using Indigenous birthing knowledge, on our own land, surrounded by our support systems, and following our traditions and traditional teachings, more of our women would be empowered by the birth process and better able to assume their responsibilities as mothers and as nation-builders… The foundation of our nations would be strengthened… (p. 29)

As we've seen throughout this paper, Indigenous mothering never 'fit' within the confines of the 'good mother' standards set out by the dominant patriarchal culture. Indigenous women's ability to mother their children according to their own values and traditions has been impacted by colonialism, a common experience shared by many Indigenous women.

> Clearly, we were different. We were 'not white', and it showed. However, the historical persistence of our cultural difference generation after generation (despite the best assimilative efforts of both Church and State) is a sign of our strength and our resistance. That we have historically, and continually, mothered in a way that is 'different' from the dominant culture, is not only empowering for our women, but it is potentially empowering for all women (Lavell-Harvard & Lavell, 2006, p. 3)

Indigenous motherhood was and is targeted intentionally by the state *because of its power*. "Patriarchy resists empowered mothering precisely because it understands its real power to bring about a true and enduring cultural revolution" (Lavell-Harvard & Lavell, 2006, p. 5). The fragility and precariousness of patriarchy seems almost laughable in such a light, yet its power and influence in Canada today remain indisputable. But could it be that mothers, or in the words of Arienne Rich, "mother outlaws" (Lavell-Harvard & Lavell, 2006), hold the power to transform our world? The efforts and resources invested by colonial powers to demonize Indigenous motherhood would suggest so. Their recognition of Indigenous mothers' ability to ensure the survival of their people was not mistaken- the mistake was in the colonial assumption that they wielded the power to destroy Indigenous motherhood. Their attempts to sever the intergenerational transmission of cultural knowledge failed. Their attempts to destroy Indigenous languages and kinship systems failed. Their attempts to dispossess Indigenous people of all land failed. And they have never succeeded in exterminating the Indigenous population. In fact, the Indigenous population is growing at a greater rate than the non-Indigenous population in the lands known as Canada (Statistics Canada, 2022).

Indigenous mothers are reclaiming their power. Indigenous populations are growing. Languages are being revived, ceremonies are being practiced and traditions are being shared. Canada is approaching a moment in time when it will be forced to reassess its worldview. When all the truths of colonial violence are laid out for all to see, how do Indigenous and non-Indigenous folks move forward? Where does everyone fit in? What are the roles and responsibilities human beings have to each other, and to the non-human world around us? Patriarchy sees only threat in Indigenous mothers, and it should- because for those who are ready for emancipation, for gender equality, for a complete cultural revolution, the resurgence of Indigenous motherhood is a source of hope for a different world.

Work Cited

Allan, B. & Smylie, J. (2018). First peoples, second class treatment. In Hobbs, M., & Rice, C. (Eds.), *Gender and Women's Studies, Second Edition: Critical Terrain* (pp. 480-489). Canadian Scholars. https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ualberta/reader.action?docID=6318365&ppg=500

Anderson, K. (2016). *A recognition of being: Reconstructing Native Womanhood*. Canadian Scholars' Press. https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ualberta/detail.action?docID=6281996

Bédard, R. E. (2006). An Anishnaabe-kwe ideology on mothering and motherhood. In Lavell-Harvard, D.M. & Corbiere Lavell, J. (Eds.) *Until our Hearts are on the Ground: Aboriginal Mothering, Oppression, Resistance and Rebirth* (pp.65-75). Demeter Press.

Bourgeois, R. (2017). Perpetual state of violence: An Indigenous feminist anti-oppression inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. In J. Green (Ed.), *Making Space for Indigenous Feminism* (pp. 253-273). Fernwood Publishing.

Boyer, Y. & Bartlett, J. (2017). External review: Tubal ligation in the Saskatoon health region: The lived experience of Aboriginal women. *Saskatchewan Health Region*. https://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/DocumentsInternal/Tubal_Ligation_intheSaskatoonHealthRegion_the_Lived_Experience_of_Aboriginal_Women_BoyerandBartlett_July_22_2017.pdf

Brant, J. (2014). From historical memories to contemporary visions: Honouring Indigenous maternal histories. *Journal of the Motherhood Initiative for Research and Community Involvement, 5*(1). https://jarm.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/jarm/article/view/39325

Brown H., Varcoe C., & Calam B. (2011). The birthing experiences of rural Aboriginal women in context: Implications for nursing. *Canadian Journal of Nursing Research, 43*(4), 100-117. https://cjnr.archive.mcgill.ca/article/view/2330

Clarke, E. (2021). Indigenous women and the risk of reproductive healthcare: Forced sterilization, genocide, and contemporary population control. *Journal of Human Rights and Social Work*, 6, 144-147. https://doi.org/10.1007/s41134-020-00139-9

Cull, R. (2006). Aboriginal mothering under the state's gaze. In Lavell- Harvard, D. M. & Corbiere Lavell, J. (Eds.), *Until Our Hearts are on the Ground: Aboriginal Mothering, Oppression, Resistance and Rebirth* (pp. 141-156). Demeter Press.

Eberts, M. (2017). Being an Indigenous woman is a 'high-risk lifestyle.' In J. Green (Ed.), *Making Space for Indigenous Feminism* (pp. 69-102). Fernwood Publishing.

Fiske, J. (1993). Child of the state, mother of the nation: Aboriginal women and the ideology of motherhood. *Culture, 13*(1), 17-35. https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/culture/1993-v13-n1-culture06349/1081385ar.pdf

Gaudet, J. C. & Caron-Bourbonnais, D. (2015). It's in our blood: Indigenous women's knowledge as a critical path to women's well-being. *Alternative, 11*(2): 164-176. https://journals-sagepub-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/doi/pdf/10.1177/117718011501100206

Kermoal, N. (2016). Métis women's environmental knowledge and the recognition of Métis rights. In Kermoal, N. & Altamirano-Jiménez, I. (Eds.) *Living on the Land: Indigenous Women's Understanding of Place.* (pp.107-137).

Kirkup, K. (2018, November 21). *Survivors of forced, coerced sterilization demand accountability*. Global news. https://globalnews.ca/news/4685849/indigenous-women-victims-sterilization/

Lavell-Harvard, D. M. & Corbiere Lavell, J. (2006). Thunder spirits: Reclaiming the power of our grandmothers. *Until our hearts are on the ground: Aboriginal Mothering, Oppression, Resistance and Rebirth* (pp. 1-10). Demeter Press.

McKenzie, H. A., Varcoe, C., Nason, D., et al. (2022). Indigenous women's resistance of colonial policies, practices, and reproductive coercion. *Qualitative Health Research. 32(7)*:1031-1054. DOI: https://doi-org.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/10.1177/10497323221087526.

Pegoraro, L. (2015). Second-rate victims: the forced sterilization of Indigenous peoples in the USA and Canada. *Settler Colonial Studies*. 5(2), 161- 173. DOI: https://doi-org.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/10.1080/2201473X.2014.955947

Ralstin-Lewis, D.M. (2005). The continuing struggle against genocide: Indigenous women's reproductive rights. *Wicazo Sa Review 20*(1), 71-95. doi:10.1353/wic.2005.0012.

Rao, A. (2019, September 9). *Indigenous women in Canada are still being sterilized without their consent*. Vice. https://www.vice.com/en/article/9keaev/indigenous-women-in-canada-are-still-being-sterilized-without-their-consent

Senate of Canada. (2022). The scars that we carry: Forced and coerced sterilization of persons in Canada - Part II. *Report of the Standing Committee on Human Rights*. https://sencanada.ca/content/sen/committee/441/RIDR/reports/2022-07-14_ForcedSterilization_E.pdf

Smith, A. (2003). Not an Indian tradition: The sexual colonization of Native peoples. *Hypatia, 18*(2), 70-85. https://www.muse.jhu.edu/article/44199.

Smith, A. (2005). Better dead than pregnant: The colonization of Native women's reproductive rights. In *A. Smith, Conquest: Sexual violence and American Indian Genocide* (pp. 79-107). Duke University Press. DOI: https://doi-org.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/10.1215/9780822374817-005

Statistics Canada (2022, September 21). *Indigenous population continues to grow and is much younger than the non-Indigenous population, although the pace of growth has slowed*. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220921/dq220921a-eng.htm

Stote, K. (2012). The coercive sterilization of Aboriginal women in Canada. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal, 36*(3): 117-150. https://web.archive.org/web/20200225094833/http://www.fqpn.qc.ca/main/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/AICRJ_STOTE-STERILIZATION.pdf



Photographer: Jienan Chen

Turtle Island Indigenous Psychologies: Radical Understanding

Bronwyn Johnston

ABSTRACT: This paper explores Indigenous psychology as a radical alternative to modern theories of psychology. I explain and define Western psychology as a dominating force which overshadows other psychological approaches. I then explore cross-cultural and previous ideas of Indigenous psychology as subsections of Western psychology. I explain that cross-cultural and Indigenous psychology are no different than Western psychology as they rely heavily on abstract, fixed meanings. Cultural psychology provides a radical approach which invites Indigenous psychology based on a genuine understanding of Indigenous practices. I explore Turtle Island Indigenous Psychologies (TIIP) as local, interrelated, oral, ceremonial, and medicinal or healing. I then use TIIP as a radical perspective to critique the colonial or tautological approaches dominating Western psychology. I offer TIIP as a genuine, radical opposition to Western psychology, which can only be used from a place of comprehensive understanding.

KEYWORDS: Indigenous psychology, Cultural psychology

I went through a short phase of walking an hour away from home to the nearest Denny's almost daily. This was during the pandemic, when many of us were searching for alternative places of study amidst the staleness of home. On one of these days, an older Indigenous man sparked conversation with me while leaving. He asked what I was studying, and I answered, "Psychology". He was intrigued, he tells me, "Oh, I study psychology too you know, but not that psychology, not your psychology. I study *Indigenous psychology*." At the time, I had not encountered the term, but it is not difficult to imagine. Of course, Indigenous peoples have their own psychological theories and procedures. But what are they? And what does "not your psychology" mean?

My Denny's encounter occurred in Calgary, Alberta. Treaty 7 territory, home to Indigenous groups such as the Blackfoot Confederacy, the Tsuut'ina First Nation, the Stoney Nakoda, and the Métis Nation of Alberta Region 3 (University of Calgary, 2023). When he mentioned Indigenous psychology, I assume he was referring to the Indigenous knowledge local to the land which he belongs to. Turtle Island (North America) contains a myriad of Indigenous groups that maintain localized epistemologies and ontologies. Each way of being is as sophisticated as the last, interrelated with the land it came from. Our interaction got me thinking, what are these Indigenous psychologies? What do they teach, and what can we learn from them? In this paper, I explore the fundamental ideas of the Indigenous psychologies native to Turtle Island and compare them to Western Psychology, cross-cultural psychology, and cultural psychology. My intention is to learn from Indigenous psychology as a radical perspective, constituted by the interrelation of context, ceremony, and healing.

WESTERN PSYCHOLOGY

To begin, I will explore the current understanding of dominant, mainstream, general or Western psychology. After World War II, "my" or Western psychology was exported around the globe and soon after it became redundant to mention American (or Western), as a prefix to psychology (Pickren, 2009, p. 87). Within psychology, the cognitive revolution transformed the dominant theory of behaviorism into cognitivism. Jerome Bruner (2002) recalls that the revolution began by discussing "meaning-making" or the meanings human beings created out of the encounters with their world (p. 2). Somewhere early on, the emphasis on meaning transformed into an emphasis on the processing of information (Bruner, 2002, p. 4). Cognitive processes were comparable to computability, mirroring the societal developments at the time (Bruner, 2002, p. 6). Since, cognitive neuroscience has been the predominant focus of Western psychologists.

Richard Shweder (1990) designates cognitive, Western psychology as "general psychology" (p. 4). He identifies the underlying aim of general psychology as the objective to describe a central processing mechanism, presumed to be a transcendent, abstract, fixed, and universal property of the human psyche (Shweder, 1990, p. 4). He highlights general psychology's desire to create controlled conditions, such as in natural science, therefore psychologists attempt to disconnect the internal psychological structures from external environmental conditions (Shweder, 1990, p. 5). In the process of abstracting universals, psychologists detach the meaning embedded in an individual's world from the cerebral functions. When I mention Western psychology, I am recalling this process of stripping away contextual meaning to uncover cognitive function, then creating abstract universalisms from the data.

Western psychology has a monopoly on psychological research. The countries of the USA, Canada, and the UK publish more than 60% of all research in psychology (Allwood, 2018, p. 3). It was documented that 96% of participants from the top six psychology journals were from Western countries (Allwood, 2018, p. 3). Moreover, the findings of Western researchers often have poor replicability in non-Western countries (Allwood, 2018, p. 1). Despite the poor replicability, mainstream psychologists value themselves as superior producers of empirical truth. Western psychology is the search for absolute truths and universals in the name of science, controlling for context and culture.

Cross-Cultural and Indigenous Psychology

As explained above, there are shortcomings of mainstream research, causing certain psychologists to diverge from the mainstream approach. One alternative is to operationalize culture as an antecedent or independent variable, and study it as an index to behaviors (Greenfield, 2000, p. 224). This approach is called cross-cultural psychology. Its main contribution to the field is testing the generalizations of Western research in non-Western countries and repeatedly discovering they transfer poorly (Shweder, 1990, p. 11). Cross-cultural psychology has been particularly triumphant in East Asian countries by distinguishing between the individualism of North America and the collectivism of East Asia. Cross-cultural psychologists rely on the universals of individualism and collectivism as the hallmark of their methods, often tested in examples such as Surveys, IQ tests, and measures of field independence and interdependence (Greenfield, 2000, p. 224).

Some cross-cultural psychologists have recently adopted the term Indigenous psychology. While debated, Indigenous psychology typically refers to the development of a local psychology, grounded in the language, history, and culture of one's own society (Pickren, 2009, p. 89). The cross-cultural approach includes two main schools of thought. First, Indigenization from without or an *etic* approach (Kim, 2000, p. 266). The etic approach takes predetermined psychological theories of universals and tests them in a local context (Kim, 2000, p. 266). Second, Indigenization from within or an *emic* approach (Kim, 2000, p. 268). The emic approach represents a "bottom-up" understanding of how people function in their natural contexts, beginning with culture, then abstracting universals from the cultural context (Kim, 2000, p. 268). Regardless, both approaches use universals and empirical methods to exemplify their findings. Under this approach, Indigenous psychology is merely a subsection of cross-cultural psychology, which is another subsection of Western psychology.

Cultural Psychology

Cultural psychology does the opposite of this. Shweder (1990) explains cultural psychology here,

> "The basic idea of cultural psychology is that, on the one hand, no sociocultural environment exists or has identity independently of the way

> human beings seize meanings and resources from it, while, on the other hand, every human being's subjectivity and mental life are altered through the process of seizing meanings and resources from some sociocultural environment and using them" (p. 74).

To further explain, Shweder's thinking develops through the principle of *intentionality*. Intentional worlds are manufactured, dynamic, and dependent on the context (1990, p. 74). Intentional things only exist in intentional worlds. For example, I am sick in the hospital. The doctor informs me that only immediate family members can visit. My biological sister is allowed to visit because in this intentional world, sister is based on shared biological content and the nuclear family unit. What about my best friend of 10 years? In many intentional worlds, if I describe my best friend as a sister, that is perfectly acceptable, and people understand what I mean. In the intentional world of the hospital, she is not a sister. Cultural psychology shifts the focus to the meaning-making process of an intentional world and intentional people inside of it. Intentionality is never fixed and is always contextual, based upon the everyday interactions of people in their world.

Western psychology includes a broad scope of approaches and theories. The main theme throughout them all is the search for universal, abstract truths to explain psychological behavior. I argue that cultural psychology provides an escape from Western, universalist positivism. This begs the question, what are other ways of thinking outside of universalism? In this next section, I dive into Indigenous psychologies to understand psychological meaning from a holistic perspective.

TURTLE ISLAND INDIGENOUS PSYCHOLOGIES

As I described, some psychologists claim the term Indigenous psychology to portray their research as *Indigenized* yet use Western theories and methodologies to exemplify their findings. In this next section, I plan to do the opposite, by engaging in a meaningful understanding of Indigenous knowledge, specifically in Turtle Island. Rather than Indigenous psychology as a singular idea, I argue for *Turtle Island Indigenous Psychologies* (TIIP) as a plural, reflective of the myriad of processes located within specific communities. I am not claiming Western psychology or cross-cultural psychology should adopt ideas from TIIP, rather I argue that Indigenous knowledge approaches psychology from a radically different perspective and we can learn from it, complimentary to cultural psychology. Shweder describes this as, "thinking through others" or "thinking through culture" (1990, p. 109).

Indigenous Knowledge

> "At the hearings considering an injunction to stop the first James Bay hydro-electric power development in northern Quebec, an elder from one of the northern Cree communities that might be affected by the development was brought in to testify about Cree lifeways and the environment. When asked to swear that he would tell the truth, he asked the translator for an explanation of the word. However, truth was translated for him, as something that holds for all people, or something that is valid regardless of the rapporteur, the elder responded: 'I can't promise to tell you the truth; I can only tell you what I know.'" (Dei et al., 2000, p. 25).

To argue for a fruitful image of TIIP, I will reference Indigenous studies of knowledge, science, and philosophy to explain. To begin, Indigenous knowledge is *local knowledge*, culturally conditioned and relational to land (Warrior & Nelson, 2017, p. 190). As the above quote suggests, Indigenous ways of knowing and being are concerned with relationality and context, not ultimate truths (Warrior & Nelson, 2017, p. 196). Relations being other humans (elders, family, friends), or more-than-humans (land, animals). Humans, more-than-humans, and land interrelate with each other, cultivating knowledge and understanding through group specific teachings and ceremonies. These processes are connected to the land which it developed on and to disconnect them would be inappropriate. This results in knowledge systems which function in diversity where truth is relational and contextual - depending on where you are.

Knowledge is *interrelated* with all things human and more-than-human. Leroy Little Bear (2012) writes that Indigenous philosophy consists of "ideas of constant motion/flux, all creation consisting of energy waves, everything being animate, all creation being interrelated, reality required renewal, and

space as a major referent" (p. 521). This quote carries a wealth of information. Namely, understanding the world as in constant motion, energy coursing through, more-than-humans and nature as all living beings, and the importance of embodied practice in space. Knowledge is not in the head, rather knowledge interconnects through the myriad of relations in our active world. Moreover, someone cannot be separated from the relations that person is engaged with. Relations embody the cyclicity of holistic knowledge.

Oral history or *oral culture* is inherently reflective of contextual relationality. Dialogue incorporates relational accountability into the exchange because of the relationship between speakers and listeners (Wilson & Laing, 2018, p. 142). Some Indigenous languages are especially inclusive of this. For example, in Wintu, an Indigenous Californian language, it is impossible to speak without at every point detailing the source of one's information (Allen, 2021, p. 4). Listeners recognize the source as a person who has embodied teachings and is now able to teach others. Another component of oral culture is the ability to adapt depending on the context. As Alex Wilson explains regarding the Cree creation story, "A story like that can only be told and listened to, never written down. Stamped in the lines of black letters onto a white page, recorded and reduced, repeating itself with each reading, the meaning of the story would be lost. We must tell our stories carefully" (2013, para. 1). She stresses the importance of oral history as a generative tool. Meaning is cultivated in practice such as dialogue, song, dance, and ceremony.

My previous points indicate the importance of Indigenous knowledge as a domain of praxis (Swazo, 2005, p. 569). Those in the community practice beneficial ways of knowing, being, and relating through the embodiment of *ceremony*. Someone cannot simply access this knowledge by reading a paper or watching a video. You must live the knowledge (Allen, 2021, p. 5). Simmee Chung (2018) reflects upon an Elder in the classroom describing why the day began with smudging, morning song, and morning prayer (p. 94). The Elder explains that he was inviting the class into a relational space for all to come together "in ceremony, and *as* ceremony" (Chung, 2018, p. 94). Elders invite those present in ceremony to respect the sacred constitution of knowledge. Repeated ceremonies such as smudging and morning prayer allow participants to consistently welcome themselves into and embody the teachings which have been passed down orally. The knowledge is not owned, or concrete. Rather, it is expressed through the active listening and participation of those within the ceremony.

For Western societies, healing often implies the healthcare system and medicine regarding pharmaceutical drugs. For many Indigenous groups, *healing and medicine* carry different connotations. Medicine relates to ecology, ceremony, and relations. For example, in David Delago Shorter's (2017) research on a Yoeme village, he explores healers named moreakamen (p. 490). If a person is sick, the moreakamen may ask if they are fulfilling their duties to their family or community, or if they have offended other-than-human beings (Warrior & Shorter, 2017, p. 498). The moreakamen demonstrate sickness, healing, and medicine in the domain of relations. Instead of locating the source of sickness through a framework of universal symptoms, the moreakamen invites the person to actively consider the relations they exist within. Sickness can be healed through the medicine of embodying healthy relations. In this way, healing is also a practice. An individual practices healing through positive relations with others, whether it be human or more-than-human. A healthy relationship with plants allows people the benefits of their medicine, something that can be obtained through the relations of people guiding each other as to what the plants can do.

The tenets I have described interrelate with each other, attributing to the holistic and contextual quality of Indigenous knowledge. For example, ceremonial practices are dependent on the land the community exists within. The language spoken supplies speakers with different means of understanding themselves and others. Healing practices depend on where you are and who you are in relation with. Knowledge cannot be reduced to an ultimate truth or a shallow understanding, rather the embodiment of knowledge is an ongoing practice of becoming in relation. This reiterates my argument for TIIP as an approach inclusive of the myriad of practices native to Turtle Island. TIIP recognizes meaning as in relation to the context it is practiced in. Therefore, I argue that psychology cannot separate itself from the contextual in an attempt to find the actual. The actual exists only where it *actually* is, in the everyday lives of people inside a community.

Challenges

TIIP and colonial institutions are contradictory. Universities are located on top of Indigenous places which already bear knowledge (Whetung & Wakefield, 2018, p. 151). As I have conveyed, Indigenous ways of knowing are radically different compared to Western ideas. Western Universities are concerned with rank, profit, quality of empirical research, and producing "logical" students. Indigenous teachings are contextual, relational, oral, ceremonial, and embodied. How can the two co-exist within the institution? In the following section, I will critique the colonial practices of psychological discourse with TIIP, criticize cross-cultural psychology, and finally compare TIIP and cultural psychology.

CRITIQUE, CRITICISM, AND COMPARISON

Colonial Psychology

To begin, I will compare positivist science to colonialism and identify how TIIP exemplifies radical understanding of psychology. Norman Swazo (2005) invoked a Foucauldian perspective to do this. He argues that unitarity discourse of knowledge (in this case, the field of psychology) generates a scientific discourse which asserts itself as power over other cultural knowledge systems (Swazo, 2005, p. 571). As exemplified by Western psychology, the creation of controlled research protocol has developed a universal, cognitivist approach which denounces unfalsifiable theories. According to Foucault, the standards of "rigorous science" imply that Indigenous ways of knowing are lacking in quality and believability, and their failure to comply with Western criteria of truth implies they are nonconceptual and useless (Swazo, 2005, p. 569). This process rationalizes the erasure of TIIP while consecrating Western psychology, therefore perpetuating colonialism.

Indigenous knowledge refuses to engage in ultimate truths used to undermine the other. This is not due to uncertainty, confusion, or "uselessness", rather a comprehension that personal certainty does not mean another's experience will be the same (Allen, 2021, p. 7). In this way, Indigenous discourses around knowledge are not triumphant and imperial. TIIP does not undermine others through the "sophistication" of science discourses. TIIP are dependent on a holistic understanding of contextual realities. This does not mean that cultural relativism is where TIIP stops, rather this is where it begins. As Nelson (2017) describes,

> "From my perspective, all knowledge is culturally conditioned and culturally relative, so Western science is another cultural story, a very powerful one indeed, but a culturally conditioned one, nonetheless. Indigenous knowledge systems are also culturally conditioned and relative, which is precisely the point of local knowledges: they are specific to particular peoples in certain places and aid in their adaptability and resilience. (p. 190).

As Nelson describes, knowledge is culturally constituted. Western psychologists' process of controlling culture through experiments, then implementing those conclusions back onto other populations is a colonial approach.

The Western psychological approach reflects the paternalism riddled throughout colonial history. Empirical or positivist research implies that Western criteria possess an ultimate understanding of psychological functioning. Therefore, Western psychologists are quick to characterize what is incorrect about an individual's functioning in the domain of mental health. They identify a psychological disorder or disease, then offer healing through specific routes of cure, usually involving psychotherapy and medication. In comparison, TIIP ideas of sickness and healing involve the relational networks which constitute the individual, and encourage healing through participation in ceremony, community, and medicine vastly different from the Western understanding of it. Joseph P. Gone exemplifies this through his research on culture, coloniality, and the well-being of Indigenous communities (Gone, 2023). He regards many modern Western mental health practices as cultural forms of brainwashing, he focuses instead on the "life-generating sacred power of ceremony" in Indigenous communities (Gone, 2016, p. 315). In this way, TIIP challenges colonial psychology through radically different methodologies based on the continuous practice of healing in everyday life.

The Cross-Cultural Problem

Cross-cultural psychologists attempt to challenge colonialism by adopting the term Indigenous psychology (Allwood, 2018; Greenfield, 2000; Kim, 2000). As described earlier, cross-cultural psychologists continue to use universalisms and

Western methodologies for their research. They extrapolate a universal framework (typically individualism and collectivism) from specific cultures then implement the universals back onto the same or different cultures, all the while claiming to be cognizant of non-Western methodologies. The adoption of Indigenous psychology into cross-cultural psychology is problematic and inappropriate if psychologists continue to use universalisms in their research.

Patricia M. Greenfield (2000) exemplifies this. Early in her paper, Greenfield advocates that much of Indigenous psychology is just cross-cultural psychology, using Western methodologies such as questionnaires and the study of variables (2000, p. 226). She explains that Indigenous psychology, especially in East Asia, is privileged to elite populations (university students) (Greenfield, 2000, p. 226). So far, her reasoning suggests that these are colonial psychological practices, very different from the TIIP I described. Later, she backtracks and argues for the integration of cross-cultural, cultural, and Indigenous psychology into a deep-structure approach. She claims, "This higher-order conceptual framework will have truly universalistic qualities" (Greenfield, 2000, p. 236). How can a theoretical framework be inclusive of anti-universalist theories through universality?

The cross-cultural psychology problem argues that shallow inclusions of local knowledge are not an Indigenized psychology. It is not enough to claim yourself Indigenized. Rather, an ethical relationship between institutional research and Indigenous knowledge exists through a genuine understanding of an individual's coming to be in place (Whetung & Wakefield, 2018, p. 151). A dialogue about the fundamental differences between Westernized and Indigenous practices must be open for ethical relating to occur (Whetung & Wakefield, 2018, p. 156). As the aptly named paper, *Please Don't Just Hang a Feather on a Program or Put a Medicine Wheel on Your Logo and Think 'Oh Well, This Will Work* suggests, psychologists cannot appropriate Indigenous knowledge to repackage their original, universalist ideas (Walsh-Buhi, 2017). This will only result in cultural appropriation or the perpetuation of colonialism which fails to interact meaningfully with Indigenous knowledge. As I have argued, TIIP provides a radically different understanding of psychology, and researchers cannot be too quick to claim Indigenization for themselves.

Cultural and Indigenous Psychology

Earlier, I described the ideas of cultural psychology, which correspond with many ideas of TIIP. Cultural psychology focuses on meaning-making, context, and embodiment. Cultural psychologists Cor Baerveldt and Theo Verheggen (2012) argue for a psychology constituted by "lived embodied practice" (p. 24). Therefore, "*knowing is indistinguishable from being*", as persons embody knowledge through action in a situated, normative world (Baerveldt & Verheggen, pp. 38-39). Similarly, Indigenous scientist Nelson (2017) explains knowledge as "coming to know" (p. 190). In addition, Indigenous scientists Whetung and Wakefield (2018) explain it as "coming to be" in place (p. 151). All authors agree upon the practice or cultivation of knowledge inside a cultural, or local world. TIIP, when taken genuinely, demonstrates cultural psychology's ideas of meaning-making processes specific to the area, and how those processes are embodied through those in community.

Psychologist Joseph P. Gone (2016) marries the radical focus of cultural psychology with the practices of Indigenous knowledge to foster the genuine healing of Indigenous communities. He practices *community psychology*, in which he explores the Indigenous ways of knowing and healing as alternative forms of therapy for issues such as problem drinking. Gone exemplifies an integration of Indigenous knowledge without abstracting universals or perpetuating Western ideas. Instead, he employs Indigenous knowledge to heal the disastrous effects of colonialism on Indigenous peoples.

CONCLUSION

Going back to my Denny's encounter, when we met, I had only just begun the immersive journey of understanding Western psychology. Later, I began a new journey of attempting to unlearn Western psychology. This journey runs parallel with the sections in the paper. I learned of Western psychology, then cross-cultural psychology, then cultural psychology, and I conclude now at Indigenous psychology or psychologies. In this paper, I argue for an understanding that Turtle Island Indigenous psychologies are radically different from Western psychology. I began by explaining the dominance of Western psychology, characterized by the

abstraction of absolute truths in the name of science. I then explained cross-cultural psychology, a subsection of Western psychology concerned with cultural universals such as individualism and collectivism. I added that cross-cultural psychologists have attempted to integrate Indigenous psychology into their approach but implement a shallow understanding of Indigenous knowledge. Alternatively, I argue that cultural psychology's anti-universalist approach is inclusive of, or runs parallel to, much of Indigenous knowledge.

So, what is Indigenous psychology? I assume the man I met at Denny's was not discussing the cross-cultural adaptation of Indigenous psychology. Rather, I imagine he was describing the psychological knowledge local to the land and community he comes from. I argue that Indigenous psychology or Turtle Island Indigenous psychologies can be studied and implemented through a genuine understanding and reflection of Indigenous knowledge. I argue these psychologies include *local context*, or a recognition that knowledge cannot be separated from the land which it came from. *Interrelatedness*, or an understanding that everything exists within relation to the other, human and more-than-human. *Oral culture*, a recognition that the oral transfer of knowledge allows for accountability and adaptability. *Ceremony*, or the embodiment of knowledge through sacred practice. And finally, *healing* in the domain of relations with others. To conclude, Indigenous psychologies do not share similar shortcomings of Western psychology. Indigenous psychologies celebrate the relationality between all things and use it to encourage the embodiment of Indigenous knowledge and healing. If Western psychologists want to meaningfully encourage Indigenous psychology, I argue it cannot be done without understanding that Indigenous knowledge comes from a holistic, contextual, and embodied place.



Artist: Layla Reddy

Work Cited

Allen, B. (2021). Indigenous epistemologies of North America. *Episteme*, 1–13. https://doi.org/10.1017/epi.2021.37

Allwood, C. M. (2018). The nature and challenges of indigenous psychologies. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108562171

Baerveldt, C., & Verheggen, T. (2012). Enactivism. *Oxford Handbooks Online*. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195396430.013.0009

Bear, L. L. (2012). Traditional knowledge and humanities: A perspective by a Blackfoot. *Journal of Chinese Philosophy, 39*(4), 518–527. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6253.2012.01742.x

Bruner, J. S. (2002). The Proper Study of Man. In *Acts of meaning* (pp. 1–32). essay, Harvard University Press.

Chung, S. (2018). Education is ceremony: thinking with stories of Indigenous Youth and families. *LEARNing Landscapes, 11*(2), 93–108. https://doi.org/10.36510/learnland.v11i2.949

Dei, G. J. S., Hall, B. L., & Rosenberg, D. G. (2000). *Indigenous knowledges in global contexts : multiple readings of our world*. Buffalo.

Cultural protocol. University of Calgary. (2023, March 23). Retrieved April 11, 2023, from https://www.ucalgary.ca/indigenous/cultural-teachings/cultural-protocol

Gone, J. P. (2016). Alternative knowledges and the Future of Community Psychology: Provocations from an American Indian healing tradition. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 58*(3-4), 314–321. https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12046

Gone, J. P. (2023). *Biography*. Joseph P Gone. Retrieved April 11, 2023, from https://gonetowar.com/

Greenfield, P. M. (2000). Three approaches to the psychology of culture: Where do they come from? Where can they go? *Asian Journal of Social Psychology, 3*(3), 223–240. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-839x.00066

Kim, U. (2000). Indigenous, cultural, and cross-cultural psychology: A theoretical, conceptual, and epistemological analysis. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology, 3*(3), 265–287. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-839x.00068

Pickren, W. E. (2009). Indigenization and the history of psychology. *Psychological Studies, 54*(2), 87–95. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12646-009-0012-7

Shweder, R. A. (1990). Cultural psychology – what is it? *Cultural Psychology*, 1–44. https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9781139173728.002

Swazo, N. K. (2005). Research integrity and rights of indigenous peoples: Appropriating foucault's critique of knowledge/power. *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science Part C: Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences, 36*(3), 568–584. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.shpsc.2005.07.006

Walsh-Buhi, M. L. (2017). "Please Don't Just Hang a Feather on a Program or Put a Medicine Wheel on Your Logo and Think 'Oh Well, This Will Work.'" *Family & Community Health, 40*(1), 81–87. https://doi.org/10.1097/fch.0000000000000125

Warrior, R. A., & Nelson, M. K. (2017). Indigenous Science and Traditional Ecological Knowledge: Persistence in Place. In *The World of Indigenous North America* (pp. 188–214). essay, Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.

Warrior, R. A., & Shorter, D. D. (2017). Sexuality. In *The World of Indigenous North America* (pp. 487–505). essay, Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.

Whetung, M., & Wakefield, S. (2018). Colonial Conventions: Institutionalized Research Relationships and Decolonizing Research Ethics. In *Indigenous and decolonizing studies in education: Mapping the long view* (pp. 146–158). essay, Taylor & Francis Ltd.

Wilson, A. (2013). *How Our Stories Are Told.* ResearchGate. Retrieved April 12, 2023, from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281463150_How_Our_Stories_Are_Told

Wilson, A., & Laing, M. (2018). Queering Indigenous Education. In *Indigenous and decolonizing studies in education: Mapping the long view* (pp. 131–145). essay, Taylor & Francis Ltd.





"I am a composer completing a Bachelor of Commerce degree at the University of Alberta. For many years, I have used photography to document the changes in the environment, such as the shifts in weather, progression of seasons, effects of technological advances, and modifications of infrastructure. My approach was inspired by Claude Monet; Paul Cezanne; and Tom Thomson's paintings, and Ansel Adams and Henri-Cartier-Bresson's photographs. "

— Jienan Chen

"The Media Party": Analyzing Media Criticism of the Canadian Far-Right

Lex Pytlarz

ABSTRACT: Far-right media networks regularly engage in media criticism to undermine the legitimacy of mainstream news. These critiques work to challenge the authority and power of mainstream news while establishing far-right media as journalistically superior. While constructive media criticism is necessary within any society, far-right news tends to frame mainstream media as an elitist and exclusionary institution that purposefully spreads misinformation to its users. In Canada, numerous far-right media sites have emerged over the past decade but have been relatively under-examined within academic literature. In this context, my paper analyzes the types of critiques Canadian far-right media use to question the legitimacy of mainstream Canadian news. This study uses qualitative analysis to examine 65 articles published by two Canadian far-right media outlets: *Rebel News* and *True North*. Guided by previous literature surrounding far-right media critiques, I identify four commonly used critiques that the Canadian far-right media employ; the Media Party position, the Disinformation position, the Citizen/Taxpayer position, and the Expert position. Through my analysis, I argue that far-right Canadian media employ these specific strategies of criticism to present their discourse as authoritative over legacy media in Canada.

KEYWORDS: Media, Far-right, Canada, Journalism, Media criticism

Introduction

Over the last decade, there has been a significant increase in the global presence of "far-right" or "alt-right" media online. These far-right media networks have emerged as an alternative to legacy, or mainstream media, challenging their authority and power (Figenschou & Ihlebæk, 2019).

Characterized by their "vocal mistrust of political and cultural elites and what they perceive as the left-wing bias of the mainstream media" (Figenschou & Ihlebæk, p. 1223), far-right networks have become increasingly vocal within the media sphere. This shift has mounted an explicit challenge to the legitimacy of mainstream journalism, as the far-right regularly engages in media criticism.

Positioned at the extreme right of the political spectrum, the "far-right" is typically characterized by nationalist, racist, and xenophobic political thought (Mudde, 2002). These ideas form the ideological core of far-right media; however, not all sites are explicit in this messaging. Far-right media often downplay the hateful tendencies of their rhetoric to "bridge" readers from the mainstream into these extremist ideologies (Hawley, 2018). By engaging in media criticism, the far-right aims to undermine the trust of mainstream news (Holt & Haller, 2017) while attempting to establish their own reporting as a superior source of information.

While constructive media criticism is necessary within a democratic society, it can take on less productive forms. Criticism grounded in media skepticism can create feelings of "alienation and mistrust towards the mainstream news media" (Tsfati, 2003, p. 67) that are not entirely justified. Far-right networks often use these tactics to portray the mainstream media as inherently biased, untruthful, and pursuing a "woke" or overly progressive agenda that is out of touch with reality. Rather than engaging in legitimate critiques, the far-right often frames the media as an elitist and exclusionary institution that purposely spreads misinformation to its consumers. Holt and Haller (2017) argue that media critiques from these far-right networks cannot be brushed off as inconsequential, as they represent perspectives increasingly echoed by the political elite. For example, right-wing politicians like Donald Trump and Pierre Poilievre, often critique mainstream media in similar ways as the far-right. Poilievre often refers to mainstream Canadian media as "Trudeau's media" – claiming that their reporting is unfairly biased against him (Poilievre, 2023). Similarly, Donald Trump has claimed that mainstream media in the United States is "fake news" and is "the true enemy of the people" (Trump, 2018). By portraying the mainstream media as untruthful and biased, it undermines the journalistic integrity of the news, which allows alternative sources of information (like far-right media) to attract those who are skeptical. Therefore, it is important to understand how such critiques work.

Although the rise of far-right media is a global trend, it has been significant in the Canadian sphere. In Canada, this type of media activity has increased over the past decade, which has seen several far-right media outlets emerge and gain popularity. Canadian far-right media has grown alongside the increasing participation of Canadians in right-wing activities, highlighted by the 2022 Freedom Convoy. This event marked a notable shift in the legitimacy of Canadian far-right networks, a topic I will explore further in this paper.

In Canada, the most prominent far-right networks include *Rebel Media*, *True North*, *The Counter Signal*, *Blacklock*, and *The Bureau*, all of which have established themselves as alternatives to traditional media sources. These far-right networks participate in regular criticism of mainstream Canadian media for its belonging to what the far-right refers to as a "Media Party": The belief that Canadian mainstream media acts more like a biased political party than with impartial journalistic integrity (Rebel News, n.d.). This paper aims to explain the Canadian far-right's media critiques, through research on the specific tactics that they employ to undermine legacy news.

Due to its relatively recent emergence there is little scholarship regarding the operation of Canadian far-right media outlets. In the hopes of bridging this academic gap, my paper will analyze how Canadian far-right media operates through the framework of existing scholarship on the far-right. To supplement my hypothesis I will introduce a framework of far-right media critiques developed by Norwegian researchers Figenschou and Ihlebæk. Through the use of this existing framework I will help answer the research question of my paper (RQ): What tactics do Canadian far-right media employ to criticize mainstream media? To conduct my research I will use content analysis to analyze two Canadian far-right

networks, *Rebel News* and *True North*. I chose these sites because they were relatively popular, frequently reported on Canadian news, did not restrict their content behind a paywall, and had strong right-leaning biases in their reporting. With this content analysis I aim to understand how Canadian far-right media criticizes legacy media, and what media outlets are most heavily criticized by the far-right.

Hypothesis

Far-right networks engage in media criticism to challenge the authority of mainstream media. A study from Figenschou and Ihlebæk (2019) argues that far-right media claim specific positions of authority in their reporting to delegitimize mainstream news. Their study conducted a qualitative analysis of Norwegian far-right media that identified five positions of media authority. These positions are summarized in Table 1. While their study focused on media from the Norwegian far-right, Figenschou and Ihlebæk argue that their findings are relevant in other national contexts due to the transnational nature of the emerging global far-right movement (Figenschou & Ihlebæk, 2019). Far-right movements across the globe are often considered "transnational" as they share similar positions and ideologies and engage in similar tactics to spread their ideas. I use Figenschou and Ihlebæk's framework to build my hypothesis on how Canadian far-right media operates.

Table 1 *How the Far-Right Criticizes Legacy Media*

Insider Position	Claim knowledge of the professional journalistic field. Often far-right journalists are formerly employed by the legacy media.
Expert Position	Factual legitimacy is built on reporting their own statistics and facts.
Victim Position	Experiential legitimacy as a media victim. (Far-right media constantly victimizes itself by claiming to be "attacked" by legacy media.)
Citizen Position	Representing the people. (Legitimacy from the people who perceive legacy media as out of touch with reality.)
Activist Position	Claims legitimacy through confrontation and active resistance.

Note: Adapted from (Figenschou & Ihlebæk, 2019).

Canadian far-right media employ specific strategies of criticism that focus on presenting their discourse as more authoritative than legacy media by claiming that Canadian mainstream media is biased and untruthful. Guided by Figenschou and Ihlebæk's (2019) theoretical framework, I believe that Canadian far-right media will frame their critiques in similar ways to those seen above in Table 1. By claiming positions of authority in their reporting, Canadian far-right media aims to legitimize their journalistic integrity over that of Canadian legacy media. I further hypothesize that media criticism from the far-right will specifically target publicly funded Canadian mainstream media (E.g. CBC News) due to what the far-right perceives as mainstream media's biased connection to the government.

This paper will proceed as follows: First, I will conduct a brief literature review that explores the origin and rise of far-right media. Second, I will introduce my cases and methodology. Finally, I will proceed to a discussion of the results and conclusions of this study.

Origin of "Far-Right" Media

The terms "far-right" and "alt-right" media are used interchangeably within the literature to describe the emergence of far-right alternative news outlets (Faris et al. 2017; Marwick & Lewis 2017). Common characteristics of these sites include distrust of political elites, unfavourable perceptions of "left-wing" mainstream media, anti-immigration and anti-Islamic sentiments, and a tendency to present alternative interpretations of information that align with extreme right-wing ideologies (Holt & Haller, 2017). The core of these ideologies is typically fueled by white nationalism, racism, and xenophobia; however, as mentioned, not all sites are explicit in this messaging. By downplaying the hateful tendencies of far-right rhetoric, these sites can "bridge" readers from the mainstream into far-right ideologies (Hawley, 2018). While it is difficult to pinpoint the exact origin of this media, it is closely related to the growth of Internet use by far-right movements.

Since its creation, the Internet has been a powerful tool for far-right movements to spread hateful rhetoric and normalize their ideology within a broader community. Far-right actors have utilized the Internet to recruit, communicate, and spread ideas to an audience online, building a highly radicalized base. The Internet's ease of access and anonymity meant that far-right groups could quietly radicalize people who were unlikely to interact with extremists face-to-face (Hawley, 2018). Websites, forums, and blogs were instrumental in this radicalization and were quickly adopted as tools by the far-right.

Early Internet forums were the first instances of far-

right activity online and were instrumental in growing the popularity of this type of extremism. Far-right forums can be traced back to the creation of the Internet, with the website Stormfront one of the earliest cases of far-right activity online. Created in 1995 by former KKK leader Don Black, Stormfront was primarily used as a public message board to connect white nationalists (Hawley, 2018). On the site, people could discuss various topics relating to race and politics, while also accessing information about white nationalism (Conway et al, 2019). The creation of Stormfront, combined with its massive popularity, inspired several other far-right actors to capitalize on the Internet's power. From the 2000s onwards, the far-right became "increasingly reliant on web forums to facilitate movement expansion by spreading propaganda and connecting with like-minded individuals" (Conway et al, 2019, p. 4).

While forums acted as an important tool for far-right actors to spread ideological messages, traditional websites also played an important role in the dissemination of far-right ideas. These websites included the creation of alternative news media that intended to spread perspectives not found within the mainstream. The first self-described "alternative news" websites emerged as early as the 1990s, with sites like *National Vanguard News* and *Life Site News* being established (Conway et al, 2019). While these sites were not as popular as far-right forums like Stormfront, they still played a crucial role in normalizing far-right discourse by presenting far-right ideas through the guise of "news". It was not until the late 2000s that far-right media sites became a widely used (and widely popular) tool of the far-right.

Far-right media was largely popularized within the United States with the creation of *Breitbart News* <breitbart.com>. This website was founded in 2007 by conservative journalist Andrew Breitbart who was "committed to the destruction of the old media guard" (ABC7, 2012). The creation of *Breitbart* was not initially connected to extreme right-wing ideologies but this changed after Breitbart died in 2012 (Davis, 2019). Under the leadership of Steve Bannon, who took over the site, *Breitbart* "established itself as a rallying point for … white supremacism, anti-feminism, anti-Islamic, and anti-Semitic extremism" (Davis, 2019, p.244). The site was pushed into the mainstream in 2016, as Bannon was recruited to work for Donald Trump's campaign. While *Breitbart* was not the first far-right news site, it did play an essential role in popularizing alternative news media. With its close ties to Donald Trump, *Breitbart* became highly influential within the conservative media sphere in the United States (Roberts & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2022). *Breitbart*'s influence, combined with its frequent attacks on mainstream media, exemplified the power far-right media could hold.

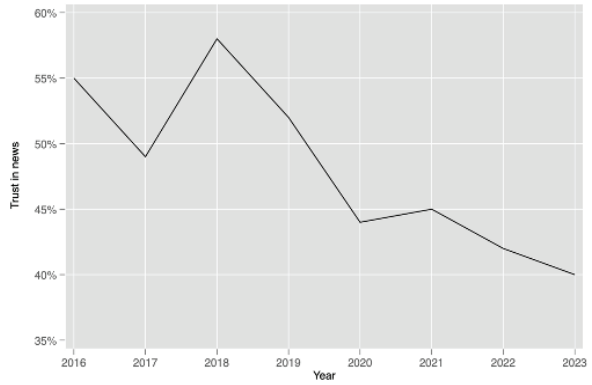
Rise of Canadian Far-Right Media

In Canada, the increase in far-right media activity has occurred most notably over the past decade, which saw several far-right media outlets emerge and gain popularity. Sites like *Rebel Media* (est. 2015) <www.rebelnews.com>, *True North* (est. 2018) <www.tnc.news>, *The Counter Signal* (est. 2020) <www.thecountersignal.com>, and *The Bureau* (est. 2023) <www.thebureau.news> have all established themselves as alternatives to traditional media and participate in regular mainstream media criticism. Despite recently emerging, these outlets have grown considerable influence within the Canadian media sphere. Instead of focusing on traditional forms of media, like radio, television, and print, Canadian far-right media has grown its audience online through social media platforms such as X (formerly Twitter), YouTube, and Facebook (Elmer & Burton, 2022). A study by Elmer and Burton (2022) found that Canadian far-right personalities and their media outlets, "at least on popular Internet platforms, … are reaching audiences almost as large as those of legacy broadcast news media" (p. 4). As audiences begin to rival those of the Canadian mainstream news, these far-right media outlets pose a significant challenge to the legitimacy of legacy media.

One factor contributing to the rise of popularity in Canadian far-right media has been the public's declining trust in mainstream media. While decreasing trust in mainstream media is a global phenomenon (Newman et al, 2023), Canadian media has seen a considerable drop in trust in the past eight years. Figure 1 shows the decline in Canadians' overall trust in mainstream news between 2016 and 2023, dropping a total of 15 percentage points. Data from the 2019 Canadian Election Study shows how this overall news distrust is directed toward mainstream media within the Canadian market. Data from Stephenson, et al

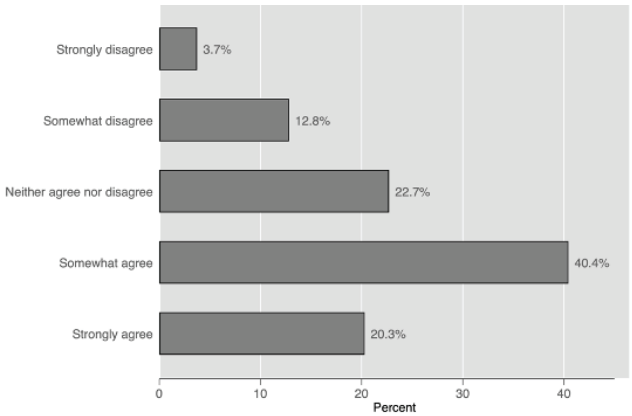
(2019) shows that 60 percent of Canadians believe that the mainstream media is largely controlled by elite interests, as shown in Figure 2. Although this data does not directly reflect Canadians' perceptions of trust toward mainstream media, it does show that many Canadians are largely skeptical of news narratives produced by the mainstream media.

Figure 1 *Canadians' Overall Trust in Legacy News (2016-2023)*



Note: The percentage of overall trust in news by Canadians. Graph created in Stata. Adapted from (Brin & Charlton, 2023).

Figure 2 *Belief That Mainstream News Media is Largely Controlled by Elite Interests*



Note: The percentage of Canadians who see the mainstream news media as controlled by elite interests. Sample size N = 9929. Graph created in Stata. Data from (Stephenson, et al, 2019).

As Canadians' trust in mainstream news decreases they are likely to turn to other sources of media for information. Decreased trust in mainstream media has been associated with increased alternative news orientation, and vice versa (Andersen et al, 2021). Far-right media sites allow people distrustful of mainstream media to find information "that gives a different picture of reality" (Andersen et al, 2021, 834). This different reality is often one that fits certain people's worldview, ideology, and social identity better than what the mainstream media represents to them.

The 2022 "Freedom Convoy" marked a notable shift in the legitimacy of Canadian far-right media networks, as their favourable coverage of the protests provided Canadians with a different picture of reality. The "Freedom Convoy" began in 2022 to protest the removal of a COVID-19 vaccine exemption for truckers but it quickly evolved into a national protest that demanded the end of all COVID-19 restrictions. Protesters argued that the Liberal government was overreaching their boundaries and ruling through tyranny because COVID-19 mandates were restricting "freedoms" (Roy & Gandsman, 2023). The protest movement had explicit ties to far-right ideologies because its organizers, Tamara Lich, Benjamin J. Dichter, and Patrick King, were linked to white nationalist, racist, and Islamophobic groups (Canadian Anti-Hate Network, 2022). Additionally, far-right extremist symbols were visible during many of the protests (Nicholson, 2022). Despite this, most Canadians involved in the protests were considerably less extreme.

Mainstream media largely framed those involved in the "Freedom Convoy" as "un-Canadian", "racist", "white nationalist", and part of a "fringe minority", while it disregarded any grievances the protesters held (Roy & Gandsman, 2023). A study by Roy and Gandsman (2023) found that between 75 and 90 percent of mainstream media's coverage of the "Freedom Convoy" depicted protesters negatively. This was in sharp contrast to the narratives emerging from far-right news sources, who were overwhelmingly supportive and encouraging of protesters. During a speech at the "Freedom Convoy", Ezra Levant of *Rebel News* addressed protesters: "The government says you're racist, the government says you're sexist, the government says you're violent. On the contrary, I've never seen a more diverse group of Canadians" (Levant, 2022). Far-right media coverage depicted protesters positively and claimed that mainstream media was "complicit in mischaracterizing" those involved (Rebel News, 2022). Rangel and Gandsman (2022) argue that the media's categorization of protesters as an "unacceptable fringe minority"

negatively impacted people's perceptions of mainstream news. This likely turned Canadians, who were supportive of the convoy and frustrated with COVID-19 mandates, to alternative sources of information that characterized the protesters more positively than mainstream news did. The perceived legitimacy of far-right networks increased during the "Freedom Convoy" as many Canadians believed that the correct news narrative surrounding the protest was coming from these alternative sites. Further research is needed to fully explore the impact of the negative media coverage of the "Freedom Convoy" on Canadians' perceptions and trust of mainstream news.

Case Studies: *Rebel News* and *True North*

Rebel News was founded in 2015 by conservative media personalities Ezra Levant and Brian Lilley, both who previously worked for the now-defunct Sun News Network. *Rebel News* was originally established as a conservative media alternative as the founders felt "there was a need for a conservative voice in Canadian media" (Little, 2017). While the site was intended to serve as an independent media network that offered conservative perspectives on the news it, along with Ezra Levant, increasingly became more extreme in its reporting. As *Rebel News* became increasingly associated with the "far-right", Lilley and several other high-profile conservatives decided to cut ties with the network in 2017. In an interview with *Global News*, Lilley explained that his decision to resign came "after watching *Rebel News* move further and further away from its original mission" (Little, 2017). Since Lilley's resignation, *Rebel News* has moved further to the far-right under the leadership of Levant.

Ezra Levant, a controversial media personality, has gained fame from his "politically incorrect" views and opinions. After he graduated from the University of Alberta with a degree in law, Levant started his career as a lawyer before transitioning into media (Levant, 2023). He worked as an occasional columnist for the *Calgary Sun* beginning in 1997, but Levant's big transition into media occurred when he co-founded the *Western Standard* in 2004. The *Western Standard* was an Albertan-based conservative magazine that aimed to act as "a counterweight to Canada's mushy, left-wing, politically correct media" (Gatehouse, 2013). Although the magazine ended in 2007, shortly after its inception, it gained considerable criticism for publishing controversial cartoons in 2006 that depicted the Prophet Muhammed (Warnica, 2017).

After the *Western Standard* ended, Levant continued his controversial career in journalism and worked with *Sun News*. *Sun News* was founded in 2011 and intended to provide Canadians with "right-of-centre" media coverage to combat the supposed Liberal drift of the mainstream media (Warnica, 2017). During his time at *Sun News*, Levant's journalism was marked with anti-establishment sentiments and great controversy. For example, in 2014, Levant controversially attacked the Trudeau family for their apparent promiscuous behaviour, a slight that resulted in Justin Trudeau refusing to speak with *Sun News* until the network had publicly apologized (CBC, 2014). *Sun News* failed to gain the conservative audience it aspired to find, which led to the company folding in 2015 (Warnica, 2017). Since co-founding *Rebel News* in 2015, Ezra Levant is no longer restricted by editorial standards. Therefore, according to *Rebel News*, he can "follow the facts wherever they may lead — even if that conflicts with the official narrative of the establishment" (Rebel News, n.d.).

True North claims to be a "Canadian digital media platform that seeks to provide Canadians with fair, accurate, truthful and fact-based news reports" (True North, n.d.). It was started in 2018 by former spokesperson for Jason Kenny and the Canadian Taxpayers' Federation, Candice Malcolm. Before 2018, it originally operated under the name Independent Immigration Aid Association, a charity established in 1994 to welcome immigrants from the UK to BC (PressProgress, 2019). Currently, *True North* operates simultaneously as a media outlet, think tank, and registered charity; however, the charitable aspects of the organization are heavily questioned (PressProgress, 2019). With the limited scholarship and information available on Canadian far-right media outlets more research is needed to explore the history of *True North* and its founder Candice Malcolm.

Methodology

My research project used content analysis to determine the positions Canadian far-right media employed to attack mainstream media. Content analysis is a research method used to "determine the presence of certain words, themes, or concepts within some given qualitative data" (Columbia, n.d.). For this project, my qualitative data sampled news articles from my two selected cases, *Rebel News* and *True North*. By using content analysis, I could

identify emerging patterns, themes, and concepts relating to media criticism, and how these ideas were employed by the Canadian far-right. Therefore, my content analysis took an inductive research approach. Inductive research follows the process of gathering data, looking for patterns, and then develops a theory around what was observed (Saylor Academy, 2012). While my hypothesis indicated a theory about potential themes and positions the Canadian far-right media could take, an inductive approach allowed me to analyze what was truly in the data. An inductive method also allowed me to compare the themes I found during my analysis with the themes I specified in the initial hypothesis.

The research project sampled data from the websites of *Rebel News* and *True North*. Both sites were chosen because they were relatively popular, frequently reported on Canadian news, did not restrict their content behind a paywall, and had strong right-wing biases in their reporting. Because of limited time, I analyzed only two media outlets to reduce the project's scope. The sample data consisted of news articles posted to the websites of *Rebel News* and *True North*. Articles posted to both sites were usually short (less than 400 words) and frequently engaged in mainstream media criticism. Again, to limit the scope, this project did not analyze any social media posts or other media statements from *Rebel News* or *True North*.

Sample news articles were collected during a three-month timeframe between August 1, 2023, and October 31, 2023. Sampling was based on the following search words: media, journalist, legacy, mainstream, global news, CBC, CTV, Globe and Mail, *National Post*, and *Toronto Star*. Searches were conducted using the search function of each website. I decided to include search words for large legacy media sites to capture any articles that aimed specific criticism at them. Articles were then reviewed for relevance. To be included in the analysis, articles had to be critical of mainstream media. Any that were not related to media criticism, or articles that were duplicated, were removed from the data set. As a result, 43 articles from *Rebel News* and 22 articles from *True North* engaged in some form of Canadian mainstream media criticism over the defined timeframe.

To analyze my data, I used the qualitative analysis software MAXQDA. As previously mentioned, I took an inductive approach to the sample data. Inductive research includes developing codes for the data "during the process of coding, based on the actual content of the data set" (Vears & Gillam, 113). This allowed me to specify additional positions of media criticism I found the Canadian far-right media using. After additional positions were identified, I coded for them in MAXQDA along with the positions specified in Figenschou and Ihlebæk's analysis. After all articles were coded, I created a frequency bar graph to indicate which positions were most frequently found within the far-right media's critiques of mainstream media. By seeing what positions of authority were most used, we can determine what strategies far-right media believe to be most effective in undermining the trust of legacy news.

Results and Discussion

A total of 65 articles relating to mainstream media criticism were examined in my analysis of *Rebel News* and *True North*. *Rebel News* engaged in the highest levels of media criticism, with 43 articles containing media critiques over the defined three-month period. The focus of these articles surrounded topics such as the Israel-Palestine war, commentary on Bill C-18, and discussions of CBC's finances. Even though *True North* engaged in lower levels of media criticism, with only 22 articles containing media critiques, similar topics were still covered in their reporting.

Although *True North* and *Rebel News* are critical of all mainstream media, most of their criticisms focused specifically on the CBC. Out of the 43 articles from *Rebel News*, 25 (or 58%) were a direct criticism of the CBC. Similar percentages were found at *True North*, with 12 out of the 22 articles (or 55%), directly criticizing the CBC. Other mainstream media sources, such as CTV, *Global and Mail*, and the *Toronto Star*, were infrequently mentioned in the critiques of *Rebel News* and *True North*. These mainstream outlets were never the focus of any article and were only referred to in a few cases. For example, one critique from *True North* described "The Liberal-aligned legacy media in Canada" as including "the CBC, CTV, *Globe and Mail*, *Toronto Star* and Postmedia" (Malcom, 2023). Compared to their criticism of CBC, Canadian far-right media was significantly less critical of other mainstream media sources.

Not only was CBC the mainstream media outlet that

faced the largest amount of critique, but they were also a frequent topic of discussion in the far-right outlets that I analyzed. Figure 3 depicts a word cloud generated in MAXQDA that contains the most common words from the articles, with higher word frequencies having greater prominence in the graph. After non-interesting words were removed (the, if, at, etc.), the term "CBC" had the highest frequency, totalling 294 hits within the 65 articles. CBC was also the only mainstream media outlet that appeared in the top 50 most frequently mentioned words.

Figure 3



Note: A word cloud depicting the 50 most common words in the 65 sample articles. The larger the word, the higher the word frequency. Non-interesting words (I, the, it, a, to, etc.) were removed.

I hypothesize that far-right media in Canada specifically targets the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) because of its crown corporation status and government funding. According to its 2022 annual report, CBC received 1.24 billion dollars from the federal government, accounting for 65.5% of its total funding (Reuters, 2023). Since the CBC is primarily government-funded, far-right media argues that the CBC biases their reporting towards the Liberal Party (the current party in power). *Rebel News* and *True North* both push the narrative of a "CBC and Liberal alignment" (Rebel News, 2023), which they believe results in overly favourable coverage of the Liberal Party. The term "state broadcaster" is also regularly used as a synonym for CBC to negatively describe the media outlet.

Rebel News and *True North* both framed their mainstream media critiques in a variety of different ways. I hypothesized that Canadian far-right media would claim positions of authority like those seen in Figenschou and Ihlebæk's 2019 analysis and I identified two additional frames that Canadian far-right media use. These additional frames include "The Media Party Position" and the "Disinformation Position".

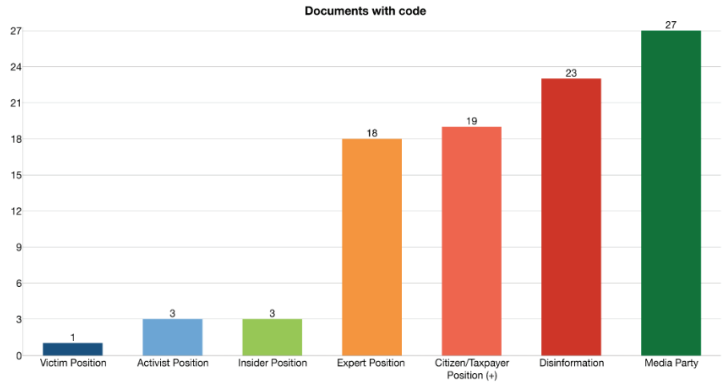
First, "The Media Party Position" is used to legitimize the claim that mainstream media (specifically the CBC) acts as a biased political party. This frame accuses the media of being "aligned" with the Liberals, which is believed to prevent the fair reporting of news. *Rebel News* and *True North* both use this position to present their discourse as authoritative, claiming that their independent journalism counteracts the narratives pushed by this "Media Party". Another characteristic of this position is the frequent inclusion of statements from Conservative MPs that criticize the "Liberal Media Party". *Rebel News* and *True North* often include comments from Pierre Poilievre like "Trudeau's media are desperate to stop his continued downfall" to reinforce their "Media Party" claim as true (Dzsurdzsa, 2023). Essentially, this position maintains that the mainstream media serves the explicit interests of the Liberal Party rather than the interests of Canadians as a whole.

Second, Canadian far-right media additionally uses what I identified as the "Disinformation Position", which accuses mainstream media of purposely spreading deceptive information. Far-right sites use this to claim journalistic authority over the mainstream media by pointing out their "biased" and "misleading" reports. This method has been especially prevalent with the far-right media coverage of the Israel-Palestine war, where they have accused legacy media of spreading "Hamas propaganda". An example of this rhetoric includes the *Rebel News* headline "The CBC calls everyone terrorists except actual terrorists and fact-checks everyone but themselves" (Rebel News, 2023b). Both *Rebel News* and *True North* consider "disinformation" to be any news narrative that does not align with their right-wing ideologies.

By examining the most popular critiques Canadian far-right media use against mainstream media, we can determine what strategies the far-right believe are most effective in undermining the trust of legacy news. In MAXQDA, I code each article for the seven identified positions of media authority (the five from

Figenschou and Ihlebæk, and the two identified by me) and I created a bar graph that represented the most used strategies. It should be noted that some articles contained more than one strategy and therefore had multiple codes assigned. Figure 4 depicts the positions that were most frequently found within the far-right's media critiques of mainstream media.

Figure 4



Note: Bar Graph depicting the positions of authority used by Canadian far-right media.

My research found that *Rebel News* and *True North* utilized the "Media Party" position most frequently in their reporting, followed by the Disinformation position, and the Citizen position. The "Media Party" position was found within 27 of the 65 articles analyzed, suggesting that the far-right believes it's a highly useful tactic. As previously mentioned, this position is used to legitimize the claim that mainstream media acts as a biased political party that favours the Liberals.

Although I hypothesized that Canadian far-right media would frame their critiques in similar ways to those seen in Figenschou and Ihlebæk's (2019) framework, only two of their identified positions (the Citizen position and the Expert position) were substantially found. The Citizen position, which was found in 19 of the 65 articles, positioned *Rebel News* and *True North* as if dedicated to represent the interests of the people. In this position, far-right media attempts to gain legitimacy from the people by claiming legacy media is out of touch with reality. In the Canadian context, *Rebel News* and *True North* used this position to criticize the legacy media's finances as being a waste of taxpayer dollars, making claims such as "69% of CBC's annual $1.2 billion budget is courtesy of the taxpayer," and "taxpayers subsidize Canadian media at $595 million — in addition to the $1.2 billion given to the CBC annually" (Gunn Reid, 2023; Rebel News, 2023c).

The Expert position found within the Canadian context saw far-right networks build factual legitimacy by reporting statistics and facts from other far-right networks. *Rebel News* and *True North* both frequently cited each other as sources to help establish credibility within their news reports. Also, articles from both sites used other far-right media such as *Blacklock*, *The Bureau*, and *The Counter Signal* to build this perceived factual legitimacy.

Conclusions

The growing presence of far-right media worldwide poses a significant challenge to the legitimacy of mainstream journalism. Far-right media continues to engage in media criticism to undermine the trust of mainstream media while asserting their journalistic authority. In Canada, the rise of far-right networks has followed similar trends since they regularly participate in legacy media criticism. I hypothesized that Canadian far-right media employs specific strategies of criticism that focus on presenting their discourse as authoritative over legacy media in Canada. Using content analysis, I found that Canadian far-right media asserts their authority by presenting the mainstream media through the following frames: The Media Party position (the claim that mainstream media is an extension of the Liberal Party); the Disinformation position (the claim that mainstream media purposefully spreads misinformation); the Citizen/Taxpayer position (the claim that mainstream media does not reflect the interests of taxpayers); and the Expert position (that uses information from other far-right media to appear to legitimize their claims). As the Canadian far-right media grows, it is crucial for mainstream media to understand the tactics used by the far-right media and develop strategies to prevent the spread of harmful far-right rhetoric and to maintain a sense of journalistic integrity in Canada.

Work Cited

ABC7. (2012). Conservative blogger Andrew Breitbart dies in LA https://abc7chicago.com/archive/8564849/

Andersen, K., Shehata, A., & Andersson, D. (2023). Alternative News Orientation and Trust in Mainstream Media: A Longitudinal Audience Perspective. *Digital Journalism, 11*(5), 833-852. https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2021.1986412

Brin, C. & Charlton, S. (2023, June 14). Canada. Reuters Digital News Report. https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/digital-news-report/2023/canada

Canadian Anti-Hate Network. (2022, January 27). *The 'Freedom Convoy'; Is Nothing but a Vehicle for the Far Right*. https://www.antihate.ca/the_freedom_convoy_is_nothing_but_a_vehicle_for_the_far_right.

CBC News. (2014, September 23). *Justin Trudeau boycotts Sun Media over Ezra Levant rant*. https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/justin-trudeau-boycotts-sun-media-over-ezra-levant-rant-1.2775747

Columbia. (n.d.). *Content Analysis*. Columbia Mailman School of Public Health. https://www.publichealth.columbia.edu/research/population-health-methods/content-analysis

Conway, M., Scrivens, R., & Macnair, L. (2019). Right-wing extremists' persistent online presence: history and contemporary trends. *ICCT Policy Brief*, 1-16. https://doi.org/10.19165/2019.3.12

Davis, M. (2019). A new, online culture war? The communication world of Breitbart.com. *Communication Research and Practice, 5*(3), 241-254. DOI: 10.1080/22041451.2018.1558790

Dzsurdzsa, C. (2023, August 14). *Poilievre doubles down after legacy media's WEF "conspiracy" smear*. True North. https://tnc.news/2023/08/14/poilievre-wef-legacy-media/

Elmer, G., & Burton, A. (2022). Rebel personalities: Canada's far-right media. *First Monday, 27*(9). https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v27i5.12546

Faris, R.M., Roberts, H., Etling, B., Bourassa, N., Zuckerman, E., & Benkler, Y. (2017). Partisanship, Propaganda, and Disinformation: Online Media and the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election. *Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society Research Paper*, 5-137. http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:33759251

Figenschou, T. U., & Ihlebæk, K. A. (2019). CHALLENGING JOURNALISTIC AUTHORITY Media criticism in far-right alternative media. *Journalism Studies, 20*(9), 1221–1237. https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2018.1500868

Gunn Reid, S. (2023, September 12). *Tax-funded CBC pays 144 execs while crying for a larger budget*. Rebel News https://www.rebelnews.com/tax_funded_cbc_pays_144_execs_while_crying_for_a_larger_budget

Gatehouse, J. (2013, January 12). *Ezra Levant: The right-wing gadfly who loves to offend*. Maclean's. https://macleans.ca/news/canada/going-on-the-offensive/

Hawley, G. (2018). *The Alt-Right: What Everyone Needs to Know.* Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1086/711049

Holt, K., & Haller, A. (2017). What Does 'Lügenpresse' Mean? : Expressions of Media Distrust on PEGIDA's Facebook Pages. (2017). *Tidsskriftet Politik, 20*(4), 42-57. https://tidsskrift.dk/politik/article/view/101534/150610

Levant, E. (2022). *Ezra Levant addresses Trucker Freedom Convoy*. Rebel News. https://www.rebelnews.com/ezra_levant_addresses_trucker_freedom_convoy

Levant, E. (2023). *Ezra Levant*. https://ezralevant.com/

Little, S. (2017, August 15). *Rebel Media cofounder Brian Lilley explains decision to quit.* Global News. https://globalnews.ca/news/3672577/rebel-media-cofounder-brian-lilley-explains-decision-to-quit/

Malcolm, C. (2023). *MALCOLM: Journalists partly to blame for Trudeau's Nazi tribute*. True North. https://tnc.news/2023/11/12/malcolm-journalists-trudeaus-nazi-tribute/

Marwick, A., & Lewis, R. (2017). *Media Manipulation and Disinformation Online*. Data & Society Research Institute. https://datasociety.net/library/media-manipulation-and-disinfo-online/

Nicholson, K. (2022, February 15). *From snakes to Spartans: The meaning behind some of the flags convoy protesters are carrying.* CBC News https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/convoy-protest-flags-extremism-1.6351336

Newman, N., Fletcher, R., Eddy, K., Robertson, C.T., & Nielsen, R. K. (2023). *Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2023*. Oxford.

Mudde, C. (2002). *The ideology of the extreme right*. Manchester University Press.

Patrick, Q. (2023, September 14). *144 CBC corporate directors are getting six-figure salaries*. True North. https://tnc.news/2023/09/14/cbc-corporate-directors-six-figure-salaries/

Poilievre, P [@PierrePoilievre]. (2023, August 13). *Trudeau's media are desperate to stop his continued downfall* [Tweet]. Twitter. https://twitter.com/PierrePoilievre/status/1690853050280239104?lang=en

PressProgress. (2019). *Right-Wing Media Outlet Accredited For Leaders' Debate is Also Registered as a Charity for Immigrants*. https://pressprogress.ca/right-wing-media-outlet-accredited-for-leaders-debate-is-also-registered-as-a-charity-for-immigrants/

Rangel, C. & Gandsman, A. (2022, February 16). *Opinion: Marginalizing dissenting voices is bad for our democracy.* The Hub. https://thehub.ca/2022-02-16/marginalizing-dissenting-voices-is-bad-for-our-democracy/

Roberts, J., & Wahl-Jorgensen, K. (2022). Reporting the news: How Breitbart derives legitimacy from recontextualised news. *Discourse & Society, 33*(6), 833-846. https://doi.org/10.1177/09579265221095422

Roy, M., & Gandsman, A. (2023). Polarizing figures of resistance during epidemics. A comparative frame analysis of the COVID-19 freedom convoy. *Critical Public Health*, 1-15. https://doi.org/10.1080/09581596.2023.2284633

Rebel News. (n.d.). *About Rebel News*. Rebel News. https://www.rebelnews.com/about

Rebel News. (2022, February 1). *'Media has been complicit' in mischaracterizing Freedom Convoy | Adam Soos on The First TV.* https://www.rebelnews.com/media_has_been_complicit_in_mischaracterizing_freedom_convoy_adam_soos

Rebel News. (2023a, August 14). *Let me show you how Trudeau's office plants an identical story in the entire regime media.* https://www.rebelnews.com/ezra_levant_show_august_14_2023

Rebel News. (2023b, October 14). *The CBC calls everyone terrorists except actual terrorists and fact-checks everyone but themselves.* Rebel News. https://www.rebelnews.com/the_cbc_calls_everyone_terrorists_except_actual_terrorists_and_fact_checks_everyone_but_themselves

Rebel News. (2023c, September 14, 2023). *Federal government extends 'temporary' $595 million media slush fund.* https://www.rebelnews.com/federal_government_extends_temporary_595_million_media_slush_fund

Reuters. (2023, April 18). *Canada's CBC says Twitter 'not serious' after '69% government-funded media' label.* https://www.reuters.com/business/media-telecom/canadas-cbc-says-twitter-not-serious-after-69-government-funded-media-label-2023-04-18/

Saylor Academy. (2012). Principles of Sociological Inquiry: Qualitative and Quantitative Methods. Saylor Academy.

Stephenson, L. B., Harell, A., Rubenson, D., & Loewen, P.J. (2019). *2019 Canadian Election Study* [Data set]. Canadian Election Study. http://www.ces-eec.ca/

True North (n.d.). *About True North.* https://tnc.news/about-true-north/

Trump, D [@realDonaldTrump]. (2018, October 29). *There is great anger in our Country caused in part by inaccurate, and even fraudulent, reporting of the news.* [Tweet]. Twitter. https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1056879122348195841

Tsfati, Y. (2003). Media Skepticism and Climate of Opinion Perception. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research, 15*(1), 65–82. https://doi.org/10.1093/ijpor/15.1.65

Vears, D.F., & Gillam, L. (2022). Inductive content analysis: A guide for beginning qualitative researchers. *FOCUS ON HEALTH PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION, 23*(1), 111-127.

Warnica, R. (2017, August 18). *Rebel without applause: How Ezra Levant built an extreme media juggernaut — and watched it all begin to unravel.* National Post. https://nationalpost.com/features/inside-ezra-levants-rebel-media



Photographer: Jienan Chen

Justice is Blind and So is Her Architect: Canadian Courthouse Designs and their Socio-Spatial Implications

Celeste Kwok

ABSTRACT: The imposing design of modern Canadian courthouses reflects the adversarial nature of the Canadian criminal justice system. This paper critically examines how excessive surveillance and security tactics, physical segregation in courtrooms, and restrictions on religious clothing inadvertently harm court users. Drawing on a blend of social sciences and architectural design theory, the analysis recommends greater efforts on behalf of the courts to ensure safe and meaningful victim participation, allow room for agencies assisting accused individuals or victims, and support opportunities for restorative justice. Courts are living, breathing social spaces which influence the administration of justice. As such, this paper argues that courthouses should be adaptable and evolve to address the needs of a transforming legal landscape. In particular, the Canadian legal system is veering away from concerns such as security, stigma, and punishment. Instead, the criminal justice system must be well-equipped to prioritize safety, cultural competence, and the goals of rehabilitation and restoration. Alterations to courthouse design should also be alive to the growing demand for legal processes that are less adversarial in nature. Overall, the judicial process is a distressing experience for all of the parties involved. Shifting to a more progressive and inclusive courthouse design is a key step in embodying the justice system that Canada needs.

KEYWORDS: Architectural Theory, Criminal Law, Institutions, Inclusivity, Restorative Justice

Introduction

The longstanding principles and discursive traditions surrounding Canadian legal affairs have entrenched within society the notion that justice is blind, value-neutral, universal, and always in a state of disinterest (Mulcahy, 2011). This is not the case; rather, it is an ideal that starkly contradicts the reality of legal operations. The application of justice is a highly emotional process, especially for victims of crime who may be re-traumatized in court and their families (Dahlberg, 2009). In addition, the time, money, and emotional resilience needed to sit through an uncertain trial can lead to heightened mental states (Dahlberg, 2009). Other factors can affect the way justice is applied, such as age, gender, socio-economic status, race, profession, as well as the identities and experiences of all involved, which point to the partiality and bias of the law.

While scholars frequently focus on the operations, functions, and ideologies of public institutions, there is a burgeoning field of critical analysis focusing on the architecture and design of these institutions and their socio-spatial implications (Zhang, 2019). Social constructions do not only exist within the conversations and proceedings of the judicial process but also within the physical spaces that contain them (Mulcahy, 2007). The intimidating building design, courtroom layouts, décor, and surveillance mechanisms all speak to the harrowing nature of the criminal courts (Mulcahy, 2011). This paper aims to explore the social-spatial constructions elicited from the architecture and design of modern criminal law courts, and how these constructions can have sociological effects on court users, namely offenders, jurists, members of the public, victims, and specialized service providers. Courts as social, living spaces will also be examined with a focus on the inclusion of ethnic and religious minorities. Lastly, some suggestions to improve Canadian courthouses and issues for further research will be given. Overall, justice and the law are not applied as uniformly and blindly as is assumed, and neither are the design choices of Canadian courthouses.

The Public in the Legal Realm

As noted by Charlotte Santry in her article, "Keeping Appearances" from *Canadian Lawyer*, the architectural examination of the courthouse can provide valuable sociological findings:

> Far from being mere bricks and mortar, courthouses are the physical embodiment of the justice system. Their design, appearance, and state of repair can affect the length of trials; help or hinder access to justice; protect or expose vulnerable parties, and inspire a sense of respect or disdain for the judicial process (2013, para. 1).

Courthouse design and décor can communicate messages to users about the guiding philosophies and expectations that the public and professionals hold regarding the law. For example, "the monolithic and grand exterior of courthouses…narrate[s] the awe-inspiring strength and seriousness of the process and garner its respect from the public" (Toews, 2018). Monumental columns, ornate fixtures, concrete or marble finishings, and regal symbols are common in Canadian courts (Toews, 2018). Increased surveillance via security or metal detection, and limited transparency via windows are also common choices (Santry, 2013). Below is an image of the Provincial Law Court of Alberta which reflects the latter characteristics:



Figure 1. Image of the Provincial Law Court of Alberta. Its blocky exterior and limited visibility make it appear fortress-like. Image taken on November 28, 2019.

These designs communicate a two-way message that the courts are authoritative and important, leaving their users feeling insignificant and emotionally neglected beneath the law's unwavering sovereignty (Toews, 2018). This structural narrative can further remove court operations from the population it is dedicated to serving: the public. Parallel to the formal proceedings which use legal vocabulary and dress, the appearance of the courthouse can exclude those unacquainted with judicial formalities.

Maass et al. completed a study in 2000 investigating the effects of courthouse architecture on the cognitive processes of potential users. Participants were shown photos of an older, medieval-style courthouse and a modernized courthouse both from Northern Italy. The older courthouse is described as having a "residential look, warm colours, large windows, [and] a large wooden door" (Maass et al., 2000), while the newer courthouse is "a massive, gray, semi-circular building, with narrow windows and an entrance enclosed between two huge walls" (Maass et al., 2000). It is conclusive that transparency, a sense of community, and warmth are the main design themes of the older building. Surveillance, stateliness, and intimidation reminiscent of Bentham's Panopticon are prioritized in the modern courthouse, similar to modern Canadian courthouses which lack the warmth and collective trust present in community courts. The 120 participants were asked to imagine they were accompanying an accused friend to court and to report their estimates of the likelihood of their friend's conviction if the trial was set at either courthouse. Remarkably, participants felt greater discomfort when presented with the modern courthouse and estimated a greater likelihood of conviction if the trial took place there (Maass et al., 2000). If members of the public are convinced that conviction rates will be higher in these modern courthouses, this could have serious consequences on everyday users of the court system. What if these unconscious sociological effects bleed into the proceedings and actual conviction rates? Modern courthouse aesthetics are not necessarily the most effective form of judicial administration and perhaps not how Canadian courthouses should be physically modeled, as they reflect an expectation that the law is retributive and lacks any community efficacy. In this context, community efficacy refers to the potential for courthouses to incite positive and collective engagement among court users to meaningful assist in crime control (Hipp & Wo, 2015).

While surveillance in the courthouse is meant to provide users with peace of mind about their safety, rigid security systems can often backfire and amplify existing anxieties. Throughout history, Canadian courthouse designs have remained cold and sterile, with metal detector screening, bulletproof glass, and security guard numbers on the rise (Santry, 2013). Criminal defence lawyer Brennan Smart claims, "To jury members, it gives the impression that society is very dangerous. They're convinced it's a jungle out there. It taints the jury before they've even started their job" (Santry, 2013, para. 40). These false perceptions can increase the longevity of the tough-on-crime neoliberal movement and reduce the perceived legitimacy of restorative justice practices which "facilitate justice experiences and achieve goals that are healing, transformative, and meaningful" (Toews, 2018) for survivors and criminalized individuals. Moreover, Smart's observation suggests that juries could be pre-disposed to convicting or giving harsher sentences given the socio-spatial effects of their surrounding environment. Overall, these obsessive safety mechanisms allow for the assumption that immediate threats exist in the courthouse and "create a discourse of stigma that call for exaggerated power relations" (Corrigan, Robertson, & Anderson, 2018).

In fairness, security mechanisms must be in place to prevent injury and to keep order, as violent exchanges do occur in court (Santry, 2013), although not to the degree that is expected based on how rigorous the systems are in Canada. Rather, this point questions the effects that overstated security can have on courthouse users, such as the increased stigmatization and alienation of offenders, a weakened sense of user safety, and a heightened sense of urgency in handing down harsh, tough-on-crime judgements to protect the public.

Linda Mulcahy argues in her examination of the politics of courtroom design that the public community has been marginalized by the struggle for territory within Canadian courtrooms (2007). This has emboldened the adversarial approach wherein input from community members and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is assumed to have no value in the criminal justice system when in reality, they have a lot to offer. Courts in Canada are open to the public, but Mulcahy suggests that the public is restricted from contributing to justice in a meaningful way. Their legitimacy is called into question in the legal arena, as all "legitimate" legal actors take the forefront of the room. This includes judges, lawyers, the accused, and even the jury, who are elected for legal duty. The community's role as a spectator is thus reinforced by their placement behind barricades. While court decisions can lead to restorative justice, perhaps restorative justice measures and community inclusion can be granted even earlier in the criminal justice process. Prioritized space allocation and involvement for NGOs and

the community as stakeholders in courtrooms could facilitate more effective criminal justice outcomes and reduce incarceration as the most probable outcome for Canadian offenders.

The courthouse itself also lacks the necessary space for external organizations and agencies, such as mental health workers, Legal Aid, John Howard Society of Canada, Elizabeth Fry Society, and Indigenous courtworkers (Santry, 2013). Courthouse architects historically would not have known about the new rocketing demand for such services, but Canadian courthouses should be evolving along with the transforming legal landscape.

It is important to understand that courtrooms are restrictive, and they employ a discourse only navigable by those in the legal profession where the public has no value (Corrigan, Robertson, & Anderson, 2018). Restorative justice models have demonstrated that NGOs and the community have a key role in repairing the harms of crime and offering more effective outcomes for victims, offenders, and public safety (Wilson et al, 2002). Implementing this model into the criminal justice system through space allocation and a rejection of the traditional legal discourse and conservative neoliberal ideologies may be worthwhile. Also, space and respect for service agencies in courthouses is essential for serving the public and ensuring the excellence and integrity of the Canadian criminal justice system.

The Experiences of the Accused in Court

Courthouses and courtrooms may in part be designed to deter offenders from acting out and to encourage them to reflect on the gravity of their act and punishment, but in practice it is detrimental to offenders' growth and overcoming of their deviant role in society (Rossner et al, 2017).

The criminal courtroom is laid out such that the "judge [is] seated on a raised dais, the defence and prosecution facing the judge, and the community, including the victim, seated behind a barrier—[which] speak to the expertise of the judge and the competition that occurs between the defence and prosecution" (Toews, 2018). This adversarial philosophy communicated through court layout emphasizes the pitting of the offender against the state and their eventual punishment. The highly visible positioning of the offender near the center of the courtroom, blocked by barricades, amplifies their perceived stance in society; they are deviant and need to be segregated from the public—even though the Canadian legal system supports innocence until proven guilty (Rossner et al, 2017). Furthermore, the need for a security guard within a few footsteps of the accused, and the standard act of shackling the offender in the courtroom can heighten fearful emotions from the public, media, and victims (Santry, 2013). It reflects a stigmatized identity as a dangerous offender to the accused themselves, labelling them within the judicial space among other environments.

For example, a recent study by social psychologists suggests that partitions and bars in courtrooms create "an 'opposition' or other which can serve to signal segregation, place or inequality", and that raised floors "become the physical manifestation of hierarchy of power" (Mulcahy, 2007). The augmentation of height and barriers between judges, who are highly educated and distinct in their power and authority, and the criminalized persons, who may have experienced grievous and criminogenic life circumstances, can exaggerate the alienation of the accused and reinforce feelings of helplessness in overcoming their criminal pathways. This power dynamic is even more disturbing for the female accused as a male judge looms over her, resurfacing the power struggles that many criminalized women have experienced before (Balfour & Comack, 2014). The study also mentioned the significance of spatial relations in *Venables v United Kingdom* in 1999, where a juvenile defendant's case resulted in a breach of the European Convention on Human Rights. The dock under which Venables was standing was raised in the hopes that he could better see what was transpiring, but the act instead heightened his discomfort and exposure to the media, whose presence was hostile. He cried throughout the trial and drew shapes on the floor with his shoes (Mulcahy, 2007). According to the author, this case illustrates the paralyzing effect that excessive courtroom exploitation can have on young, vulnerable accused.

Tim Hennis, the defendant of a murder case in North Carolina, appealed his case due to the admission of evidence in the courtroom. Graphic photographs of the crime scene and autopsy examination were projected right above the defendant's head ("*State v. Hennis*," n.d.). Hennis asserted that "the state's use of slides and photographs of the victims' bodies

addressed and impressed the emotions of the jury more forcefully than its logic and that, because the probative value of evidence was far outweighed by its prejudicial impact, he was deprived of a fair trial" ("*State v. Hennis*," n.d. para. 8). A new trial was ordered due to unfair admissibility of evidence. Clearly, the physical and spatial display of evidence is also an important factor in courtroom usage and should be considered in explorations of courtroom functionality.

The emphasis on the accused's deviance in courtrooms is the beginning of a long-winded identity struggle that offenders face in prison and the community upon release, and this issue is even more urgent for juvenile offenders who begin the labelling process in their youth.

Victim Navigation through the Criminal Justice System

The survivors of crime are left as idle spectators despite having a significant stake in the outcome of trials. Even with the new prioritization of victim needs through victim advocacy and service, the Victim Bill of Rights, increasing use of victim impact statements, and a growing body of support for restorative justice, "many victims [still] experience the justice process as re-victimizing because… they are relegated to the sidelines of their own experiences, receive little validation and vindication, and achieve little, if any, reparation of the direct losses they experienced because of the crime" (Toews 2018). Victims and their families are thus neglected throughout the process, unable to make meaningful contributions in contrast to the legal professionals monopolizing the judicial space. As such, trials in Canadian courtrooms can be damaging for victimized parties who are silenced by a history of judicial traditions and restrictive design choices. The way judicial outcomes are reached without consulting victims ultimately minimizes the extent to which victims' needs are addressed by a system meant to serve them and the public.

As stated earlier, courthouses lack available space for local services and agencies, including those that can assist victims, such as Victim Services (Santry, 2013). This can be a huge detriment to victimized parties who are usually unfamiliar with the court process and how to navigate the legal system. Furthermore, victims may not be aware of Victim Services at all, as there is little to no promotion of it at least in the Provincial Law Court of Alberta, other than word of mouth or documentation that must be requested. Victim Services are provided by a combination of government, police, and non-profit organizations, and their services include crisis or emergency intervention and response, as well as critical incident stress debriefings (Allen, 2014). 90% of providers in Canada also supported victims by helping them partake in their trial via "court accompaniment, assistance with victim impact statements and victim or witness preparation" (Allen, 2014, para. 8). Finally, many victim services provide information to victims about "hearings, offender relocation, and offender release", among other important services such as medical support, transportation, counseling, shelter, monetary compensation, and restorative justice programming (Allen, 2014, para. 8). These services are integral to the wellbeing of victims and not only their ability to navigate the justice system but also their ability to overcome their victimization and feel a renewed sense of empowerment. The physical exclusion of such services from Canadian courthouses only serves to limit client accessibility and put victims at risk for re-traumatization in court and everyday life following the distressing incident(s) they experienced.

Meaningful support is generally absent within the courtrooms themselves. An austere decorum exists within courtrooms where visible distress such as venting anger, or crying, is not allowed to accompany the proceedings. A crime survivor from Toews' analysis referred to court as "a dead place, suggesting that it didn't offer the life and hope desired by survivors" (2018), such as opportunities to express pained or joyful emotions, safely speak about their experiences, or feel respect for their humanity. Rather, the cold and unemotional "civility" of Canadian courthouses further strips victims of their dignity. Furthermore, attending trial is often a new and unfamiliar situation for most visitors, so naturally being in a state of high alert is common. Victims in the study noted key characteristics such as "hard materiality (stone, cement, marble, brick), bland colours, institutional furniture, and even fake plants)" (Toews, 2018) that magnified the unworthiness of their unique emotions and experiences in the courthouses.

In the heat of the moment, vulnerable parties may want to rush out of the courtroom to find respite. Victim-specific waiting rooms which designate private

space for victims and witnesses can provide emotional relief and reduce stress. Unfortunately, the existence of these rooms is very limited across Canada, and a single room within a whole courthouse is not enough to provide consistent comfort (Toews, 2018).

Victims of violence needing a safe retreat from their perpetrator is also a narrow possibility; in the crowded lobby of a courthouse in Sherwood Park, victims are forced to face their perpetrators within close quarters. Local lawyer Peter Court says that "sexual assault victims are sometimes taken by police to a nearby McDonald's as there is nowhere inside the building they can wait safely for trials to start" (Santry, 2013). The widespread issue of privacy and safety is most detrimental to victims of violence and assault, but it extends to contenders in family and youth court, traffic court, civil court, and other justice departments as well.

Victims are one of the greatest stakeholders and most vulnerable parties in criminal trials, yet their contributions and feelings of safety are severely neglected within the Canadian courthouse. Reconstructing the space to better provide areas of respite for victims would reduce the risk of re-victimization in court and other poor psychological effects. Empowering victims with the ability to contribute meaningfully to the justice process, specifically in a restorative manner, as well as providing the necessary services in the courthouse to address victim needs are key solutions.

The Niqab: A Double-Edged Obstruction of Justice

The ideological and performative space of the courtroom needn't be neglected in the discussion of Canadian courts. The way actors are presented in court must be examined to better understand the polarizing nature of the courtroom and how this may hinder the fair administration of justice. I draw on the example of *R v NS* to illustrate the expressive inequalities faced by many ethnic and religious ethnicities in the Canadian criminal justice system.

N.S. is a Muslim woman who attended trial in Ontario in 2008 with the goal of testifying in an inquiry involving childhood sexual assault charges against her uncle and cousin. She wished to testify wearing her niqab, a religious garment that conceals the face except for the eyes. Per the Canadian criminal justice system, the accused has the right to face their accuser, and N.S.' case caused the court to question the strength of her affiliation to the Muslim faith and whether she should be allowed to testify wearing a niqab. Eventually, the case was appealed and made it to the Supreme Court of Canada, where the justices were extremely divided in how to approach the issue (Bhabha, 2014).

According to an article by Stephanie Voudouris (2013), the main hesitancy from the justices revolved around how covered N.S.' face was when she wore her niqab. It was difficult for the accused to see her face, and justices worried that not being able to see a witness's face or expressions would impact the effectiveness of cross-examinations and resulting decisions.

During the debate, Justice Abella argued that seeing less of a witness's face does not significantly impair a judge's ability to assess the credibility of a witness and that a complainant should not be forced to "choose between her religious rights and her ability to bear witness against an alleged aggressor" (Voudouris, 2013, para. 10). Furthermore, the niqab is an integral part of N.S.' religious identity as it is for many Muslim women. Forcing her to remove it upon testifying would run the risk of making her feel uncomfortable in court, as though her privacy is being invaded. Her discomfort and altered demeanour, as a result, could be wrongfully misinterpreted as dishonesty, even though some of the justices argued that viewing her demeanor was crucial to a fair trial.

Voudouris (2013) adds that a decision like this would force N.S. to remove a piece of clothing before her accusers, who were implicated in sexual assault. Not only does this instigate similar feelings of exposure and humiliation present in sexual assault victimization, but it would also reinforce the traumatizing shifts in power that occur between the assaulted and the assaulter.

Finally, the dangers of a decision which would potentially require Muslim women to remove their niqabs in court could prevent them from reporting crime and testifying against the accused—this would be a grievous miscarriage of justice to religious minorities who share the same or similar religious garb.

Throughout the appeals process, N.S. asserted her freedom of religion in the courtroom, although the

final decision was less than favourable. Provincial judges must consider a lengthy, interpretive criterion to determine whether witnesses should be allowed to wear niqabs in courtroom. Essentially, a person does not have the absolute right to wear a niqab when testifying in court in Canada, even though witnesses wearing other religious garb such as crosses or kippahs are given much greater lenience. While the decision does not represent a complete ban on niqabs in the courtroom, it still acts as an obstruction of justice for Muslim women as opposed to a security risk. Overall, the circumstances of N.S. provoke questions about our justice system and whether it supports or demeans the rights of ethnic and religious minorities in Canada. If legal spaces are consistently marginalizing minorities, how can system officials, society, and discourse conclude that the system is blind and fair?

Conclusion

Between 2016 and 2017, 357,642 cases were completed in adult criminal courts throughout Canada (Miladinovic, 2019). As such, an even greater number of people experienced these vital institutions in the year, including public viewers, professionals, defendants, and victims. Client experience in the court setting, as well as scholarship that critically examines courts is extremely important; as Toews (2018) outlines, Court buildings can be understood as living systems or cultural environments in which decisions are made about people's lives, property, and civil rights. A court is not just a set of rooms, corridors, and entrances, it is a social and emotional world. This living world is negatively impacted by intimidating exteriors, a deficiency in warmth, excessive security systems, lack of space for client services or respite, the politicization of religious garments in court, and many other spatial issues. These problems impact all parties involved in the criminal justice processes and drastically weaken the effectiveness and legitimacy of Canadian courts in the fair administration of justice. Budget and staffing cuts made by the United Conservative Party are expected to further burden an already overworked justice system, meaning that the enhancement of court spaces in Alberta will not be a priority in the coming months (Wakefield, 2019).

Fortunately, not all hope is lost. Canadian courts are slowly but surely transforming to meet their needs. In the past 30 years, the Provincial Law Court of Alberta has been implementing specialized courts that consider the specific circumstances present in certain cases; these include mental health court, Indigenous court, drug court, and domestic court. These courts can address the issues of re-traumatization and stigma that could occur in regular criminal court, and they also provide a safer space for proceedings ("Special Courts", n.d.). While this is a step in the right direction, the hours are limited. Mental health court only runs on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and with a growing demand, regular criminal courts will be used for overflow or some defendants will be prone to prolonged trial dates. Deficiencies could be addressed by allocating more space to community organizations and service agencies that specialize in high-demand areas of concern.

The Calgary Courts Centre opened in 2007. It is 24-storey, with 73 courtrooms, space for 360 external staff, and includes large libraries and a glass atrium. Its welcoming appearance and availability for service providers "represents all the principles of law and justice both in a very fresh new way, reflecting the energy and prosperity of the province" (Santry, 2013, para. 10). While there is a stark contrast between the Calgary Centre and the Provincial Law Court of Alberta, the latter is currently undergoing renovations that may lead to positive outcomes as seen below:

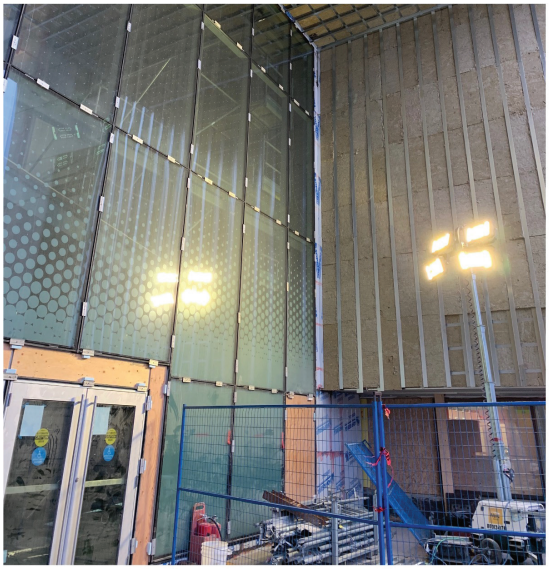


Figure 2. Image of the public entrance of the Provincial Law Court of Alberta. Image taken on November 28, 2019.

The glass panels are a new addition that could signal a progressive change in Canadian architectural design; the courts will no longer appear intimidating or enigmatic to its visitors, but perhaps more transparent, both structurally and symbolically.

With these positive changes, hopefully, greater recognition of how court space is utilized is on the horizon. There is no easy, practical solution that can address heightened security precautions, but perhaps designating security guards and sheriffs more proportionately throughout the courthouse can reduce anxieties rather than having a large number concentrated at the entrance. Also, inclusivity in court spaces should apply to religious and ethnic minorities who may already suffer from limited access to justice for other reasons such as economic disadvantages and the inability to afford legal counsel, transportation, time to take off work, or language barriers that make it difficult to understand the proceedings. Lastly, the empowering principles of the restorative justice model should be considered in the physical design of future courthouses in Canada, as this would contribute to greater outcomes for all parties in the criminal justice system. This would include the elimination or reduction of physical barriers and docks in courtrooms. A more communal layout would encourage participation, such as having all court attendees seated in a circular formation similar to restorative justice circles.

Regarding issues for future research, there was limited data concerning how the accused perceive courthouses and courtrooms in Canada. This data would help expand on the experiences of the accused in court and offer a more diverse perspective. Also, there was scarce data on how certain populations including rural users are affected by typical courthouse locations in Canada. Analyses of these physical structures would certainly benefit from a critical examination of court placement.

In conclusion, justice is not blind, and the architectural space that houses the proceedings of justice has not been designed blindly, either. To have an effective criminal justice system, it is imperative to question the implications of both the function *and* form of our public institutions and determine how these elements synergize to perpetuate centuries-old, misleading discourses about Canadian legal affairs.

Work Cited

Allen, M. (2014). Victim Services in Canada, 2011/2012. *Statistics Canada*. Retrieved from https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2014001/article/11899-eng.htm.

Balfour, G., & Comack, E. (2014). *Criminalizing Women: Gender and (In)Justice in Neoliberal Times*. Fernwood Publishing.

Bhabha, F. (2014). R v. NS: What's Fair in a Trial? The Supreme Court of Canada's Divided Decision on the Niqab in the Courtroom. *Alberta Law Review, 50*(4), 871-882. https://doi.org/10.29173/alr79.

Corrigan, L., Robertson, H., & Anderson, B. (2018). Performative Interior Design in the Criminal Courtroom. *Journal of Interior Design, 43*(3), 43-59. https://doi.org/10.1111/joid.12125.

Dahlberg, L. (2009). Emotional Tropes in the Courtroom: On Representation of Affect and Emotion in Legal Court Proceedings. *Law and Humanities, 3*(2), 175-205. https://doi.org/10.1080/17521483.2009.11423767.

Hipp, J., & Wo, J. (2015). Collective Efficacy and Crime. *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, 4*(2), 169-173. https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-0-08-097086-8.45045-2.

Maass, A., Merici, I., Villafranca, E., Furlani, R., Gaburro, E., Getrevi, A., & Masserini, M. (2000). Intimidating Buildings: Can Courthouse Architecture Affect Perceived Likelihood of Conviction? *Environment and Behaviour, 32*(5), 674-683. https://doi.org/10.1177/00139160021972739.

Miladinovic, Z. (2019). Adult Criminal and Youth Court Statistics in Canada, 2016/2017. *Statistics Canada*. Retrieved from https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002- x/2019001/article/00002-eng.htm.

Mulcahy, L. (2007). Architects of Justice: the Politics of Courtroom Design. *Social & Legal Studies, 16*(3), 383-403. https://doi.org/10.1177/0964663907079765.

Mulcahy, L. (2011). *Legal Architecture: Justice, due process, and the place of law*. Routledge.

Rossner, M., Tait, D., McKimmie, B., & Sarre, R. (2017). The Dock on Trial: Courtroom Design and the Presumption of Innocence. *Journal of Law and Society*, 44(3), 317-344. https://doi.org/10.1111/jols.12033.

Santry, C. (2013). Keeping Up Appearances. *Canadian Lawyer*. Retrieved from https://www.canadianlawyermag.com/news/general/keeping-up-appearances/269208.

Special Courts. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://albertacourts.ca/pc/about-the-court/innovation/special-courts-(domestic-violence-drug-court-indigenous).

State v. Hennis. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://law.justia.com/cases/north-carolina/supreme-court/1988/499a86-0.html.

Toews, B. (2018). 'It's a Dead Place': A Qualitative Exploration of Violence Survivors' Perceptions of Justice Architecture. *Contemporary Justice Review, 21*(2), 208-222. https://doi.org/10.1080/10282580.20181455511.

Voudouris, S. (2013). Peeling Back the Court's Decision in R v NS. Retrieved from http://www.thecourt.ca/peeling-back-the-courts-decision-in-r-v-ns/.

Wakefield, J. (2019, November 21). 'Something has to give': Alberta Justice System Braces for Budget Cuts. *Edmonton Journal*. Retrieved from https://edmontonjournal.com/news/local-news/something-has-to-give-alberta-justice- system-braces-for-budget-cuts.

Wilson, R., Huculak, B., & McWhinnie, A. (2002). Restorative justice innovations in Canada. *Behavioural Sciences & the Law, 20*(4), 363-380. https://doi.org/10.1002/bsl.498.

Zhang, C. (2019). Spatial Cognition in the Courtroom: A Quasi-Experimental Study of the Influence Canadian Courtroom Design Has on Jury Cognition. *The Young Researcher, 3*(1), 33-49. Retrieved from http://www.theyoungresearcher.com/papers/zhang.pdf



Photographer: Henry Deng

Compliance and the Second Sex: Analyzing Women's Participation in the Far Right through de Beauvoir

Alex Ballos

ABSTRACT: As women's participation becomes increasingly visible within far-right movements, the question of agency is often brought up; are women in the far-right agents? Although this question has been explored before, only a limited sect of this literature has analyzed this phenomenon through a feminist theoretical lens. This is notable considering much of women's participation stems from an initial rejection of feminist values, often citing feminism as being the root cause of their lack of quality of life.

Throughout this paper, I will argue that women's agency in far-right movements can be better explained through the application of Simone de Beauvoir's theoretical framework. I will situate this argument within a literature review that analyzes the previous understandings of women's agency within the far-right. Following this, I will additionally present literature on hegemonic masculinity and its relationship to far-right women's complicity. Furthermore, the strength of using de Beauvoir's theoretical framework to analyze women of the far right will be asserted through an analysis of the case study of Ayla Stewart, an infamous far-right online influence. This paper ultimately aims to answer the following: *How can de Beauvoir's theoretical framework help better understand the agency of women within far-right political and social movements?*

Introduction

As women's participation becomes increasingly visible within far-right movements, the question of agency is often brought up: are women agents in the far-right? Although this question has been explored before, only a limited sect of the literature has analyzed this phenomenon through a feminist theoretical lens. This is notable, considering much of women's participation stems from an initial rejection of feminist values; often citing feminism as being the root cause for their quality of life, or lack thereof. Nancy Love argues in her academic paper "ShieldMaidens, Fashy Femmes and TradWives: Feminism, Patriarchy and Right-Wing Populism" that far-right women claim feminism has functioned as a tool to rob them of "the opportunity of having a male provider, a happy family and a nice home" (Love 2020, 2). Women who uphold this perspective consequently believe that feminism has failed to provide women with the security, rights, and privileges that traditionalism once promised. Analyzing this phenomenon through a feminist lens provides a stronger foundation of understanding, particularly as the rejection of feminism becomes a tool for the recruitment and mobilization of far-right female actors.

Simone de Beauvoir's The Second Sex presents a plausible explanation for women's involvement in movements that undermine their rights and freedoms. Throughout this paper, I will argue that women's agency in far-right movements can be better explained through the application of de Beauvoir's theoretical framework. I will situate this argument within a literature review that analyzes the previous understandings of women's agency within the far-right. Following this, I will present literature on hegemonic masculinity and its relationship to far-right women's complicity. Furthermore, the strength of using de Beauvoir's theoretical framework to analyze women of the far right will be asserted through an analysis of the case study of Ayla Stewart, an infamous far-right online influence. This paper ultimately aims to answer the following: *How can de Beauvoir's theoretical framework help better understand*

the agency of women within far-right political and social movements?

An Illusion of Female Agency?

Considering this paper will be using de Beauvoir's theoretical framework, agency must be defined first. Agency in this work will be defined through an existentialist lens found within *The Second Sex*, which suggests that agency is to have the ability to seek transcendence, or rather to posit the *Self* as sovereign (de Beauvoir 1949, 74). Further, the term 'far-right' will be simply defined as a right-wing political and social movement that exists outside of mainstream conservatism and is often more radical than mainstream conservatism.

Scholars have recently begun to address the concept of women's agency through their involvement within far-right movements, as well as the increase in their positions as leaders and organic intellectuals (Kisyova 2022; Tebaldi & Baran 202). Early research on the fringe of the right-wing spectrum often failed to address gender at all due to the ideology's association with masculinity and whiteness (Kisyova 2022, 38). It was not until the 1980s that women and gender became a prevalent aspect of extreme right-wing studies (Blee 2020, 418). This was primarily the result of gendered assumptions and stereotypes including, but not limited to, the assumption of women as "incidental political actors", or non-violent, heteronormative mothers and wives (Blee 2020, 418). Early scholars who focused on the gendered aspects of the far right suggested that women's role in the far right is limited to that of being supporters of their male counterparts within far-right movements (Kisyova et al. 2022, 39). Ultimately, this encourages a conclusion that their participation was a result of close relationships and compliance, rather than their own ideological beliefs and convictions.

It is important within this research to explore more recent literature on this topic. Moreover, Catherina Tebaldi and Dominika Baran in "Of TradWives and TradCaths: The Antigenderism Register in Global Nationalist Movements" suggest that the use of traditional gender roles within the far-right allows for a perverse type of agency to be fulfilled by these female actors. Rather, white women who take up this stereotype of being the traditional wife gain agency through upholding their nation's "purity" through their own sexual and social restraint (Tebaldi & Baran 2023, 8). Similarly, Maria-Elena Kisyova suggests that liberation and agency, in the perspective of far-right women are gained through their commitment to "femininity, traditionalism and reverence for gender complementarity" (Kisyova 2022, 37) Hence, these academic sources suggest that women's participation in the far-right is an active choice. Kisyova's paper furthers this argument that "women not only have agency but also are actively working as ideologues; creating content and mainstreaming ideology in efforts to recruit followers." (Kisyova 2022, 60). Similarly, Kristy Campion in "Women in the Extreme and Radical Right: Forms of Participation and Their Implications" examines the various forms of participation women may take, which she concludes include being violent actors, thinkers, facilitators, promoters, activists, and gendered exemplars (Campion 2020, 2). Recognizing the diverse and multiple ways in which women organize themselves within far-right movements implies that women are not passive actors. Moreover, Campion argues that "the ideology itself is adaptive and can be shaped and reshaped by female participants", thus allowing for these women to lead and mobilize these ideological movements (Campion 2020, 14).

Although this literature review presents two opposing positions on women's agency within the far-right, much of it remains based on the difficulty comprehending why women may participate in an ideological ecosystem that champions heteronormative, anti-feminist and male supremacist ideals. This paper consequently presents a novel way of understanding this phenomenon. Through the use of the existential lens and de Beauvoir's phenomenology of gender, this paper plans to situate far-right women as agents in their own complicity. This will be further explored later in the paper.

Defining the Relationship Between Far-Right Women and Hegemonic Masculinity

It is critical to define the relationship between far-right women and hegemonic masculinity, considering far-right feminine identities are posited in contrast to a hyper-masculine archetype. Through recognizing the interdependence of far-right women on a hegemonically masculine ideology, de Beauvoir's phenomenology of gender can be further understood as a theoretical basis of analysis for this phenomenon. There is extensive literature that has identified the long-term relationship far-right movements have had

with hegemonic masculinity (see Kelly 2017; Worth 2021; Kisyova 2022; Purvis 2019). Historically, this term's definition has been debated and restructured, however, Mike Donaldson conceptualized this hegemonic masculinity as the following:

> "Hegemonic masculinity, particularly as it appears in the works of Carrigan, Connell and Lee, Chapman, Cockburn, Connell, Lichterman, Messner and Rutherford involves a specific strategy for the subordination of women. In their view, hegemonic masculinity concerns the dread of and flight from women. A culturally idealized form, it is both a personal and a collective project, and is the common sense about breadwinning and manhood. It is exclusive, anxiety-provoking, internally and hierarchically differentiated, brutal and violent. It is pseudo-natural, tough, contradictory, crisis-prone, rich and socially sustained. While centrally connected with the institutions of male dominance, not all men practice it, though most benefit from it. Although cross-class, it often excludes working-class, gay and black-men. It is a lived experience, and an economic and cultural force, and dependent on social arrangements. It is constructed through difficult negotiation over a life-time. Fragile it may be, but it constructs the most dangerous things we live with. Resilient, it incorporates its own critiques, but it is, nonetheless, 'unraveling.'" (Donaldson 1993, 645-646)

Donaldson's reference of hegemonic masculinity constructing "the most dangerous things we live with" provides groundwork for understanding the far-right (Donaldson 1993, 646). A concrete example of hegemonic masculinity in the far-right can include the prevalent sexual and physical violence rooted in heteronormative power dynamics. Using this framework, it is easily understood that the far-right advocates for the reconstruction, or rather amplification of hegemonic masculine ideals. The reinforcement of hegemonic masculinity within the far-right has been explored by Owen Worth in "Reasserting Hegemonic Masculinity: Women's Leadership within the Far-Right". Worth asserts that hegemonic masculinity is reinforced by the far-right through two connected ideals. First, the rejection of the global political economy and contemporary neoliberal world order that promotes a culture of corporate capitalism and a heightened and aggressive consumerism that has fundamentally erased "golden-age" attitudes, culture and world order. (Worth 2021, 509). Second, the representation of a new "elite-driven globalism" that situates feminism as a significant part of the feminization of the workforce and destruction of "everyday culture, life and social normality" (Worth 2021, 509). Through upholding these inherently contradictory beliefs, the far-right asserts the need for a return to structures of gender that are based within traditionalism and the patriarchy. Moreover, Felix del Campo in "New Culture Wars: Tradwives, Bodybuilders and the Neoliberalism of the Far-Right" asserts that women's acceptance of these values is developed through gender panic that is ubiquitous in the heterogeneous political ecosystem of the contemporary far-right (del Campo 2023, 690). More specifically, del Campo's argument recognizes the visible need for the far-right to reinstate patriarchal social relational ties, resulting in anti-genderism becoming a tool of empowerment for women supporting this ideology. According to Kisyova et al., far-right women construct a narrative where the traditionalism and hegemonic masculinity of this ideological movement can function as a further path to women's liberation in comparison to previous and current feminist movements (Kisyova 2022, 37). This results in their roles as traditional women to be posited as "the key to racial salvation or endangered womanhood, legitimizes violent and non-violent action, and enables them to select and project an idealized and ideologically loaded expression of femininity." (Campion 2020, 15). Women's acceptance of hyper-femininity and their consequential rejection of feminism functions as both tools of recruitment and mobilization, which suggests that the relationship between the far-right and its acceptance of hegemonic masculinity need to be examined to effectively apply de Beauvoir's theoretical framework as a point of analysis.

De Beauvoir's The Second Sex and Women of the Far-Right

De Beauvoir's The Second Sex offers a critical perspective into women's subservience to men. Straying away from common biological, psychoanalytic, or economic explanations, she presents an existential framework to determine what a woman is and why women remain oppressed? Her objective in forming her phenomenology of gender is to understand why women are not autonomous, equal human beings to men, but instead the secondary 'Other'. As de Beauvoir developed this theory, she

argued that women's subservience is a result of their immanence, in contrast to man's transcendence. Transcendence in this context is to extend towards the future through seeking to surpass a current condition; whereas immanence is to be within a stagnant state, or to not be able to seek projects that realize the self as an existent. Men's ability to posit themselves as the 'Self', in contrast to women's 'Otherness', is achieved through women's ability to reproduce. This leads to their inability to seek any condition beyond the biological human state (Beauvoir 1949, 72). Her human state is shaped by her body's ambiguity which dismisses her consciousness in favour of her body's commitment to the survival of the human species. De Beauvoir recognizes that it would only be natural for women to be recognized as superior due to this "supernatural" ability, however, women's ability to reproduce instead limits her autonomy. Her autonomy is restricted by the biological confines of her human state, the necessary domestic labour she takes on, and the responsibility of the continuation of humankind through reproduction and maternal care. Consequently, she is imprisoned by her biology, unlike men who are not imprisoned by the same biological responsibilities. Men, who can attempt to escape from their biological fate, can thus achieve transcendence and posit themselves as the 'Self', rather than the 'Other'.

What is important for this research, is not a woman's original immanent state, but rather her current one. Why do women continue, or rather choose to be subordinate to men when they are no longer limited by their reproductive abilities? According to de Beauvoir, women's current subservience is a result of their complicity. Using various archetypes of women (such as prostitute, mystic, and narcissist) as proof of this phenomenon, de Beauvoir identifies the internalization of 'Otherness' as a central reason behind women's continued subjectivity, as well as their lack of unity against their oppression. Simultaneously, she recognizes that this is in part a consequence of women's upbringing. She states that women "without ever being taught the necessity of assuming her own existence" rely on the support, protection, and guidance of the 'Self' instead of realizing their own transcendence (Beauvoir 1949, 757).

The relationship between far-right women's femininity and hegemonic masculinity situates itself strongly within de Beauvoir's The Second Sex. Considering de Beauvoir understood women's role as the 'Other' to be a consequence of her immanence, or stagnancy. It could be assumed that these women are chasing transcendence through their pursuit of right-wing traditionalism. Moreover, this assumption of perspective is supported by Tebaldi and Baran's aforementioned notion that women gain agency through upholding their nation's "purity" through both their own sexual and social restraint (Tebaldi & Baran 2023, 8). Yet, this perceived chance at agency (rather than posit them in a transcendent state) solidifies their role as the 'Other', as the women. In interpreting women's complicity to be the 'Other', de Beauvoir presents women's subjugation as both voluntary and involuntary, using Sartrean bad faith as a voluntary refusal of freedom and acceptance of domination (James 2006, 151). To expand on this despite de Beauvoir recognizing women's situation as being inherently affected by patriarchal societal structures, she also argues that:

> "Refusing to be the Other, refusing complicity with man would mean renouncing all the advantages an alliance with the superior caste confers on them. Lord-man will materially protect liege-woman and will be in charge of justifying her existence: along with the economic risk, she avoids the metaphysical risk of a freedom that must invent its goals without help." (de Beauvoir 1949, 10)

De Beauvoir's variability on whether women are truly complicit in their subjugation presents an interesting position when analyzing women of the far-right, especially considering the impact that both socialization and contemporary accessibility have on women's choices. If we are to assume that women of the far-right are both a product of the complexities of male hegemony and the patriarchy, while also maintaining that she is an agent in choosing subservience, then a unique understanding of their participation is presented.

A Case Study: Tradwife Ayla Stewart, Wife with a Purpose

In order to argue that de Beavoir's theoretical framework helps scholars better understand women's participation in the far-right, it is critical that it be applied to a case study. For this research, I will apply this framework to the case study of Ayla Stewart, a female far-right influencer who identifies herself

as a Tradwife. According to Love, Tradwives are a "group of white nationalist 'mommy vloggers' who promote the virtues of staying at home, submitting to male leadership [and] bearing lots of children" (Love 2020, 2). Tradwives are derived from the recent idealization of what Ashely A. Mattheis notes as "#Tradculture" (Mattheis 2021). Although Tradculture presents itself as a positive subculture that celebrates traditional values of marriage, homemaking, and family ideals, this far-right online culture has noticeably been connected to white supremacist and extreme heteronormative gender narratives. Tradwives mobilize a fabricated culture of traditionalism and gendered mechanisms to reproduce whiteness and white social dominance. More specifically, conceptions of white femininity are utilized to posit women's primary roles as "caregivers and domestic managers" (Stewart 2020). The women who act as Tradwives, specifically as influencers online, perform traditional female gender roles through "visible presentations of hyper-femininity and articulations of the benefits of submission to men as their 'head of household'" (Mattheis 2021, 93). Traditional conceptions of biology are consequently weaponized to create a stylised imagery of female subordination and restriction to the private sphere. According to Mattheis, "linking care and domesticity in this ideal with the stated desire to be a submissive helpmeet, reifies notions of women's 'natural' roles as wife and mother." (Mattheis 2021, 93). These idealized gender dynamics of benevolent paternalism result in a narrative that reinforces heteronormativity and masculine domination. More importantly, this subgroup of far-right women constructs hyper-femininity as an aesthetically pleasing fantasy, which is often in direct opposition to contemporary intersectional feminist values. Using an anti-feminist narrative of victimization, Tradwives, like Stewart, consistently lament "how white men have been robbed of their rightful status; their jobs and roles have been taken by women, people of colour, and immigrants in the workforce", while also arguing that feminism solely exists to destroy the traditionally gendered sanctities of marriage and purity (Love 2020, 2). Understanding the perpetuation of hegemonic masculinity within the gender dynamics of Tradculture allows for far-right Tradwives to be a critical case for analysis using de Beauvoir theoretical framework.

Tradwife Ayla Stewart is a Mormon mother of six children who began her blog in October 2015, which lasted until February 2019 (Gawronski 2019, 8). Although she is no longer consistently posting on her blog, Stewart has consistently identified herself as maintaining "alt-right" or "far-right" beliefs. These beliefs were particularly represented through her willingness and plan to participate in the 'Unite the Right' white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia in August 2017. Stewart and her status as a Tradwife is relevant to applying de Beauvoir's theoretical framework, considering her claimed past as an educated feminist who saw the negative light in which feminist scholars viewed motherhood (Stewart 2015). More specifically, Stewart criticized her academic peers as rejecting the natural importance of female biological gender roles. As a result, her belief in traditionalism and her own complicity in traditionalism and hegemonic masculinity resulted in her separation from her previous feminist beliefs. Once she began vlogging, she maintained an increasingly influential position, acting as an influencer who recruited and encouraged women to celebrate far-right patriarchal values that reinforced hegemonic masculinity, white femininity, and called for further gender traditionalism. Stewart's relevancy and uniqueness present a strong case study for analysis, particularly due to her emphasis on the importance of white patriarchal dominance, traditional gender roles, and racial purity.

In her YouTube video "Feminism- My History With It and My Rejection of It", Stewart provides her audience with her background and how she came to accept her Tradwife views. Stewart suggests in this video that much of her life socialized her into being a feminist, stating:

"I went to a very liberal high school program. I had teachers who were former Black Panther members and things like this. So, I never questioned whether or not I was going to be a feminist" (Stewart 2015).

Stewart later discusses how she completed both a bachelor's degree in Anthropology and a graduate degree in Gender and Spirituality studies. However, she cites her turning point away from feminism as its degradation of men, and natural gender roles (Stewart 2015). Interestingly, regardless of her claimed socialization as a child and young adult, Stewart maintained strict traditionalist ideological positions. However, using de Beauvoir's theoretical framework, I would argue instead that it was Stewart's later socialization and active choice to embrace these traditionalist gender values (and harmful white supremacist rhetoric) which led Stewart to her

Tradwife status. Moreover, Stewart states that "the [feminist] cultural reality is not that they want to be equal with men. The cultural reality is that they're very degrading to men, to men's instincts that have been placed in them, whether you believe by God or by evolution" (Stewart 2015). This demonstrates her active choice to value men's rights concerning feminism as a critical part of her rejection of the movement. Considering that Stewart's education during her graduate degree focused heavily on Mormonism, the religion she identifies with, and she became a mother of two during this period (Stewart 2015), her choice to reject feminism and embrace hegemonic masculinity was openly stated to be shaped by both her peers and her family values, that of which she believed was in direct opposition to second-wave feminism. Within this origin video, Stewart plays an active role in romanticizing an idealized, nostalgic facade of hetero-patriarchal dominance that exists within the gender dynamics she practices and encourages her audience to abide by. Mattheis argues that "traditional notions of white femininity are a modality through which white women have learned to assert power within white patriarchal culture"; this argument, understood through the lens of Stewart's far-right advocacy and participation, can be posited within de Beauvoir's critique of women's complicity in patriarchal structures (Mattheis 2021, 95). As suggested by de Beauvoir, if women choose to reject patriarchal structures and relations, they risk further losing the limited privileges they gain through compliance (Beauvoir 1949, 10). This suggests that Stewart and other women among the far-right are both complicit, but also attempting to gain further privilege, or a similar transcendence, to that of men through a subjugation to men. In pursuit of this, they play a role in advancing traditional gendered roles and racial purity that maintains white supremacy and fascist nation-building.

What does this imply about women's agency in the far right? The case of Ayla Stewart, showcased in her YouTube video, demonstrates that neither socialization nor choice acts alone when trying to understand women's complicity in the far-right. It is clear throughout this video that Stewart was highly influenced by the patriarchal structures both during her graduate degree and after, despite her rejection of feminism beginning at a later date. Further, much of the discourse she presents in her video solidifies itself within far-right rhetoric; arguably making it clear that she actively chose to discuss certain themes to normalize and soften this ideological position. Regardless, what Stewart's case study makes clear is that de Beauvoir's phenomenology of gender regarding her understanding of women's complicity should be applied to further attempts at understanding women's agency in the far-right.

Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated the unique way in which de Beavoir's phenomenology of gender can be used to understand women's increasingly visible roles within the far-right, both online and in the public sphere. In order to further this argument, a recognition of the role of hegemonic masculinity in the far-right is crucial to apply de Beavoir's theoretical framework. Although there remains a gap in the scholarly literature that addresses women's involvement in the far-right, particularly in a feminist manner. The literature that does exist continues to debate whether women are independent agents when participating in politically extreme movements. Thus, the use of Ayla Stewart and her relationship to patriarchal, heteronormative far-right Tradculture as a case study provides a crucial insight into the potential de Beauvoir's theory has in terms of analyzing the far-right through a feminist lens. Arguably, de Beauvoir's framework allows for the complexities of women's subservience to be recognized as having both voluntary and socialized dimensions. Where this paper falls short, is through its limitation to one case study. Considering the uniqueness of applying de Beauvoir to women's far-right participation, it would be interesting to see whether this framework would still apply to other cases as well.

Work Cited

Beauvoir, Simone de. 2011. *The Second Sex*. Translated by Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier. 1st Vintage Books edition.

Blee, Kathleen. 2020. "Where Do We Go from Here? Positioning Gender in Studies of the Far Right, Politics, Religion & Ideology" 21:4, 416-431, https://doi.org/10.1080/21567689.2020.1851870

Bracke, S. 2003. "Author(Iz)Ing Agency - Feminist Scholars Making Sense of Women's Involvement in Religious 'Fundamentalist' Movements." European Journal of Women Studies 10 (3): 335–46. doi:10.1177/1350506803010003006.

Campion, Kristy. 2020. "Women in the Extreme and Radical Right: Forms of Participation and Their Implications" Social Sciences 9, no. 9: 149. https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci9090149

James, Sarah.2006. "Complicity and Slavery in the Second Sex" in *The Cambridge Companion To Simone de Beauvoir*, ed. Claudia Card. *Cambridge University Press*. https://doi.org/10.1017/CCOL0521790964

Donaldson, Mike. 1993. "What Is Hegemonic Masculinity?" *Theory and Society* 22 (5): 643–57. https://www.jstor.org/stable/657988

Gawronski, Raegan M. 2019. "White Women and White Supremacy: How and Why White Women Contribute to White Supremacy". *Student Publications*. 822. https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/student_scholarship/822

Kelly, Annie. 2017. "The Alt-Right: Reactionary Rehabilitation for White Masculinity: US Alt-Right Extremism Is a Logical Consequence of Mainstream Neo-Conservatism." *Soundings* (13626620), no. 66 (May): 68–78. https://doi.org/10.3898/136266217821733688

Kisyova Maria-Elena, Yannick Veilleux-Lepage, and Newby Vanessa. 2022. "Conversations with Other (Alt-Right) Women: How Do Alt-Right Female Influencers Narrate a Far-Right Identity?" *Journal for Deradicalization Summer* 2022 (31): 35–72. https://search-ebscohost-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edsdoj&AN=edsdoj.9925a18d90214425b0d41fbeca268a5b&site=eds-live&scope=site.

Mattheis, Ashley A. "#TradCulture: Reproducing whiteness and neo-fascism through gendered discourse online." In *Routledge Handbook of Critical Studies in Whiteness*, pp. 91-101. *Routledge*, 2021.

Love, N.S. 2020. "Shield Maidens, Fashy Femmes, and TradWives: Feminism, Patriarchy, and Right-Wing Populism." *Frontiers in Sociology* 5 December. https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2020.619572

Purvis, Dara E. 2019. "Trump, Gender Rebels, and Masculinities." *Wake Forest Law Review* 54 (2): 423–50. https://elibrary.law.psu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1376&context=fac_works

Stewart, Ayla. "Feminism- My History With It and My Rejection of It" YouTube, 49:39, September 12, 2015. Accessed November 22, 2023 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=__5BCUTzzpQ

Stewart, A. 2020. 'Tradlife: The Restoration and Preservation of Traditional Family Values. Wife with a Purpose'. Accessed December 8, 2023. https://wifewithapurpose.com/

Sykes, Sophia. Hopner, Veronica. 2023 "Tradwives: The Housewives Commodifying Right-Wing Ideology" *Global Network on Extremism and Technology*. Accessed November 22, 2023 https://gnet-research.org/2023/07/07/tradwives-the-housewives-commodifying-right-wing-ideology/#:~:text=Within%20these%20positions%2C%20Tradwives%20promoted,militia%20movement%2C%20and%20online%20counterculture.&text=Conservative%20Right%20Tradwives%20advocate%20for,supporting%20their%20husbands%20and%20children.

Worth, Owen. 2021. "Reasserting Hegemonic Masculinity: Women's Leadership within the Far Right." International Affairs 97, no. 2 : 503–21. https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiaa100

"I am an undergraduate student in my last year majoring in Business Technology Management. Although I always interact with modern technology, the art of ancient buildings attracts me. This is the Village of Hong, established in 1131 in Anhui, China. The village became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2000, because of its exceptional preservation of the architecture and city plan of a rural village in feudal China. My parents and I visited here during our second China self-driving tour in 2023."

— Sevilla Zhou





Protectors or Enforcers? Exploring the Impacts of Militarization and Hyper-Masculine Subcultures in Policing Marginalized Communities in Canada

Waniza Wasi

ABSTRACT: This essay examines the complex relationship between contemporary law enforcement practices and Black, Indigenous, and racialized communities in Canada, by focusing on hyper-masculine subcultures and militarized tactics. Using case studies, including the death of Ejaz Chaudry and the criminalization of Wet'suwet'en land defenders, this paper analyzes the historical and colonial roots that shape policing practices. This study finds persistent over-policing and discriminatory practices in marginalized communities, emphasizing the urgent need for reform. Through Fanon's concept of the white gaze, this essay discusses how symbols like the 'thin blue line' contribute to an 'us versus them' mentality, reinforcing militaristic culture. The transnational dimensions of police militarization, influenced by historical and contemporary ties to settler-colonial practices, reveal how shared colonial legacies contribute to the perpetuation of militaristic approaches in law enforcement. Cases like Chaudry and the Wet'suwet'en land defenders highlight the devastating consequences of militarized responses, urging comprehensive reforms. This essay acknowledges that while guardian approaches are more favorable in lieu of the outdated warrior mindset, the former community-oriented models still possess limitations. Despite this recognition, the essay contributes to the discourse on redefining policing practices, rebuilding community relations, and fostering a more just, equitable, and community-focused future in law enforcement.

KEYWORDS: Police militarization, Law enforcement, Settler-colonialism, Policing practices, Hyper-masculine subcultures, Thin blue line, Colonization, BIPOC communities

Introduction

According to the 2019 General Social Survey on Canadian's safety and victimization, Indigenous peoples and visible minorities reported having less confidence in law enforcement in comparison to their non-Indigenous and non-racialized counterparts (Ibrahim, 2020). This accentuates a complex relationship between Indigenous and racialized communities and law enforcement. In this essay, I explore the intricate dynamics of this relationship, particularly by examining the role of hyper-masculine subcultures within the police force and their consequential impact on the militarization of policing in Indigenous and racialized communities. In exploring the relationship between Indigenous, racialized communities, and law enforcement, it is imperative to delve into how policing, deeply entrenched in hyper-masculine subcultures, takes on militaristic attributes. The concept of masculine subcultures in policing refers to the prominent norms, values, and behaviors within law enforcement that emphasize traits conventionally associated with masculinity (such as strength, aggression, and dominance). These subcultures influence not only the workforce composition, but also the culture and conduct of law enforcement agencies, and shapes their approach to policing practices and community interactions. The manifestation of militarism within law enforcement, from military-led training procedures to the adoption of identity symbols like the 'thin blue line,' mirrors the aggressive traits commonly associated with militaristic principles of identity and culture, that are common in hyper-masculine subcultures. This hyper-masculine environment often perpetuates an aggressive and dominating mindset, contributing to the challenging relationships between law enforcement and marginalized communities.

Additionally, I will incorporate case studies, including the murder of Ejaz Chaudry by the Peel Regional Police's Tactical and Rescue Unit in June of 2020 and the ongoing criminalization of Wet'suwet'en land defenders, to deconstruct and examine the intersections of hyper-masculinity and militarization in local law enforcement. To comprehend the contemporary challenges faced by such communities, it is important to acknowledge the historical and ongoing colonial foundations that shape policing culture in Canada. This paper not only seeks to uncover the roots of hyper-masculinity in law enforcement but also aims to critically assess its influence on policing practices, public perceptions, and the encouragement of an 'us vs. them' mentality. By contributing to the ongoing discourse on reform, accountability, and the transformation of law enforcement, this essay aims to shed light on the path towards strengthening public perceptions of the police and redefining community relations and policing.

Policing Indigenous and Racialized Communities

The concept of policing Indigenous and racialized communities in North America is deeply intertwined with the legacy of settler colonialism. The historical establishment of policing in Canada and the United States is deeply rooted in the project of dominating Indigenous communities and constructing settler-colonial societies (Monaghan, 2013; Nettelbeck & Smandych, 2010). In contemporary times, policing evolved within the context of the strained relationship between law enforcement and non-white communities. Fletcher (2021) asserts that nations established on the exploitation of slave labor and resources inherently perpetuate inequality and injustice in contemporary times. In the Canadian context, the historical exploitation of Indigenous peoples and resources continues to shape contemporary policing practices. The government structures historically established are tailored to further the interests of those who benefit from settler colonialism. In Canada, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), formerly known as the North-West Mounted Police (NWMP), played a pivotal role in the establishment of a settler society by providing security for settler populations while concurrently employing violence and coercion against Indigenous communities as part of their broader agenda of domination. Heightened policing and security forces were enforced, despite Indigenous peoples posing minimal threat (Monaghan, 2013). Today, the RCMP continues to over-police in Indigenous and racialized communities, employing racially motivated practices such as carding and street checks, raising concerns about the agency's continued alignment with the interests of those who historically benefited from the exploitation of Indigenous communities. (McKay, 2021, p. 54).

Franz Fanon's concept of the 'white gaze' adds another layer to this historical analysis. According to Fanon (1967), the white gaze is a mechanism through which the dominant group, particularly white elites, controls social spaces and interactions, shaping perceptions of Black people, people of color and by extension,

Indigenous communities. In the context of policing, this perspective was instrumental in reinforcing power dynamics during the establishment of policing, perpetuating racialization and subjugation, and establishing the binary of "us" (white people) versus "them" (non-white people). This lens influenced the strategies employed by law enforcement, contributing to the historical coercion and violence against these racialized communities. The legacy of the white gaze continues to cast a shadow on contemporary policing, further complicating the dynamics between law enforcement and racialized communities.

Despite ongoing attempts to reform policing to reflect the multicultural nature of settler societies like Canada and the United States, contemporary law enforcement practices persistently exhibit disproportionate discrimination against racialized and Indigenous communities. Police violence continues to persist, particularly with Black Americans in the United States and Black and Indigenous peoples in Canada. Black Americans are three times more likely to be killed by the police compared to their white counterparts, rendering this phenomenon as a public health issue in the United States, which highlights the systemic nature of this problem (Dincer & Johnston, 2021). Racism, specifically the systemic targeting of Black communities, is not exclusively an American phenomenon, but also a Canadian crisis. While slavery in Canada was officially abolished two centuries ago, contemporary institutions (particularly law enforcement) serve to control Black communities through invasive police surveillance and an accentuated vulnerability to violence, or murder, by police (Maynard, 2017). An investigation by CBC News found that police killings disproportionately affect Black communities, particularly in Toronto where the Black population makes up 8.3% of the total population but 36.5% of police deaths (Dunn, 2018). Similarly, the alarming increase from 14.6% to 19.5% in the proportion of Indigenous civilians among total law enforcement killings in Canada over the past two decades stresses the persistent and deepening disparities faced by Indigenous communities (Gillezeau et al., 2022). This upward trend not only reflects a disproportionate impact on the lives of Indigenous individuals, but also signals a continuation of historical injustices rooted in colonial legacies. The consequences of such trends extend beyond mere statistics, manifesting as a reminder of the urgent need to explore effective strategies for reform and accountability within the Canadian law enforcement system. This reality further emphasizes the pressing importance of examining the intersections of hyper-masculinity, militarization, and colonial biases in policing practices to comprehensively address and reflect the challenges and experiences faced by Black, Indigenous, and racialized communities in their contemporary relations with law enforcement.

Masculinity, Militarization & The Thin Blue Line

Historical and contemporary contexts lay the groundwork for understanding the complexities and challenges faced by Indigenous and racialized communities in their interactions with law enforcement. The historical legacy of coercion and violence in policing forms a crucial standpoint for examining the hyper-masculine subculture and militarization of law enforcement. Rooted in decades of instilling an 'us versus them' mentality and the othering of racialized and Indigenous communities, this legacy highlights the deeply ingrained patterns of behavior within law enforcement agencies. Historically, coercion and violence through hyper-policing have been used to maintain control and dominance over marginalized communities, perpetuating a culture of aggression and superiority within law enforcement (McKay, 2021; Monaghan, 2013). This culture not only shapes individual behaviors but also influences institutional practices and policies, reinforcing a militaristic approach to policing that prioritizes force over dialogue and community engagement. Understanding this historical context is essential for addressing the systemic issues that continue to impact the relationship between law enforcement and marginalized communities today.

The intersection of the masculine subculture and the militarization of policing perpetuates a dynamic where notions of strength, aggression, and dominance become deeply ingrained within law enforcement operations. In line with this dynamic, ongoing research indicates a significant underrepresentation of women in policing, with women comprising only 13% of the policing workforce in the United States (Rushin, 2021). However, masculine subcultures are a complex phenomenon within policing that extends beyond the realm of gender demographics and diversity hiring. It is not solely a problem arising from the lack of women representation; instead, it reflects deeper-rooted systemic sentiments embedded within

policing operations. In fact, contrary to conventional beliefs that assume that increasing women representation in policing would alleviate extreme use of force through the gendered concept of femininity, Rushin (2021) found that departments with a larger share of women officers tend to use deadly force more frequently than departments with fewer female officers. Thus, addressing issues of hypermasculinity within policing requires more than just changing gender representation.

The pervasive problem of masculinity in policing extends beyond workforce composition, influencing the culture and conduct of law enforcement agencies. This masculinized environment, which emphasizes assertiveness and control, intertwines with the historically rooted 'us versus them' mentality in policing (Fletcher, 2021). Symbols employed in contemporary policing, such as 'the thin blue line', play a crucial role in perpetuating this division and reinforcing the intertwining of militarization and hyper-masculinity. The 'thin blue line' is a powerful and complex pro-police symbol used in the United States, Canada, and globally; it emerged amongst white nationalists in response to the Black Lives Matter movement. As Boyce et al. (2023) argue, this symbol illustrates a threshold for a necessary line of defence, protecting the good from the evil and civilization from savagery. However, the symbol and its associated sentiments are saturated in a racial connotations, suggesting a hierarchical distinction that assigns value to white lives while deeming racialized peoples as unworthy of safety and consideration (Boyce et al., 2023). While 'the thin blue line' serves as a powerful and multifaceted pro-police symbol on a global scale, its interpretation is not without controversy.

The creation of the 'thin blue line', whether physical or metaphorical and where the morally righteous 'good guys' are pitted against the dehumanized 'others,' mirrors the 'us versus them' mentality pervasive in policing (Lynch, 2018, p. 34). In this symbolic division, those in uniform are positioned as righteous defenders against an external, often dehumanized, threat— a concept deeply ingrained in military operations. Fanon's concept of the 'white gaze' becomes particularly relevant here, as the symbols used in contemporary policing continue to 'other' non-policing members of racialized communities. The symbol, therefore, complicates the binary of 'us versus them,' legitimizing the exclusivity of police as an identity. This identity, while not necessarily reflective of its inherent goals, echoes a militarist culture to which officers owe their loyalty. The symbol establishes a new binary of 'police versus non-police,' veering away from the broader goals of policing, such as maintaining peace and order. The subtle intertwining of symbols and militarization within contemporary policing paints a complex landscape. 'The thin blue line', often seen as a symbol of solidarity among law enforcement, inadvertently contributes to the dehumanization of those on the 'other' side, or not police-affiliated, viewing them as a perceived threat to the policing, militarist culture.

Manifestations of police militarization highlight a blurred line between law enforcement and the military, echoing the symbolic representations of power and authority. Turner (2018) defines police militarization as a process in which law enforcement draws from military practices, replicates military culture and behavior, and encompasses three key aspects: (a) the "blurring of lines" between the military and the police, (b) the utilization of surplus military equipment, vehicles, and weapons by law enforcement, and (c) the adoption of increasingly advanced technologies by law enforcement. The 2014 riots in Ferguson exemplify the blurred line between law enforcement and military in the United States, as the response from law enforcement mirrored that of a military patrol in a foreign warzone. Throughout the Ferguson riots, civilian law enforcement patrolled the streets armed with assault rifles, dressed in body armor and camouflage uniforms, and shielded their faces with gas masks—a scene reminiscent of American military patrols in Iraq or Afghanistan (Haynes & McQuoid, 2018). By connecting these visuals to the broader symbolism of power and authority, the militarization of police forces emerges as not only tactical response, but also as a symbolic assertion of control and dominance.

The militarization of US law enforcement, particularly in its resemblance to Middle Eastern war zones, is not coincidental, but rather relates to a larger concern of US law enforcement agencies receiving training from Middle Eastern, settler-colonial militaries. A notable example is the Israel Defence Forces (IDF), which actively engages in the colonization of Palestinian land through heightened policing, violence, and militarism (Garwood, 2016; Ho, 2013). Training exchanges with the IDF have deep implications for contemporary North American policing practices, contributing to

a militarist ethos within domestic law enforcement agencies. This connection between the IDF's settler-colonial practices and the militarization of US law enforcement speaks to a broader issue—the historical goals of policing in the West and how they continue to shape contemporary practices. The historical ties between policing and colonialism, rooted in the establishment of control and authority, find importance in the strategies and approaches adopted by law enforcement agencies today. By adopting practices from military entities involved in settler-colonialism, US law enforcement (and by extension law enforcement in the West in general) perpetuate a cycle that seemingly serves the interests of those who benefit from settler colonialism, echoing the power dynamics and hierarchies inherent in historical colonial goals. However, instances of law enforcement militarization are not exclusive to the United States.

The tactical response to the Ferguson riots demonstrates a broader, transnational concern about the increasing militarization of police forces, a concern that extends beyond the borders of the United States and echoes into ongoing discourse surrounding Canadian law enforcement practices. In the Canadian context, manifestations of police militarization are vividly demonstrated through specific case studies, such as the murder of Ejaz Chaudry by the Peel Regional Police's Tactical and Rescue Unit in June 2020 and the ongoing criminalization of Wet'suwet'en land defenders. These incidents highlight the concerning trend of a blurring of the line between law enforcement and militarization within Canada, raising critical questions about the priorities and values embedded in contemporary policing practices. They also highlight how police militarism is predominantly exercised toward racialized communities. The militarized response to both cases not only jeopardizes the safety and well-being of individuals like Ejaz Chaudry, but also poses a broader threat to the fundamental rights and liberties of groups resisting injustice, as seen in the case of the Wet'suwet'en land defenders.

The case of Ejaz Chaudry, a 62-year-old father of four with schizophrenia, epitomizes the grave consequences of the militarization of policing (particularly towards marginalized community members), as evident in the actions of the Peel Regional Police's Tactical and Rescue Unit during a mental health crisis call in June 2020. Chaudry's family called the non-emergency line in hopes of a compassionate response while seeking assistance for his mental health crisis. However, the involvement of the Tactical and Rescue Unit resulted in a devastating outcome—Chaudry's death due to the use of deadly force (Nasser, 2023). This case highlights the inherent dangers associated with the militarized culture within law enforcement, shedding light on how situations requiring nuanced and empathetic responses can escalate to tragic ends when met with excessive force. The militaristic subculture, marked by paramilitary training models and international collaborations with settler-colonialism militaries, is evident in the response of the Tactical Rescue Unit. Their involvement in what should have been a mental health crisis intervention highlights how militarized tactics, such as home raids and aggression towards non-criminal activity, permeates everyday policing scenarios. This coupling of hyper-masculinity and militarization emphasizes the pressing need for comprehensive reforms that dismantle embedded structures within law enforcement, redefining community relations and ensuring that instances like Ejaz Chaudry's tragic death become catalysts for positive change rather than harbingers of systemic failure (Lynch, 2018; Ho, 2013).

The ongoing criminalization of Wet'suwet'en land defenders also sheds light on the issue of police militarization in Canada, particularly concerning its entanglement with colonialism. This example refers to the legal and punitive actions taken by authorities against members of the Wet'suwet'en Indigenous community in British Columbia, Canada. This community has been actively opposing the construction of the Coastal GasLink (CGL) pipeline, which is planned to pass through their traditional and unceded territory. Despite the Wet'suwet'en people's rights and title to this land, they have faced surveillance, harassment, and forceful removal by the Canadian government and the Province of British Columbia. The resistance against the CGL pipeline, opposed by all five Wet'suwet'en clans, highlights the Indigenous community's commitment and right to safeguard their ancestral lands in accordance with their laws and customs. The militarized responses of excess surveillance and unlawful removal from their territory, accompanied by three large-scale police raids (involving the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), helicopters, dog units, assault weapons, and collaboration with Coastal GasLink's private

security) has led to the arrest and detention of 74 individuals, including: hereditary Chiefs, matriarchs, legal observers, and members of the media (Amnesty International, 2023). These actions not only violate the rights of the Wet'suwet'en people, but also spotlight the colonial roots embedded in Canadian police forces, which were historically oriented towards suppressing Indigenous independence to protect settler interests and economies (Nettelbeck & Smandych, 2010). The militarized response to Indigenous land defenders raises critical questions about the priorities and values embedded in law enforcement practices in Canada, as well as the broader implications for Indigenous rights and self-determination.

The cases of Ejaz Chaudry and the criminalization of Wet'suwet'en land defenders highlight the pervasive issues surrounding police militarization in Canada. Both instances illustrate a concerning trend: the blurring of lines between law enforcement and militarization, posing critical questions about the fundamental priorities and values inherent in contemporary policing practices. Ejaz Chaudry's case humanizes the experiences of marginalized individuals and mental health patients who face excessive force, a consequence of physical militaristic tactics exemplified by law enforcement. Similarly, the continuous criminalization and mistreatment of Wet'suwet'en land defenders accentuate the relationship between police militarization and settler-colonialism. The government's forceful suppression of Indigenous resistance, exemplified in actions like large-scale police raids with helicopters and assault weapons, highlights the persistence of colonial ideologies within law enforcement. Moving forward, redefining policing practices is integral to the fundamental shift away from militarized approaches, acknowledging the inherent flaws in current practices and advocating for comprehensive reforms that prioritize empathy, community relations, and the protection of fundamental rights. Instances like those of Ejaz Chaudry and the Wet'suwet'en land defenders should serve as catalysts for positive change rather than symbols of systemic failure.

Re-Evaluating Policing Practices

In addressing the pressing need to re-evaluate policing practices (particularly in marginalized communities where tensions between law enforcement and community members are most heightened), a shift towards community policing is an important measure in fostering collaborative partnerships, collective goals, and rebuilding trust. Policing is fundamentally distinct from and antithetical to military operations, because it is rooted in serving and protecting communities rather than engaging in combat or warfare. The warrior approach in policing is characterized by a focus on crime fighting and a militaristic ethos that emphasizes dominance, readiness for battle, and the use of force (Strah et al., 2013). This approach has been criticized for its implications in abuses of authority, strained relationships with minority communities, and overly aggressive responses (particularly in interactions with individuals experiencing mental health issues) (Strah et al., 2013). The warrior model promotes a perception of the police operating in a hostile environment where danger is ever-present, legitimizing the use of force as a primary tool. This training perpetuates traditional police cultures, reinforcing the idea of police as crime fighters rather than community supporters, and contributing to the hegemony of the warrior model within law enforcement (Strah et al., 2013)

The distinction between the warrior approach and community-oriented policing is crucial, especially in the context of contemporary local law enforcement practices that reflects militarist practices by adopting a 'warrior' approach. There is an urgent imperative to redefine what policing looks like (Haynes & McQuoid, 2018). Effective policing shifts away from the warrior mentality, and aims to establish a more community-oriented and guardian-based approach that emphasizes communication, de-escalation, and procedural justice. Community policing cannot coexist with the warrior mindset as it inherently rejects the discredited 'warrior' approach to policing that perceived inner-city communities as inherently hostile to law enforcement efforts (Forman, 2004). Community policing requires four key functions that emphasize the importance of consultation between residents and police: (1) neighborhood residents can express their concerns and needs, (2) the police can educate citizens about neighborhood crime issues, (3) citizens are allowed to state complaints about the police themselves, and (4) the police report back on what actions they have taken and what successes (or non-successes) they have had (Forman, 2004). This approach fosters a mutual working relation of trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve, cultivating a relationship founded on mutual

respect and collaboration, as opposed to an 'us versus them' relationship.

Community policing is not just a set of tactics, but rather a strategy in which the community and police have a mutual understanding of the needs and challenges within that community. Strah et al. (2013) argues that in practice, the warrior-based policing presents greater risks for abuses of authority, antagonistic relationships with inner-city minority communities, and heavy-handed responses in encounters with persons suffering from mental illness. The warrior approach in contemporary policing has not only fueled the militarization of law enforcement but also led to a crisis in the culture of modern policing. This is reflected in the hostile relationships with Indigenous and racialized communities, and violent responses to individuals in mental distress. Shifting to a guardian mindset, where officers are trained outside the warrior paradigm, introduces the potential for transformative change. Guardian training emphasizes citizen interactions defined by dignity and respect, bringing the potential for positive change in law enforcement (Forman, 2004). This progressive model prioritizes communication skills and de-escalation tactics over physical control, aligning with the paramount goal of officer safety while fostering positive public perceptions of police legitimacy, fairness, and citizen satisfaction through procedural justice-based practices (Strah et al., 2023). Critics may argue that a relationship of mutual respect, as outlined in the guardian approach in community policing, places the officer at risk. However, officer safety is paramount to both models. The 'warrior' mindset relies on the use of physical control, whereas guardians are taught to use communication skills and de-escalation tactics (Strah et al., 2023). Embracing community policing that rejects the outdated warrior mindset is crucial in fostering collaboration, collective goals, and rebuilding trust. This shift from a 'warrior' to a guardian-oriented approach is an essential step towards strengthening public perceptions of the police and redefining community relations and policing.

In considering the proposed shift to community policing, it is crucial to acknowledge the challenges with dismantling deeply ingrained institutional foundations. Policing, as an institution, has historically been resistant to substantial change (Lingamneni, 1979). The prospect of altering not only the organizational structure, but also the underlying subculture raises significant questions about the viability of such transformations. Ultimately, envisioning a future where every citizen's basic needs are met and survival is not criminalized, necessitates more than incremental reforms. The notion of 'undoing' the already established policing foundation comes with significant resistance to changes among officers and is a challenge that cannot be underestimated. This resistance often stems from the ingrained norms and values that perpetuate a warrior-based mentality based on the traditionalist idea that "this is the way things are done" (Lingamneni, 1979).

While recognizing the magnitude of this challenge, it is essential to emphasize that minor changes (including the shift to a guardian approach) may not be sufficient to address the systemic issues at hand. Meaningful change requires a re-evaluation of the very essence of policing. Although positive steps have been taken across Canada, such as Edmonton Police Services' implementation of the Police and Crisis Response Team (PACT), which partners with Alberta Health Services to provide mental health support, the reality remains stark. Even with the existence of co-responding with mental health professionals through multidisciplinary units like PACT, instances of police-involved fatalities in cases of mental distress persist. For instance, in December 2023 alone, two individuals experiencing mental health crises lost their lives at the hands of the Edmonton Police Services (Parsons, 2023). These tragic incidents emphasize the need for more systematic and comprehensive transformations to achieve effective law enforcement. Initiatives like PACT represent steps in the right direction, yet the sobering reality of continued violence demands a re-evaluation of current practices and the future of policing.

Conclusion

In conclusion, contemporary law enforcement practices toward Indigenous and racialized communities inherently employ hyper-masculine and militaristic policing tactics. The historical context of policing, rooted in settler colonialism, has shaped policing culture and contributed to existing disparities and systemic issues. The cases of Ejaz Chaudry and the Wet'suwet'en land defenders highlight the urgent need for reform, emphasizing the consequences of militarized responses and their disproportionate impact on marginalized individuals. The transnational influence (seen in policing collaborations between U.S. law enforcement and the Israel Defence Forces, as well as its influence on Canadian policing) highlights global impacts on Western law enforcement militarization and its parallel with colonial practices. This interconnectedness highlights how militaristic approaches and colonial legacies transcend borders, shaping policing practices globally.

In moving forward, re-evaluating policing practices, shifting towards community policing, and rejecting the 'warrior' mindset are essential steps in rebuilding confidence in policing. The historical legacy of policing, entrenched in contemporary power dynamics and colonial biases, requires a fundamental redefinition of policing approaches to address the challenges associated with dismantling deeply ingrained institutional foundations. The intersection of hyper-masculinity and militarization perpetuates an 'us versus them' mentality, posing risks and consequences for marginalized communities. The analysis of the 'thin blue line' symbol adds depth to the understanding of how such symbols contribute to the dehumanization of racialized individuals. This symbol, often associated with a 'warrior' mentality, reinforces the 'us versus them' mentality and can alienate communities. Embracing a guardian-oriented approach (which prioritizes empathy, communication, and procedural justice) is essential for upholding justice while emphasizing fairness, respect, and citizen satisfaction. This approach shifts the focus from a confrontational stance to one that fosters positive community relations and mutual respect. The guardian-oriented approach, as opposed to the warrior mentality, introduces the potential for transformative change, steering law enforcement towards a more just, equitable, and community-focused future. However, it is important to stress that meaningful change requires more than incremental reforms; it requires a re-evaluation of the very essence of policing to ensure effective, accountable, and community-centered law enforcement practices.

Work Cited

Amnesty International. *Criminalization of Wet'suwet'en Land Defenders.* (2023). https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/03/criminalization-wetsuweten-land-defenders/

Boyce, G., Massaro, V., & Spess, L. (2023). Unravelling the "Thin Blue Line": Policing as an Engine of Inequality. *Antipode*, 55(5), 1538-1559–1559. https://doi-org.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/10.1111/anti.12928

Dunn, T. (2018). In deadly encounters with Toronto police, more than a third of victims are Black. *CBC News*. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/police-deaths-blacks-data-1.4599215

Fanon, E. (1967). Black Skin, White Masks. New York: Grove Press

Fletcher, M. L. (2021). Erasing the Thin Blue Line: An Indigenous Proposal. Michigan State Law Review, 2021(5), 1447-1488.

Forman, J. (2004). Community Policing and Youth as Assets. *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* (1973-), 95(1), 1–48. https://doi-org.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/10.2307/3491381

Garwood, E. (2016). With Whom are Many U.S. Police Departments Training? With a Chronic Human Rights Violator – Israel. *Amnesty International USA*. https://www.amnestyusa.org/updates/with-whom-are-many-u-s-police-departments-training-with-a-chronic-human-rights-violator-israel/

Gillezeau, R., Rushford, D. T., & Weaver, D. N. (2022). Policing and Indigenous Civilian Deaths in Canada. *Journal of Economics, Race, and Policy, 5*(3), 210–239. https://doi-org.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/10.1007/s41996-022-00097-6

Haynes, J. B., Jr., & McQuoid, A. F. (2018). The Thin Blue Line: Police Militarization and Violent Crime. *New York Economic Review, 49*, 26–62.

Ho, S. (2013). *Israel trains US law-enforcement in counter-terrorism.* The Times of Israel. https://www.timesofisrael.com/israel-trains-us-law-enforcement-in-counter-terrorism/

Ibrahim, D. (2020). *Public perceptions of the police in Canada's provinces, 2019.* Statistics Canada. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2020001/article/00014-eng.htm

Lingamneni, J. R. (1979). Resistance to Change in Police Organizations: The Diffusion Paradigm. *Criminal Justice Review,* 4(2), 17-26–26. https://doi-org.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/10.1177/073401687900400204

Lynch, C. G. (2018). Don't Let Them Kill You on Some Dirty Roadway: Survival, Entitled Violence, and the Culture of Modern American Policing. *Contemporary Justice Review: Issues in Criminal, Social, and Restorative Justice, 21*(1), 33-43–43. https://doi-org.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/10.1080/10282580.2018.1415045

Maynard, R. (2017). *Policing Black lives: State Violence in Canada From Slavery to the Present*. Fernwood Publishing.

McKay, J. (2021). *Systemic Racism in Canada: Report of the Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security*. House of Commons. https://www.ourcommons.ca/Content/Committee/432/SECU/Reports/RP11434998/securp06/securp06-e.pdf

Monaghan, J. (2013). Mounties in the frontier: Circulations, anxieties, and myths of settler colonial policing in Canada. *Journal of Canadian Studies, 47*(1), 122-148–148. https://doi-org.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/10.3138/jcs.47.1.122

Nasser, S. (2023) . Police in Ontario killed a man in crisis, now they're fighting to keep their names private. *CBC News*. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ejaz-choudry-lawsuit-police-names-1.6898010

Nettelbeck, A., & Smandych, R. (2010). Policing Indigenous Peoples on Two Colonial Frontiers: Australia's Mounted Police and Canada's North-West Mounted Police. *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology*. 43(20). (pp. 356-375).

Rushin, S. (2021). Masculinity in Policing: The Need to Recruit More Women in American Police Departments. *George Washington Law Review Arguendo, 89*(6), 1512–1526.

Strah, B. M., Pollock, J. M., & Becker, L. T. (2023). Shifting From Warriors to Guardians: Officer Reflections on Law Enforcement Training in Washington State. *Crime & Delinquency, 69*(2), 439–463. https://doi-org.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/10.1177/00111287221117488

Turner, F. W. (2018). An Introduction to Police Militarization. In B. Fox (Ed.), *Police Militarization: Policy Changes and Stakeholders' Opinions in the United States* (pp. 1-5). Springer.



Photographer: Sevilla Zhou

Boundaries of Self: Ecopsychology and Autistic Experience

Larissa Jamin-Lynn

ABSTRACT: Ecopsychology provides numerous ways to define the boundary between self and environment, including the idea of an expanded self that incorporates the natural world into one's self-perception. Within ecopsychology, this concept is primarily approached from a neurotypical perspective. It is, however, valuable to consider the experience of Autistic individuals through this lens, particularly in relation to sensory experience. I propose that many Autistics experience a highly permeable self-environment boundary leading to self-identification that includes environment and heightened sensory input. I draw primarily from the ideas of Arne Naess (1995) on expanding spheres of self-identification and Theodore Roszak's (1995) concept of the ecological unconscious to illustrate this. Additional support is provided by considering the lived experience of Autistic individuals, including the author. Very few published works examine Autistic experience as described by Autistics, which is critical in presenting an accurate perspective. By viewing Autistic sensory experience through the framework of ecopsychology and using the described experiences of Autistic individuals, the resulting conclusions can support more respectful and Autistic-affirming practices and supports.

KEYWORDS: Ecopsychology, Autism, Autistic, Sensory experience

Many writers on ecopsychology have devoted considerable time and energy into pondering how the boundary between self and environment is defined, including what this boundary means for humanity's relationship with the natural world. To some, like James Hillman (1995), this is not just one question for psychology to grapple with, but rather *the* question. If we consider this query within the context of human neurodiversity, the possibility emerges that there are a variety of ways that this boundary is experienced and can defined. One of these experiences is that of the Autistic[1] person. The ways in which Autistic people connect to their environment are particularly similar to Arne Naess's (1995) concept of the expanded self and Theodore Roszak's (1995) concept of the ecological unconscious. Using ecopsychology as a lens to view neurodivergence provides further understanding of how Autistics experience their environment, which could then be used to create more effective and respectful approaches to therapy.

The writings of Naess and Roszak represent key insights into the question articulated by Hillman of where the bounds of the psyche are perceived. In *Self-Realization: An Ecological Approach to Being in the World*, Arne Naess (1995) argues that the use of the word self within modern culture is just another word for ego. To Naess (1995), the expression of mature human nature involves self-identification with other living things, which he describes as an ecological self that sits beyond the development from ego to social self to metaphysical self. It is a progression of expanding spheres incorporated into self-identification. According to Naess (1995) this ecological self can be encapsulated as "that which

[1] Identity first language, such as Autistic person rather than person with autism is used throughout in order to align with neurodiversity affirming practices and a dominant preference of those in the Autistic community.

this person identifies" (p. 226). This identification is as simple as a situation that evokes deep empathy in an individual for another living being (Naess, 1995).

With a slightly different perspective, Roszak (1995) perceives the expanded self as encompassing an ecological unconscious that exists at the heart of the human psyche. From this perspective, personal unconscious becomes an access point to a deep well of shared ecological knowledge. Roszak (2009) argues that the ecological unconscious is part of what defines humanity and "freeing the ecological unconscious may be the key to sanity in our time" (p. 36). When viewed through this lens, ecopsychology is about seeing our relationships and actions regarding the natural world as aspects of unconscious needs and desires (Roszak, 1995).

Although different in specifics, both Naess and Roszak conceive of a self that is broadly and inextricably connected to the natural world. This concept of expanded connection with environment is echoed in the experiences of many Autistic individuals through variations on a sense of "being in constant conversation with every aspect of [their] environment" (Silentmiaow, 2007, 3:41). According to Naess (1995), the richness of reality is such that we can only take in so much at once, and different aspects of the environment are perceived in different emotional states. This idea seems to represent an allistic[2] perspective. One way to conceive of the Autistic mind is to consider that the Autistic mind perceives its environment all at once in its entirety.[3] Recent research is beginning to understand what Autistics have long known; that the Autistic mind experiences things as wholistic and non-hierarchical (Sibeoni et al., 2022). The inability to disentangle environment and sensory experience can be considered universal to humanity (Sibeoni et al., 2022); however, the lived experience of Autistics indicates that this entanglement is further entrenched in the Autistic mind. Autistics describe experiencing their environment as an inextricable combination of sensory and emotional aspects that are both immediate and all encompassing (Sibeoni et al., 2022).

In *The Ecopsychology of Child Development* Anita Barrows (1995) identifies the developmental task of a child is to "simultaneously build enough of a membrane around herself to be able to function in her culture and allow that membrane to be permeable enough, receptive enough to sensation, feeling, communion" (p. 105). According to this statement, it seems that the membrane that Autistics develop has a different degree of permeability than that of allistics. A natural environment, which often has softer edges and more space for sound, can be less of an assault to the Autistic sensory system; whereas an urban environment often necessitates the use of artificially created barriers such as headphones, control of surrounding smells, or other adaptations that create a controlled barrier for the individual. This exertion of personal control serves to minimize the permeability of self to a manageable degree for the Autistic individual (Sibeoni et al., 2022).

From the perspective of ecopsychology, evidence for human-environment connection is given by Naess (1995) as he describes how resettlement in Norway led to the loss of identity for individuals, due to their identity being tied to and defined by their environment. On a smaller scale, Autistic individuals can experience a temporary disturbance of identity when displaced from a chosen activity or environment. It is common for Autistic individuals to experience difficulty and take more time when transitioning between places or activities. This can be due to the increased self-environment permeability that Autistics experience. In transition, the Autistic individual needs to extricate their identity from said activity or environment. Naess (1995) describes destruction of nature as something that "threatens our innermost self" (p. 232), akin to how Autistics often experience change: as a fundamental threat to the self.

From this perspective, Autistic sensory overload can be framed as the individual's self being overwhelmed by the environment through a high degree of self-permeability and blurring of the boundary between self-identity and environment. This could be indicative of the overwhelming nature of the individual's environment and a deeply urgent need for a more harmonious interaction with the environment. It is important to note that for many

[2] The term allistic refers to any person who is not Autistic.
[3] Observations on Autistic experience made without citation are based on the lived experience of the author, who is Autistic, and the lived experiences of others in the Autistic community.

Autistics, human-centric environments are more overwhelming than natural environments, particularly when the individual is not permitted to interact in ways that feel natural to them. Allistic society dictates what type of interactions with environment are appropriate in what situations. For an Autistic individual to act outside of these bounds is to risk being labeled out of touch with one's surroundings and being non-communicative (Silentmiaow, 2007). However, for many Autistics, to interact with one's surroundings according to what is expected by society is limiting and involves reacting to only certain parts of the environment (Silentmiaow, 2007). In *A Psyche the Size of the Earth*, James Hillman (1995) states that any "cut between the self and natural world is arbitrary" (p. xix) and uses the example of borderline disorders to show the existence of states of the human psyche wherein the personality is in a state outside the limits typically set by psychology. The Autistic experience of environment is often outside of these bounds, involving intense self-environment permeability.

In identifying the similarities between Autistic experience and ecopsychology ideas of self, the conversation regarding how best to support Autistic individual's changes. For example, the need for time to transition makes more sense when framed as the need to extricate oneself from one's surroundings due to increased permeability of self and increased self-environment identification. Use of this concept as a framework could act as a way for Autistics to understand their own sensory experiences and for allistic therapists to have empathy for their clients and offer appropriate supports. Additionally, the assault of human-centric environments compared to natural environments could be used to emphasize natural elements when considering therapeutic spaces for Autistic people. The idea of natural spaces also need not mean strictly wild nature, which comes with its own overwhelming aspects such as rain, strong winds, and extreme temperatures, all of which may be challenging for some Autistics. Indoor spaces could be designed to emphasize the calm aspects of nature by using filtered natural lighting, varying textures, and natural sounds. This approach could transform an urban therapy setting into a safer and more regulating environment. This is not to say that this would be an ideal environment for every Autistic person, but it could be part of increasing consciously accessible therapeutic spaces. Critical to this process is incorporating ecopsychology perspectives into ongoing research of the Autistic experience to better capture a complete scope of lived experience.

Overall, it appears that ecopsychology has a significant amount to offer as a lens through which to view Autistic experience. The writings of Naess and Roszak on self-environmental boundaries provide insight into the sensory experiences of Autistic individuals as a form of self-permeability, as does the work of Barrows on development of a membrane between self and environment. All of these, when taken together as considerations for Hillman's question of where the boundary between the self and the other is, lead to a more interconnected view of Autistic sensory experience. It could be beneficial to not only Autistic individuals, but allistic individuals as well, to incorporate these ideas into the therapeutic setting. Arguably even more important is to incorporate these ideas into the dominant understanding of Autistic experience. This could help to engender understanding within allistic society of Autistic experience and therefore positively impact acceptance of human diversity.

Work Cited

Barrows, A. (1995). The ecopsychology of child development. In T. Roszak, M. E. Gomes & A. D. Kanner (Eds.), *Ecopsychology: Restoring the earth, healing the mind* (pp.101-110). Counterpoint.

Hillman, J. (1995). A psyche the size of the earth. In T. Roszak, M. E. Gomes & A. D. Kanner (Eds.), *Ecopsychology: Restoring the earth, healing the mind* (pp.xvii-xxiii). Counterpoint.

MacLennan, K., O'Brien, S., Tavassoli, T. (2021). In our own words: The complex sensory experiences of autistic adults. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, 52*, 3061-3075. http://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-021-05186-3

Naess, A. (1995). Self-realization: an ecological approach to being in the world. In G. Sessions (Ed.), *Deep ecology for the twenty-first century* (pp. 225-239). Shambhala.

Roszak, T. (2009). A psyche as big as the earth. In L. Buzzell & C. Chalquist (Eds.) *Ecotherapy: Healing with nature in mind* (pp. 30-36). Counterpoint.

Roszak, T. (1995). Where psyche meets gaia. In T. Roszak, M. E. Gomes & A. D. Kanner (Eds.), *Ecopsychology: Restoring the earth, healing the mind* (pp.1-17). Counterpoint.

Sibeoni, J., Massoutier, L., Valette, M., Manolios, E., Verneuil L., Speranza, M., Revah-Levy, A. (2022). The sensory experiences of autistic people: A metasynthesis. *Autism, 26*(5), 1032-1045. http://doi.org/10.1177/13623613221081188

Silentmiaow. (2007). *In my language* [Video]. University of Alberta WGS 244. www.wgs244.org/2021/09/14/big-ideas-neurodiversity-studies/



Photographer: Henry Deng

Forgive Me, Your Honour, For I Have Sinned: An Exploration into the Use of Rap Lyrics in Gang-Related Criminal Court Trials

Jordan Mangelsen

ABSTRACT: This paper explores the use of rap lyrics in criminal trials across the United States and Great Britain. Rap is a multibillion-dollar industry and has soared in popularity since its inception. In recent years, rap lyrics have been used to ascertain guilt or innocence through the perceived meaning of the specific lyrics. However, there have been no advancements toward appreciating the cultural significance of rap or its status as a legitimate art form (Nielson and Dennis, 2019). The criminal justice system has favoured treating lyrics as confessions. Meaning, it fails to consider the nuance of the socio-historical context of the rap industry or the implications of the street code. This paper does not argue that all rap lyrics are either exclusively true or false; it instead argues that the uncritical approach to examining rap lyrics in the context of the criminal justice system has replicated systems of harm that have disproportionately affected young Black men.

KEYWORDS: Gangsta rap, Drill, Gangs, The street code, Rap lyrics

Rap music has become a complex system for self-expression, especially for Black communities in low-income areas (Nielson & Dennis, 2019). Creating rap music can be a healthy form of identity creation and support the growth of emotional intelligence. Listening to rap is an entertaining pastime and has been shown to increase youth involvement in social activism. Rap is a counterculture often involving explicit lyrics detailing violence and political commentary (Owusu-Bempah, 2022). Rap has dominated the mainstream charts and is especially prevalent in many Black communities. Becoming famous through rap also creates an opportunity for upward mobility for those who otherwise do not have access to economic mobility (Nielson & Dennis, 2019). Rap is a complex art form that has received wide critical acclaim, rapper Kendrick Lamar was awarded a Pulitzer Prize in music for his authenticity, vulnerability, and ability to capture societal issue through his music. Nevertheless, rap has a particularly negative reputation for being affiliated with gangs and is viewed as dangerous (Nielson & Dennis, 2019). Other predominantly Black music genres have faced similar treatment in the past. From jazz, blues, and reggae to modern 'gangsta rap' and 'drill', Black music is treated with hesitation, though it continues to be among the most profitable genres in the music industry (Fatsis, 2019).

Rap is a social platform that allows the writer to approach the genre in many ways (Owusu-Bempah, 2022). Some may choose to rap about lived experiences or engage in social commentary; either way, much of the genre is intentionally provocative, relying on figurative speech and hyperbole to create entertainment. The violent characteristics of the genre can often be used as marketing tools for commercial success, and social media has developed as a tool for rappers to self-promote and gain credibility in the rap space (Patton et al., 2015). The emergence of social media has made surveillance of rappers and gang members more accessible to police (Stuart, 2020). Police look for evidence of gang affiliation and the disclosure of criminal behaviours online (Lane, 2018). Authorities are prone to accepting social media posts at face value without understanding the digital street code, even when hyperbolic language is present (Ilan, 2020). The lack of nuance by authorities demonstrates the inability to understand the notion of the street code and how it influences the behaviour of youth embedded in street culture online.

In the United States, the growth of the subgenre of gangsta rap and its explicit lyrics led to using rap lyrics as evidence in court to prove criminal wrongdoings (Nielson & Dennis, 2019). While in Britain, the same thing can be witnessed through the censorship of another rap subgenre, drill music (Owusu-Bempah, 2022). Gangsta rap influenced the emergence of drill, so it is no surprise they share similarities in the content of their lyrics; both subgenres exhibit themes of violence and criminality. With increasing frequency across the USA and the UK, young men are being prosecuted without acknowledging that their rap lyrics are forms of art. (Nielson & Dennis, 2019; Owusu-Bempah, 2022). This paper will examine the United States and Britain to acknowledge how rap is criminalized in a broader context. Nielson and Dennis (2019) found that when examining the use of rap lyrics as evidence in approximately 500 cases, 95% of defendants were Black or Latino. Owusu-Bempah (2022) found similar results in the UK, noting that the practice was almost exclusively reserved for cases with Black defendants. Rap lyrics should not be admissible in criminal trials because of the lack of cultural competency in the criminal justice system. Without confronting the systemic problems of the criminal justice system, there is a disproportionately negative impact on Black men and their artistic expressions in rap music.

Gangsta Rap and The Street Code

Rap music began as a form of Black youth culture, originating in the Bronx, New York, in the 1970s (Owusu-Bempah, 2022). Rap as a genre has been viewed as threatening, dangerous, and violent, posing a danger to society (Stoia et al., 2018). The intertwining of gang culture with rap culture led to the rise of gangsta rap in the late 1980s. The subgenre is a product of gang culture in Southern California (Kubrin, 2005). Gangsta rap involves the images of the violent and dangerous reality of gang life in the inner cities, with an increased value placed on authenticity (Stoia et al., 2018). The role of authenticity requires artists to present violent imagery from a first-person narrative to receive credibility. The increased pressure on authenticity comes from adherence to the street code. Anderson (1994) defines the street code as "a set of informal rules governing interpersonal public behaviour, including violence" (p. 82). Thus, the street code regulates violence in approved ways, with other street-oriented individuals establishing the rules. Existing as an external entity,

the street code garners respect and must be constantly guarded as social identity is a significant factor of the code; one can acquire status for being violent, gaining the respect of peers and deterring future violence against themselves. The street code is a cultural adaptation to the lack of faith in the criminal justice system, specifically policing. Individuals who adhere to the street code must take care of infractions independently, creating a sense of physical and psychological control. Gangsta rap groups like NWA were open about their critical view of police and the criminal justice system, opening them to persistent legal surveillance and an investigation from the FBI (Stoia et al., 2018). Police hyper-surveillance tactics have disproportionately punished rappers for their acts of resistance.

Changing the Street Code

The rise of social media has also fundamentally changed the street code, allowing individuals to grow and consolidate their violent reputations online (Anderson, 1994; Stuart, 2020). Online portrayals of the hyper-masculine gangster are derived from the change in the street code; however, it is important to note that these portrayals are not necessarily false; they are just different from those found in earlier contexts (Urbanik & Haggerty, 2018). False representations of one's reputation online can result in violent assaults on the street. Urbanik and Haggerty (2018) found that the authenticity requirement in rap lyrics and social media posts is prominently displayed by the association with violent criminals, guns, drugs, and neighbourhood affiliations. Being seen online interacting with well-known criminals is a way to build social capital and earn street credit. Rappers will display the people they are aligned with in music videos to send a message to rival gangs; this acts as a protective factor because it may deter future attacks and may increase street credit.

Conversely, Stuart (2020) found that gang members and non-gang-associated youth would routinely exaggerate their violent and criminal behaviours on social media. During his fieldwork, Stuart (2020) observed the gangs posting photos of fake drugs and counterfeit money on various platforms. These manufactured displays have led to the realization that gangs and rival gangs may all be disingenuously 'fronting' (Stuart, 2020; Urbanik & Haggerty, 2018). The discrepancies between Urbanik and Haggerty (2018) and Stuart (2020) could be due to the ever-changing nature of social media and the rate that trends emerge.

Rap was once the most popular way to earn street credit online, but social media has emerged as an alternative medium to establish street credibility (Patton et al., 2013). Social media has become a universal method of communication for youth, and it should come as no surprise that gang members will use the platforms to bolster their reputations online. Gang behaviours have moved into the digital space with the cultural phenomenon known as 'internet banging.' Internet banging refers to the strategy employed by gang members to trade insults or make threats to rivals over social media platforms. Social media is also an important tool for gangs to conduct business through drug sales, communication and coordination of actions and events relating to the gang. New gang members can employ social media to build their reputation by engaging in internet banging and boasting about criminal behaviours. The internet is the ideal way to form a collective identity; gang-affiliated youth use the collective identity to maintain their masculine identities and internalize the values of the street code while remaining online (Anderson, 1994; Patton et al., 2013). Patton et al. (2013) argue that the collective identities of gangs have formed out of embracing the otherness that is subjected to them. Hence, the cultural significance of rap music claiming radical rebellion:

> If the political and social discourses are shaping me into a thug, I will be a super-thug; if they are crafting public opinion that I am dangerous, I will become super dangerous; and if they are creating me to be a criminal, I will create and advocate a criminalized identity. (Patton et al., 2013, para 27)

Rap and social media have intersected as they have both grown to be alternative forms of cultivating a masculine street identity (Patton et al., 2013). Famous rappers are also subject to new variations in online street credibility. Rapper Rick Ross was exposed for fronting a false persona and was threatened by a member of the Gangster Disciples for his hypocrisy. Alternatively, rapper Chief Keef took to Twitter after a rival gang member was murdered to make fun of the victim ending his tweet with #LMAO (laughing my ass off). Chief Keef is an example of how rappers can benefit from

internet banging and the street credit affiliated with social media gang violence.

Understanding the American Perspective of Rap in the Courtroom

Nielson and Dennis (2019) examine three contexts in which prosecutors use rap lyrics as criminal evidence in the United States. The first is the diary, the most common scenario when prosecutors treat a defendant's lyrics as confessions. Prosecutors may claim the violent lyrics as autobiographical journals containing the admissions to crimes. The second scenario is motive and intent. Motive and intent are used when the lyrics are written or performed before the alleged crime. Prosecutors will argue that the lyrics indicate a motive or prior knowledge of the crime. In the criminal trial of *United States v. Foster* (as cited in Nielson & Dennis, 2019), Derek Foster was found with a large quantity of drugs on him but denied knowing they were there. Foster was carrying a notebook with rap lyrics he had written about dealing drugs. Foster's defence argued that the writing was purely fictitious; however, the US Court of Appeals found that "in writing about this 'fiction' character, Foster exhibited knowledge of narcotics trafficking, and in particular drug code words" (Nielson & Dennis, 2019, p. 14). However, the court did not acknowledge that Foster could have learned the code words through popular culture. The courts have also used this same context of motive and intent to illustrate a defendant's gang associations. The third scenario is threats; unlike the previous two instances, the lyrics in the threat cases are the crime themselves. Prosecutors argue that rap lyrics should be understood as literal threats of violence against others. All three cases insinuate that rap lyrics accurately reflect the realities and intentions of the defendants.

Lane (2018) also found that prosecutors in the USA would use photographs posted to social media as evidence of criminal behaviour. Posting photos online served as a way for authorities to connect defendants and label them as gang members. Some states will enhance sentences for people who are believed to be gang members, and the implication is that by simply posting a photo online, individuals could receive longer and harsher sentencing (Esbensen et al., 2001). Nielson and Dennis (2019) point out that while not everyone in prison for their lyrics is innocent, they have been denied a fair trial.

Nielson and Dennis (2019) found that most rappers on trial were amateurs and argue that famous rappers receive the artistic license for their lyrics, while amateurs are believed to be rapping and writing about personal experiences. However, this notion has been challenged with the indictment of rapper Jeffrey Lamar Williams, better known as Young Thug, under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act in 2022 (Jarvie & Brown, 2022). The RICO act was introduced to convict top organized crime captains; it does not require the person to have committed the crime, but rather that they had knowledge or controlled a network of criminal activity. Atlanta prosecutors believe Williams is the organizer of a criminal street gang known as Young Slime Life (YSL) and has allegedly made music about the gang's crimes. YSL is not only an alleged street gang but also the name of Williams's record label, which prosecutors believe is designed as propaganda to recruit new members. The research into Williams' lyrics and social media posts has also allegedly found documentation of gang symbolism of wearing red and flashing hand signs. Fulton County prosecutors list lyrics from nine of Williams's songs in the indictment. The alleged social media posts and lyrics of Williams and other YSL members are believed to be connected to the 2015 murder of rival gang member Donovan Thomas Jr. The lyric in question comes from the song *Anybody*: "I never killed anybody, but I got something to do with that body" (Young Thug & Nicki Minaj, 2018, as cited in Jarvie & Brown, 2022). Using the lyrics, in this case, is an example of the diary concept, with Williams' lyrics being treated like a confession (Nielson & Dennis, 2019). Morrison (2022) interviewed Erik Nielson on using Williams' lyrics in the RICO indictment. Nielson argues that the shift toward using lyrics in the cases of famous rappers indicates a worrying trend of the expansion of lyrical evidence in the United States. Nielson believes that this case is not necessarily about the guilty verdict, as much as Williams is being used to send a message to other rappers showing they are vulnerable to the same treatment.

The increase in cases like Williams's comes from the bias of hyper-surveillance around rappers, which is a consequence of the broad reach of social media platforms (Nielson & Dennis, 2019). Police and prosecutors have turned to social platforms as a tool to investigate gang members and affiliates (Stuart, 2020). This act is hugely problematic because of the lack of cultural competency in these investigations,

with many officers utilizing their own interpretations. Stuart (2020) argues that the increased inspections of social media lead to the disproportionate surveillance of Black youth and reinforce the myth of Black criminality. Police departments compile lists of gang members based on information found on social media, which can lead to misidentification and wrongful convictions. In 2012 a Harlem youth was wrongfully incarcerated after 'liking' posts of gang activity on Facebook. The opportunities for police to misidentify gang members have grown with social media's rapid expansion.

The Censorship of Drill Music

Drill music is a subgenre of rap that originated in Chicago but has become more broadly associated with the United Kingdom (Ilan, 2020). Drill is an underground genre characterized by moving away from traditional labels and allowing artists freeform publication on sites like YouTube and SoundCloud. Driller's demographics are mainly young Black male artists from underprivileged backgrounds. The London Metropolitan Police have recently been targeting the genre to censor the music by banning live performances and requesting videos be removed from YouTube. Authorities have argued that drill glorifies and commends criminal behaviour and the use of violence. The UK has also followed the US ruling that rap videos, lyrics, and social media posts can be used as evidence in criminal trials and scrutinized by the courts. Black people in the British criminal justice system are already overrepresented, and with this reaction to drill, young Black men are most at risk of having their lyrics used against them in court (Owusu-Bempah, 2022). It is paramount to understand that race is a central component of the topic of prosecution of rap and drill (Ilan, 2020; Nielson & Dennis, 2019; Owusu-Bempah, 2022).

Drill has found itself in the grips of the criminal justice system, with many artists being issued Criminal Behaviour Orders (CBOs), prohibiting them from posting music to YouTube or playing live events without informing the police beforehand (Fatsis, 2019). Members of the Brixton-based group 410 have been classified as a gang. Meaning, they are now prohibited from certain areas of London, as well as banning them from referencing individuals and places that are said to be associated with a rival gang. Drillers and members of 410 AM and Skengdo received a suspended sentence for performing the song *Attempted 1.0*, which allegedly contains incitements of gang violence. However, Fatsis (2019) notes that while the lyrics are violent, they do not indicate gang involvement or activity. The absence of cultural competency in policing efforts makes it difficult to appreciate the differences in artistic expression and boasting criminal behaviour (Ilan, 2020; Stuart, 2020). Ilan (2020) maintains that the criminal justice system is 'street illiterate' meaning it is "unable to properly interpret what is being communicated by street-culture communications such as drill" (p. 999). The censorship of drill lacks nuance and fails to understand the functions of drill as a culturally conscious subculture that acknowledges the realities of social life in South London (Fatsis, 2019; Ilan, 2020).

Owusu-Bempah (2022) reviewed 38 criminal cases involving various uses of lyrics and rap videos to investigate how the genre is used in the British legal system. The analysis of criminal trials dates between March 2005 and January 2021. Interestingly, Owusu-Bempah (2022) found that 42% of all cases occurred between 2018 and 2022, indicating an upward trend in using lyrical evidence in the UK. The provocative nature of drill music makes it particularly vulnerable to misinterpretation by legal authorities. Influenced by the gangsta rap subgenre, drillers adopt a 'badman' persona, meaning they will flaunt their violent and criminal behaviours in a first-person narrative. Most cases prosecuting drill artists were related to weapons and murder, both common subject matter of drill music. However, these references should not be taken at face value as it is typical for rappers and drillers to exaggerate their propensity for violence because that is what is increasingly popular with listeners. British courts were particularly resistant to understanding the context of the songs or the wider music industry.

Owusu-Bempah (2022) found that most defendants in these cases were Black youth, indicating that lyrics and music videos are used almost exclusively against Black people. This is not due to a lack of White rappers or drillers; the expansive nature of the popular genre has many famous and amateur White rappers and a huge White fanbase. Nevertheless, Black men are targets of this pointed use of lyrical evidence. Due to the nature of the genre, rap is closely associated with criminality by non-listeners; these labels are then placed on defendants. Furthermore, the interpretation of drill as nothing more than violence dismisses the ability of Black youth to meaningfully participate

in a legitimate form of artistic expression (Ilan, 2020). Black men are also subjected to their status as symbolic assailants, in which negative stereotypes of criminal behaviour translate to over-policing and overrepresentation of Black people in prison (Brunson & Miller, 2005; Owusu-Bempah, 2022). Black men are visibly associated with crime and treated with suspicion because of the idea of a symbolic assailant (Brunson & Miller, 2005). The racialized approach to using rap music as evidence also links rappers to gangs (Owusu-Bempah, 2022). Music videos tie individuals to gang association as evidence of criminal behaviour. The term 'gang' is racialized by the London Metropolitan Police, with many of their indicators simply being relevant parts of youth culture in South London. The London Metropolitan Police's gang index vastly overrepresented Black youth because of how the understanding of Black youth culture has been boiled down to gang culture. By linking defendants to crime via gang association is a way prosecutors can use rap as a racial signifier to build a gang narrative. The British Court of Appeal has held that using rap lyrics to prove gang membership is justified. As a result, the prosecution of rap and drill disproportionately affects Black youth through various means.

Conclusion

Rap has become one of the most popular music genres in the United States and is a multibillion-dollar industry (Nielson & Dennis, 2019). Hip-hop and rap have become ways for Black men to represent their cultural identities. Since the inception of popular media, Black men have been painted as violent predators (Rudrow, 2019). Rap is a way to resist oppression from the reductive stereotypes created and promoted by White supremacy. Despite this, as the genre has grown in popularity, rappers are under increased pressure to push narratives of violence to appeal to young White suburban boys and men. Rappers are constantly fighting between sharing lived realities and enticing listeners through violent rhetoric, further explaining why it is uninformed to include rap lyrics and videos as criminal evidence.

Moreover, rap music has been regarded with suspicion in a way that has historically only affected Black creative art forms (Fatsis, 2019; Nielson & Dennis, 2019). Rap has effectively been denied the status of a legitimate form of artistic expression through its use as criminal evidence (Nielson & Dennis, 2019). The devastating consequences of this denial have led to many young men in prison for their lyrics. Using rap lyrics in criminal trials reflects society's willingness to incarcerate young men of colour, who make up a significant portion of the rap genre. The incarceration of rappers silences a generation of artists and denies their freedom of expression.

Work Cited

Anderson, E. (1994). The code of the streets. *The Atlantic Monthly, 273*(5), 81-94. https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1994/05/the-code-of-the-streets/306601/

Brunson, R., & Miller, J. (2005). Young black men and urban policing in the United States. *British Journal of Criminology, 46*(4), 613-640). doi: https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azi093

Esbensen, F., Winfree L. T., He, N., & Taylor, T. (2001). Youth gangs and definitional issues: When is a gang a gang, and why does it matter? *Crime and Delinquency, 47*(1), 105-130. doi: 10.1177/0011128701047001005

Fatsis, L. (2019). Policing the beats: The criminalisation of UK drill and grime by the London Metropolitan Police. *The Sociological Review, 67*(6), 1300-1316. doi: 10.1177/0038026119842480

Ilan, J. (2020). Digital street decoded: Why criminalizing drill music is street illiterate and counterproductive. *British Journal of Criminology, 60*(4), 994-1013. https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azz086

Jarvie, J., & Brown, A. (2022, May 10). *Can Young Thug's lyrics be used against him? Prosecutors say yes in RICO case against rapper.* Los Angeles Times. https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/music/story/2022-05-10/young-thug-rico-lyrics-gang-ysl

Kubrin, C. (2005). Gangstas, thugs and hustlas: Identity and the code of the street in rap music. *Social Problems, 52*(3), 360-378. doi: 10.1525/sp.2005.52.3.360

Lane, J. (2018). *The digital street*. Oxford Academic. https://doi-org.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/10.1093/oso/9780199381265.001.0001

Morris, D. (2022). *How Young Thug's RICO charges set a new precedent for rap lyrics used as evidence.* okayplayer. https://www.okayplayer.com/news/young-thug-ysl-rico-case-rap-lyrics-criminal-evidence.html

Nielson, E., & Dennis, A. (2019) *Rap on trial: Race, lyrics, and guilt in America*. The New Press.

Patton, D., Eschmann, R., & Butler, D. (2013). Internet banging: New trends in social media, gang violence, masculinity and hip hop. *Computers in Human Behaviour, 29*(5), 54-59. doi: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2012.12.035

Owusu-Bempah, A. (2022). Prosecuting rap: What does case law tell us? *Popular Music, 41*(4), 427-445. doi: 10.1017/S0261143022000575

Rudrow, K. (2019). "I see death around the corner": Black manhood and vulnerability in me against the world. *Journal of Black Studies, 50*(7), 632-650. doi: https://doi-org.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/10.1177/0021934719875941

Stoia, N., Adams, K., & Drakulich, K. (2018). Rap lyrics as evidence: What can music theory tell us? *Race and Justice, 8*(4), 330-365. doi: 10.1177/2153368716688739

Stuart, F. (2020). Code of the tweet: Urban gang violence in the social media age. *Social Problems, 67*(1), 191-207. Doi: 10.1093/socpro/spz010

Urbanik, M., & Haggerty, K. (2018)' # It's dangerous': The online world of drug dealers, rappers and the street code. *The British Journal of Criminology, 58*(6), 1343-1306. doi: 10.1093/bjc/azx083



Photographer: Sevilla Zhou

Barred from the Border: Disability Discrimination within Immigration Systems

Hussain Alhussainy

ABSTRACT: This article critically examines how disability discrimination manifests within the immigration systems of Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia. Despite Canada's reputation as a welcoming nation, the article argues that its points-based immigration system perpetuates ableist notions, treating disabled immigrants as economic burdens. The analysis explores the historical context of Canada's immigration system, its impact on disabled immigrants, and draws comparisons with other nations. Examining the immigration regulations of the United States reveals discriminatory practices and ableist language, while the United Kingdom's points-based system emphasizes economic contribution, hindering disabled immigrants' integration. In Australia, despite having an anti-discrimination act, disabled immigrants face barriers, including detention. The article concludes that these countries, despite differing immigration systems, share a commonality in excluding disabled immigrants based on eugenic and ableist ideologies rooted in neoliberal democracies. Overall, the points-based systems, intended to eliminate biases, inadvertently reinforce discrimination against disabled individuals, highlighting the need for a more inclusive approach to immigration policies.

Introduction

Canada prides itself on being a welcoming nation that opens its borders to immigrants from all walks of life. However, on-par with the majority of nations around the world, disabled immigrants are not offered the same opportunity as non-disabled immigrants. Immigrants with disabilities are seen as an economic and social burden to their prospective countries. Regardless of the immigration system employed by a country, disabled immigrants are disproportionately viewed through a cost-benefit lens, as if an individual's ability is a form of capital. Canada uses a merit-based system, aiming to reduce discrimination and biases, but closer analysis may suggest that that is not the case. The question that arises is how does Canada's points-based immigration system discriminate against disabled immigrants and do differing immigration practices around other neoliberal democracies result in less discrimination towards and better accessibility for disabled immigrants? This paper argues that the Canadian immigration system embodies notions of compulsory able-bodiedness and employs cost-benefit analysis which results in the negative treatment of disabled immigrants that limit their opportunities to immigrate and integrate into society. On top of that, it posits that these notions, behaviors, and outright discriminatory policies are not unique to Canada but rather are found in other neoliberal democracies and are rooted in eugenic and ableist thought characterized by the determination of desirability based on economic potential. This paper will start with an analysis of Canada's points-based system and its relationship with applying immigrants, focusing on disabled immigrants. Cases from the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia will be used to critically compare their immigration systems in order to understand their respective relationships with disabled immigrants. From that analysis, this paper intends to reach a conclusion that highlights how other systems around the world are not more effective in limiting ableist notions and practices than in Canada.

Canada's Merit-Based Immigration System

Canada's immigration selection procedures opened up following the conclusion of World War II. Prior to that, Canada was extremely selective of who it let into the country, openly discriminating based on factors like race, religion, class, health, and ability. The implementation of the points-based system in 1967, saw an increase of immigration to Canada from Asia, Africa, and Latin America (Elrick, 2022, 110). This new merit-based system is still in use today, and it assesses one's value to the country based on factors such as language, education, work experience, age, family connections, and how likely one is to permanently settle in Canada (Government of Canada, 2023). For other nations, Canada's system has "long been considered an example of international best practice" (Elrick, 2022, 110). However, the system should not be freed from criticism.

Some critics suggest the individualistic nature of the points-based system is detached from the social groups the individuals belong to (Elrick, 2022, 110). The goal of introducing a merit-based system was to eliminate discrimination from the screening process. However, in its early days, bureaucrats would still admit based on race, not merit as they were supposed to (Elrick, 2022, 111). The power that officers hold over decision making would suggest that those practices are still seen today but are not as overt. This is due to the economic importance placed on immigrant applicants. Merit equates to ability which is often measured by productivity and results based analysis. The officer is delegated the authority of making decisions based on their assumption of who will meet and fulfill the productivity and economic thresholds. Overall, it is essential to understand that Canada prioritizes economic potential when screening applicants, as that is what contributes to its ableist immigration practices.

Impacts on Disabled Immigrants

The Canadian immigration system has both historically and contemporarily outlined its disapproval of accepting immigrants with disabilities. Based on records from laws and House of Commons debates, the exclusion of immigrants with mental disabilities was a deliberate decision "to ensure the proper 'character' of immigrants coming to Canada" (Chahda, 2008, 1). Prior to the postwar era, the language was more direct – the term "feeblemindedness" was used to describe disability is evident in historical documents (El-Lahib, 2016, 770). Whereas in the new iteration of criteria barring the disabled, it is much more sensitive and politically correct, citing strain on the nation and resources. This shift in language is intentional, which is to be less explicit with its discrimination but continues "to serve a gatekeeping function to keep people with disabilities out by facilitating their construction as

an inadmissible social group" (El-Lahib, 2016, 770). By manipulating language to focus on an economic system to move society away from the individual, it relieves the pressure of seeming exclusionary or ableist.

Canada views the disabled immigrant through a cost-benefit analysis. The immigrant's educational and employment history are taken into account to assess whether they have value and prior knowledge they could deploy when integrated into the system. However, oftentimes, due to ableist and discriminatory practices in their country of origin, immigrants with disabilities are left uncompetitive due to the lack of opportunity within their home land. Since Canada's points-based system heavily favours work experience and education, the exclusion that people with disabilities experience in their countries of origin has a "direct bearing on their admissibility as immigrants to Canada" (El-Lahib & Wehbi, 2011, 98). These individuals face the same barriers within their country of origin hoping to seek more opportunity through immigration but, because of perceived lack of ability, they encounter the same problems or integration and acceptance into society.

Immigrant families are not safe from being separated and destroyed as a result of this points-based system that meticulously screens potential immigrants for any perceived burden or strain on society or medical resources. A prime example of this is discussed in El-Lahib and Wehbi's (2011, 100-101) research; a French family immigrated to Montreal in 2005 for economic reasons, they integrated and contributed to the Canadian economy by relocating their business into the country. The Canadian state granted permanent residency to the entire family excluding the applicant's youngest daughter who had a pre-existing disability. The Canadian government prioritized the perception of disability as a deterrent over the potential economic benefits that the family brought. When going about obtaining PR for the dependent, the business man even guaranteed he would take on the responsibility of paying for any medical costs needed by his daughter, therefore relieving responsibility from the state. The ministry of immigration did not loosen up when the family tried to go through the humanitarian stream; which shows that people with disabilities face challenges when immigrating through three of the four streams.

Analysis of the United States

Looking beyond Canada, the first immigration system I intend to analyze is that of the United States. Unlike Canada, the US does not use a merit-based system. The US claims to focus primarily on family reunification with 69% of their visas being approved on the grounds of family connections whereas 14% are employment-based visas (Bristol & Choi, 2022, 1). With this distinction from Canada it may be presumed that the US would be less discriminatory if the objective is reuniting families. However, they have in place the public charge rule. The public charge rule was introduced with the Immigration Act of 1882 and put in place to hinder the mobilization of disabled people into the US as they would become a liability, or a public charge, by depending on public services (Weber, 2015, 24). The criteria for the public charge rule targets people with disabilities, making it a highly exclusionary policy.

As a result, the US perceptions and attitudes toward disability are much more openly discriminatory and ableist. Most prominently, those with disabilities wishing to immigrate to the US are required to provide medical notification to prove a normal state of well being (Wilson D. J., 2009, 37). Ableism is also embedded in the country's foundations as the US Constitution uses intense language that reflects not only racial biases but also regarding who is considered to be worthy of entry into the United States of America, with usages like 'broken down human beings', 'poorly built human beings', and 'bad economic risk' to describe disabled people (Gerber, 2005, 50). Historically, procedures were put in place to screen individuals wanting to come into the country to determine if they had a disability or what counted as a perceived disability, typically for immorality, and if they managed to reach the port and disability was suspected or revealed, arrangements would be made for deportation of the individual (Ressa, 2022, 20). In 1986, the US attempted to change their system with amendments to their immigration act pertaining to individuals with disabilities, emphasizing family unification over economic prosperity. However, in practice, the system still emphasizes and expects economic independence and contribution to the labour market (Ressa, 2022, 22). As Gerber observed, when making decisions, immigration officials "included judgments about which individuals were deemed attractive enough to walk the American streets as well as the more understandable calculations about the individual's

capacity to be productive" (2005, 52). This approach is similar to Canada's barring of disabled immigrants based on ensuring the proper 'character' of immigrants.

Furthermore, there are other policies and practices that separates the US and Canadian immigration systems. American structures are firmly rigid, making it immensely more difficult for immigration policies to be relaxed and changed due to the contentious nature and polarization surrounding the topic of immigration (Bristol & Choi, 2022, 3). Agency to change immigration policy, however, is much more prevalent within the Canadian system because of the differences between Parliament and Congress (Bristol & Choi, 2022, 3). Additionally, the attitudes towards immigration are noticeably different as Canadians generally have a more positive attitude towards accepting new immigrants and refugees provided that they can take on jobs, especially ones that are in high demand in the labour force (Bristol & Choi, 2022, 4). Americans on the other hand are more nationalistic and protective of their border, having more of an emphasis on assimilation rather than multiculturalism (Bristol & Choi, 2022, 3). However, in practice, the American diaspora resembles a melting pot of cultures. Despite these different attitudes towards immigrants, those feelings are not tolerant or welcoming to disabled immigrants as they are seen to both as incapable of economically contributing or assimilating to the normal.

Analysis of the United Kingdom

Although Europe has a variety of different immigration systems, and some may have offered a more unique perspective for this paper, the existing research is limited. Therefore, the second case for analysis is the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom's immigration system is a points-based system that was revised in 2021 following the UK's departure from the European Union. The revised system is mostly similar to the system prior, but the major difference is that it now aims to select migrants who will contribute the most to the UK's economy (Walsh, 2021). The slight relaxation of their immigration policies only benefits skilled workers, and does little to prevent discrimination against disabled immigrants. Under the old system, immigration was restricted across the board but points could be earned for language ability, work experience, education, and family connections (Walsh, 2021). Now, with emphasis placed on skilled workers, the most common visa type is awarded based on the applicant having a job offer already lined up in the UK in addition to their language ability, work experience, education, and salary (Walsh, 2021).

The impact on disabled immigrants does not change between the systems, rather as the UK continues down a path that values contribution and productivity, disabled people continue to face barriers both at the border and within the nation. Hughes argues that "Neoliberal Britain has made significant headway in dismantling the 'safety net' of welfare support that once helped to protect disabled people from the discrimination and exclusion" (2017, 476). This bleeds into the immigration policies within the United Kingdom as the mere presumption that disabled people are not contributing to the economy strengthens the barrier preventing disabled workers from integrating into the country and labour market.

There is also a lot of pre-existing research regarding refugees and asylum seekers in the UK. This research is not as prevalent for Canada or the United States so offers a new perspective. Disabled refugees are almost completely ignored both throughout the immigration process and once they are settled in the UK (Roberts, 2000). Despite refugees and asylum seekers acquiring the same rights as a British citizen once they have been granted entry, "refugees face significant difficulties when attempting to access services and resettle" (Roberts, 2000, 945). The services and support available to both refugees and disabled people have been gradually reduced (Yeo, 2019, 676) which suggests that barriers in access to support are heightened for disabled refugees. Disabled refugees and asylum seekers are a minority within both the disabled population and refugee population, therefore it is easier for their needs to be dismissed by service providers (Roberts, 2000, 944). Furthermore, the language used regarding disability continues to uphold ableist constructs as Yeo suggests, "labels of 'vulnerability' obscure systemic oppression and distract from the rights and achievements of disabled people" (2019, 676). These presumed notions are what limit opportunity for disabled refugees and immigrants, even before entering the country.

Analysis of Australia

The final system to analyze is the Australian immigration system. Australia uses a points-based system that judges applying immigrants based on age,

education, and work experience similar to Canada (Waldeck & Guthrie, 2017, 219). Australia has two acts in place relevant to this analysis; the Migration Act of 1958 and the Disability Discrimination Act of 1992. Canada does not have an anti-discrimination act for people with disabilities, the closest policy in place in Canada is the Human Rights Act of 1985. The fact that Australia has the Disability Discrimination Act in place however, does not actually protect disabled immigrants. The Disability Discrimination Act does not apply to the Migration Act which means that discrimination on the grounds of disability is lawful under the Migration Act (Waldeck & Guthrie, 2017, 219). This is intentional as the Migration Act replaced the highly discriminatory Immigration Restriction Act of 1901 (St Guillaume & Finlay, 2018, 123). Although abolished, it can be inferred that the Immigration Restriction Act, also referred to as the White Australia Policy, still has underlying influence in Australia's immigration policy (St Guillaume & Finlay, 2018, 123). The act sought to deny non-white and non-normative bodies, which meant people with disabilities were explicitly targeted, and while it may not be as explicitly written in policy today, disabled immigrants still face discrimination in Australia.

Australia uses policies of both locking out and locking up to ensure that the undesirable remain blocked from entering or integrating within the country. Their policies are aimed to bar entry for disabled immigrants and refugees but those who manage to be granted entry then face the risk of being detained. Australia has an issue with wrongfully detaining refugees, and a disproportionately high rate of detained refugees are disabled (Soldatic & Fiske, 2009, 289). When taking refugees into account, even though they are granted entry, it often remains the fact that they do not have the resources necessary to settle including access to medical, health and social care (Dew et al, 2022, 33). Additionally, when factoring in the presence of disability, it is found that there is a lack of accountability on the part of the state in ensuring accommodation and medical needs are met. There needs to be a collaborative effort between refugee specific services, disability services, and health services in order to ensure that intersectional identities do not fall through the cracks (Dew et al, 2022, 33). This means individuals that are a part of multiple marginalized identities can get the resources and care they need.

Furthermore, the "Migration Act gives extraordinary powers to individual officers to deprive a person of their liberty with little administrative and no judicial oversight" (Soldatic & Fiske, 2009, 299). This means that officers may infringe on the freedoms of the immigrant that would otherwise be respected within Australia's borders for the purpose of determining who is worthy of being granted entry. Not only has this been observed with the detainment of disabled migrants but also with the mistreatment of disabled asylum seekers coming to Australia (St Guillaume & Finlay, 2018, 119). The goal of the border seems to be to ensure that society is made up of what the state claims to be of elite stature. One that promotes the advancement of the country rather than its supposed hindrance by unwanted disabled individuals which are determined to be flawed bodies that subside the progress and prosperity of all due to their supposed reliance on the state.

Discussion on the Different Systems

In the immigration systems that were explored, it's clear that the points-based system is an increasingly preferred approach among the West. The merit-based systems of Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia can be compared and contrasted with each other as well as the system within the United States. The point-based systems explicitly choose who they admit based on a cost-benefit analysis that prioritizes potential economic contributions and in contrast, the US claims to prefer to admit based on family connections yet it too heavily emphasizes economic contributions and independence. Regardless of how these neoliberal nations define their immigration systems and policies, it is clear that disabled immigrants and refugees are prevented from settling. Those with disabilities or families with disabled family members face a multitude of barriers that construct a notion that they are unwanted on the grounds of being a burden on the economy and social services. Families are left divided, refugees are detained, and disabled immigrants do not get access to necessary services, presuming that they are even allowed entry into their new country in the first place.

The points-based system was created with the intention of removing all racial, ethnic, national, and religious biases alongside any discriminatory factors that may disadvantage marginalized peoples when immigrating. However, since merit is awarded based

on skills associated with health or economic potential, the points-based system is rooted in eugenic ideology. Eugenics is an ideology that reinforces compulsory able-bodiedness, which is the standardization of hiding disability and operating under expectations of physically typical conditions (McRuer, 2013, 301). Eugenic thinking is deeply embedded within neoliberal democracies, which translates into policies with the underlying intentions to discriminate against or even remove disabled people from society (Wilson, R.A., 2018, 1). Disabled individuals are simply seen as a population to be taken care of hence the idea that with disabled immigrants comes a burdensome responsibility on the state (Dolmage, 2018, 134). Canada, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia are the beacons of neoliberal democracy, and in turn embody the hidden discrimination enacted on disabled people, both within their borders and those seeking out immigration. This is despite the differing immigration systems between the parliamentary democracies versus the US since ultimately they result in the same action and, with regards to services, inaction taken by these countries that effectively alienate immigrants and refugees with disabilities from the rest of society. The liberal democracy is the foundation for these immigration policies (Natter, 2018, 1) Therefore, regardless of their similarities or differences, they all work to uphold a neoliberal hegemony, which shuts out disabled people.

Conclusion

We tend to think of the international reputation of Canada and its Western allies as nations that are welcoming towards immigrants and refugees. However, disability has not reached that level of welcome and tolerance; it lacks the societal and governmental push to be fully embraced within a nation's borders. As explored, the points-based system is the ideal immigration system for many neoliberal democracies as they cite it to be the system that moves away from historical prejudices. However, the points-based system relies on a list of skills one must possess or obtain in order to be considered valuable and worthy of admission, skills which may present barriers for disabled people. The points-based system of Canada, the UK, and Australia employs a cost-benefit analysis which prioritizes economic contributions and views disabled people as a potential strain or hindrance to economic prosperity. The treatment of disabled immigrants is no better in the US, where they claim to focus on family reunification in their immigration system. All these systems rely on compulsory able-bodiedness to construct ableist policies and practices, ultimately excluding disabled immigrants and refugees by determining those individuals to be undesirable.

Work Cited

Bristol, M. and Choi, K. (2022). Immigration: US vs. Canada. *Global Research and Consulting Group Insights*, 1-5. https://insights.grcglobalgroup.com/immigration-us-vs-canada-by/#:~:text=In%20terms%20of%20policy%2C%20the,the%20flexibility%20of%20immigration%20policy

Chadha, E. (2008). "mentally defectives" not welcome: Mental disability in canadian immigration law, 1859-1927. *Disability Studies Quarterly, 28*(1). https://doi.org/10.18061/dsq.v28i1.67

Dew, A., Lenette, C., Wells, R., Higgins, M., McMahon, T., Coello, M., Momartin, S., Raman, S., Bibby, H., Smith, L., & Boydell, K. (2022). 'in the beginning it was difficult but things got easier': Service use experiences of family members of people with disability from Iraqi and Syrian refugee backgrounds. *Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities, 20*(1), 33–44. https://doi.org/10.1111/jppi.12424

Dolmage, J. T. (2018). *Disabled upon arrival: Eugenics, immigration, and the construction of race and disability.* Ohio State University Press.

El-Lahib, Y. (2016). Troubling constructions of Canada as a 'land of opportunity' for immigrants: A critical disability lens. *Disability & Society, 31*(6), 758–776. https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2016.1200460

El-Lahib, Y., & Wehbi, S. (2011). Immigration and disability: Ableism in the policies of the Canadian state. *International Social Work, 55*(1), 95–108. https://doi.org/10.1177/0020872811407941

Elrick, J. (2020). Bureaucratic implementation practices and the making of Canada's merit-based immigration policy. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 48*(1), 110–128. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183x.2020.1817731

Gerber, D. A. (2005). Comment: Immigration history and disability history. *Journal of American Ethnic History, 24*(3), 49–53. https://doi.org/10.2307/27501598

Government of Canada. (2023). "Federal Skilled Worker Program (Express Entry): Six selection factors" *Government of Canada*. https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/express-entry/eligibility/federal-skilled-workers/six-selection-factors-federal-skilled-workers.html

Hughes, B. (2017). Impairment on the move: the disabled incomer and other invalidating intersections. *Disability & society, 32*(4), 467–482. https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2017.1298991

McRuer, R. (2013). Compulsory Able-Bodiedness and Queer/Disabled Existence in *The Disability Studies Reader.* 369-378.

Natter, K. (2018). Rethinking immigration policy theory beyond 'western liberal democracies.' *Comparative Migration Studies, 6*(1). https://doi.org/10.1186/s40878-018-0071-9

Newbold, K. B., & Simone, D. (2015). Comparing disability amongst immigrants and native-born in Canada. *Social Science & Medicine, 145*, 53–62. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2015.09.035

Ressa, T. W. (2022). Disability, race, and immigration intersectionality: Disempowering the disabled through institutionalized ableism in American Higher Education. *The Educational Forum, 87*(1), 17–32. https://doi.org/10.1080/00131725.2022.2065711

Roberts, K. (2000). Lost in the System? Disabled Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Britain. *Disability & Society 15*(6), 943-948.

Soldatic, K., & Fiske, L. (2009). Bodies 'locked up': Intersections of disability and race in Australian immigration. *Disability & Society, 24*(3), 289–301. https://doi.org/10.1080/09687590902789453

St Guillaume, L., & Finlay, E. (2018). Disabled mobility and the production of impairment: The case of Australia's migration policy framework. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, 59(1), 119–131. https://doi.org/10.1111/apv.12182

Waldeck, E., & Guthrie, R. (2007). Disability discrimination and immigration in Australia. *International Journal of Discrimination and the Law, 8*(4), 219–236. https://doi.org/10.1177/135822910700800402

Walsh, P. (2021). Policy Primer: The UK's 2021 points-based immigration system. *The Migration Observatory at the University of Oxford*. https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/primers/policy-primer-the-uks-2021-points-based-immigration-system/

Weber, M. C. (2015). Immigration and Disability in the United States and Canada. (Exploring Law, Disability, the Challenge of Equality in Canada and the United States). *Windsor Yearbook of Access to Justice, 32*(2), 19-36.

Wilson, D. J. (2009). "No defectives need apply": Disability and immigration. *OAH Magazine of History, 23*(3), 35–40. https://doi.org/10.1093/maghis/23.3.35

Wilson, R. A. (2018). Eugenic thinking. *Philosophy, Theory, and Practice in Biology, 10*(20220112). https://doi.org/10.3998/ptpbio.16039257.0010.012

Yeo, R. (2019). The regressive power of labels of vulnerability affecting disabled asylum seekers in the UK. *Disability & Society, 35*(4), 676–681. https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2019.1639688

Fine Arts Review Team

Harmony Handsaeme	Tomiwa Babalola	Kohan Eybergen
Reshma (Rjay) Ram	Sabrina Shanta	

Humanities Review Team

Phoebe Lam	Madelyn Barr	Jenikka Kirkland
Anna Cey	Catherine Moroziuk	Sarah Morse
Aoife Devlin-O'Connor	Laura Timmons	

Social Sciences Review Team

Padgett Hiew	Brandon Kuhknke	Stephanie Brooke Maffitt
Marie Baddogon	Grace Christiansen	Aleah Klein-Gebbinck

Copy Editing Team

Padgett Hiew	Phoebe Lam	Madelyn Barr
Carlson Ng	Trevor Talbott	Laura Timmons
Stephanie Brooke Maffitt		

With Special Thanks To

Christine Brown	Arthur Macatangay	Katie Cuyler

Oasis Executive Team

Hussain Alhussainy *President*	**Layla Alhussainy** *Vice President Internal*	**Jayden Blumhagen** *Vice President Academic*
Prishna Sweeney *Vice President Finance*	**Alex Ballos** *Vice President External*	**Nathan Perez** *Vice President Outreach and Events*

Oasis Council

Cameron Kennedy *Fine Arts Councillor*	**Harmony Handsaeme** *Fine Arts Councillor*	**Aoife Devlin-O'Connor** *Humanities Councillor*
Jenikka Kirkland *Humanities Councillor*	**Bronwyn Johnston** *Social Sciences Councillor*	**Nathan Thiessen** *Social Sciences Councillor*
Jasleen Mahindru *International Councillor*		



crossings.

an undergraduate arts journal