

SUURJ: Seattle University Undergraduate Research Journal

Volume 4

Article 1

2020

SUURJ Volume 4 Entire Volume

Editors of SUURJ

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.seattleu.edu/suurj>

Recommended Citation

Editors of SUURJ (2020) "SUURJ Volume 4 Entire Volume," *SUURJ: Seattle University Undergraduate Research Journal*. Vol. 4 , Article 1.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.seattleu.edu/suurj/vol4/iss1/1>

This Entire Volume is brought to you for free and open access by the Seattle University Journals at ScholarWorks @ SeattleU. It has been accepted for inclusion in SUURJ: Seattle University Undergraduate Research Journal by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks @ SeattleU.



SUURJ



4
VOLUME

Seattle University Undergraduate Research Journal
June 2020

Chief Faculty Editors

Tara Roth
Hannah Tracy

Designer

Caleb Hou, '14

Student Editors

Ella Campbell
Hatcher Chapman
Helen Hills
Erin Kiuttu
Annika Le
Ciara Murphy
Michael Pazen
Delaney Ryburn
Allie Schiele
Elena Selthun
Ryan Thelin

Faculty Content Editors

Ken Allan
Onur Bakiner
Serena Cosgrove
Kristin Hultgren
June Johnson Bube
Mark Jordan
Erik Olsen
Christopher A. Paul
Nova Robinson
Michael J. Spinetta

Faculty Advisory Board

Marc A. Cohen
Serena Cosgrove
June Johnson Bube
Rochelle Lundy
Steven Klee

Founding Chief Faculty Editor

Molly Clark Hillard

Founding Student Editorial Team

Taylor Martino
Julia McGee
Hannah Rips
Chloe Traynor
Anyia Vindla



Table of Contents

4	Welcome to <i>SUURJ</i>
6	Core and University Honors Writing
7	“The Relationship Between White Supremacy and Capitalism: A Socioeconomic Study on Embeddedness in the Market and Society.” <i>Cara Nguyen</i>
17	Short Communications
18	“Anthropogenic Debris in the Puget Sound: Review, Methods, and Analysis.” <i>Koryna Boudinot and Diana DiMarco</i>
27	“The Threat of Climate Change on Alpine Birds and their Habitats.” <i>Leticia Santillana Fernandez</i>
45	Full-Length Research Articles
46	“Identity and Social Support: LGBTQIA+ Individuals and Help Seeking Behaviors.” <i>Erin Alberts and Natasha Rohrsetzer</i>
65	“‘Do You Feel Better Now?’: Reclaiming Holocaust Narratives and Delegating Responsibility in Spiegelman’s <i>Maus</i> .” <i>Elizabeth Ayers</i>
77	“Framing the Center: Belize and Panamá within the Central American Imagined Community.” <i>Isabeau Belisle Dempsey</i>
98	“The Rise of Neo-Nationalism and the Front National in France.” <i>Austin Nelson</i>
119	“Interrogating Colonial Legacies: Jeffrey Gibson’s Indigenous Futurism.” <i>Mariah Ribeiro</i>
138	“Learning from the Failures and Institutionalized Ideology of Colonial Feminist Education Programs in Afghanistan.” <i>Elena Selthun</i>
156	“Diversity and Disability: Why Disability Services Syllabi Statements Hurt Inclusivity.” <i>Tracy Spencer</i>
177	Contributor Biographies



Welcome to *SUURJ*

Welcome to the fourth volume of the *Seattle University Undergraduate Research Journal* (*SUURJ*). Our team of student editors is excited to publish the product of our yearlong partnership between our dedicated editorial board, wonderful faculty content editors, and talented student writers. It is an essential value of *SUURJ* to highlight diverse undergraduate perspectives that are often dismissed in academia. As editors, we appreciate that *SUURJ* has offered us the opportunity to engage with conversations about topics outside of our disciplines, and we are committed to providing our community the same opportunity.

This year, we are excited to present an interdisciplinary journal that includes subject matters such as biology, art history, international studies, psychology, history, communications, English, and economics. While we do not select works based on a theme, we found that many of this year's pieces focused on representing marginalized communities and advocating for social change—ranging from studies of climate change to critiques of structural inequities around the world and right here at Seattle University. Our authors are not only writing about social change; through their work, they are creating it. As editors of a publication focused on amplifying the diverse and powerful voices of Seattle University's undergraduate student body, we are humbled to provide a platform for our community to engage with these perspectives. Our journal has genuinely been a labor of love, passion, and collaboration.

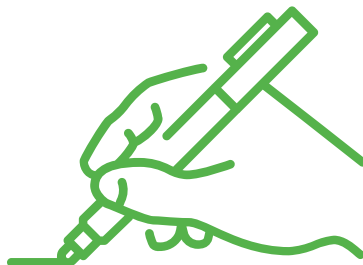
Our team had the pleasure of welcoming Professors Hannah Tracy and Tara Roth as *SUURJ*'s co-chief faculty editors. We have witnessed their work and dedication to the journal through late nights, stressful deadlines, and our unceasing questions. Working with Professors Tracy and Roth has been a blessing in our lives, as students, as editors, and as friends. Not only have they embraced the history of the journal started by Dr. Molly Clark Hillard, but they have allowed us to make it our own. Because of the work of the editors in each consecutive year, submissions to the journal continue to grow in number, and we are thrilled to have made our own contributions to the success of *SUURJ*.

Although we are *absolutely* biased, we could not imagine having a better editorial team. Each of us brought our own perspectives, experiences, and talents to the table. Without this collaboration, *SUURJ* would not have been possible. Although our final quarter together has been interrupted by the challenges that the world has been facing due to the coronavirus, *SUURJ* has given us a sense of stability and community. We hope that witnessing the integration of minds, majors, and passions will offer you the same experience.

In coming years, we look forward to growing the journal and solidifying its role in our Seattle University community. Volume 4 truly speaks to our journal's mission of providing a platform for students across disciplines to enter into larger academic conversations, and we are

excited to see how Volume 5 continues to progress this mission. In these uncertain times, it is vital to celebrate the accomplishments of our students. Thank you for supporting *SUURJ* and for all your help in realizing our mission.

Stay safe,
SUURJ Student Editorial Team



Core and University Honors Writing

With its emphasis on seminar-style classes, focus on research-based inquiry, and practice of writing in revision, our liberal arts core curriculum sets Seattle University apart from other institutions of higher learning. Our University Honors program also sets us apart, as an interdisciplinary program of academically rigorous courses for highly motivated students; starting in freshman year, University Honors offers a variety of tracks including: Intellectual Traditions, Society, Policy and Citizenship, and Innovations, each of which place a strong emphasis on writing as a process as students peer review and edit to produce scholarly work. We felt strongly that to capture the spirit of Seattle University and to convey that spirit to a national audience, SUURJ should include writing from the Core and/or University Honors.

The Relationship Between White Supremacy and Capitalism: A Socioeconomic Study on Embeddedness in the Market and Society

Cara Nguyen, Economics

Faculty Mentor: Erik Olsen

Faculty Content Editor: Erik Olsen

Student Editor: Hatcher Chapman

Abstract

Economic liberalism has built a market system that is founded on the belief that it is separate from other social institutions, that it is self-regulating, and that it operates without bias. This paper claims that despite the classical liberal values that the market is built to serve, capitalism exists within a context in which societal contracts like cultural and racial contracts influence market outcomes. Specifically, the racial contract in the United States contextualizes the capitalist free market system as a system that normalizes, empowers, and encourages the exploitation and abuse of Nonwhite people, specifically Black and Indigenous folks. The market was constructed and functions within a white supremacist society, which means that its outcomes uphold white supremacy. By weaving discussions of the foundations of the free market system like market embeddedness, neoliberalism and economization, settler versus Indigenous views of land, and the creation of racial contracts, the paper details how capitalism and white supremacy are intimately related. Ultimately, the domination and exploitation of Nonwhite people will continue to be an integral part of the liberal capitalist market system, regardless of whether this is done consciously or not. It will continue because it is built into the structures of the market. The project of challenging white supremacy, then, is directly tied up in the project of dismantling the capitalist market.

The conceptualization of the free market by Adam Smith and the discussion of private property by John Locke both built the foundation of capitalism and served as a basis for the way that capitalism evolved into its modern form. Exhibiting classical liberal values such as individual freedom and equal opportunity under the law, the way that Smith envisions the free market seems to result in a system that gives everyone equal chances at sustaining themselves in society; yet, how the market functions shows otherwise. Economic liberalism has built a market system that is founded on the belief that it is separate from other social institutions, that it is self-regulating, and that it operates without bias. I claim that despite the classical liberal values that the market is built to serve, capitalism exists within a context in which societal contracts like cultural and racial contracts influence market outcomes. Specifically, the racial contract in the United States contextualizes the capitalist free market system as a system that normalizes, empowers, and encourages the exploitation and abuse of nonwhite people, specifically Black and Indigenous folks. The market was constructed and functions within a white supremacist society, which means that its outcomes uphold white supremacy. My analysis will explore how the market and society exist in an intimate relationship that results in the upholding of white supremacist institutions, practices, exchanges, and systems. I first seek to understand how the market interacts with those that use it by dissecting the work of Milton Friedman, Karl Polanyi, and Wendy Brown, then contextualize this in the context of racial contracts discussed by Charles Mills and Robert Bunge. Ultimately, this paper will show how capitalism as a system contributes to the dehumanization, exploitation, and subjection of nonwhite communities in the United States.

Smith's free market depends on the idea that all actors are able to make whichever decisions in their self-interest and that no one is able to be coerced into making decisions against their will. Milton Friedman, a foundational neoliberalist is a great fan of the free market, believing that if all actors are voluntary and informed, "co-operation is thereby achieved without coercion" (Friedman 13). His belief in capitalism's ability to provide the needs for all assumes that, technically, all those who are involved in the market are in a certain sense choosing to take part in it, which means that they have the desires, resources, and knowledge to do so. Free-market liberalism presupposes that decisions made within the market are free, meaning that folks are allowed to make their own choices based on their self-interests. In pursuing our self-interests through the market, everyone ought to have a meaningful opportunity to get what they want. Friedman asserts that the market is built to be impersonal, that it "separates economic activities from political views and protects men from being discriminated against in their economic activities for reasons that are irrelevant to their productivity – whether these reasons are associated with their views or their color" (Friedman 21). This reveals his core belief: that the market is successful because it is separate from other social institutions and that bias is unable to make its way into market outcomes because of

this distinction. His line of thought comes from a long tradition of economic theory. However, sociologists, anthropologists, and political theorists have dismantled this long-standing assumption and show that the market and society are deeply embedded in one another.

Karl Polanyi is the most notable thinker when it comes to discussing the embeddedness of the market. He is an economic theorist with a strong background in history, anthropology, and social theory, often drawing on the works of Max Weber and Karl Marx to develop an understanding of economic systems and the exchanges that occur within them. In *The Great Transformation*, he claims that “man’s economy...is submerged in his social relationships” (Polanyi 38). His work details the history of economic thought, recognizing that much of it has depended on conceptualizing the economy as a system of markets that works through automatically functioning price mechanisms (Polanyi xxii). He describes economic liberalism’s goal with creating the free market system as a, “veritable faith in man’s secular salvation through a self-regulating market” (Polanyi 141). Polanyi argues that economic liberalism has failed to understand that, “the control of the economic system by the market is of overwhelming consequence to the whole organization of society” (Polanyi 60). Simply stated, the market functions within social institutions. Since the market is run by and engaged with by humans, the relationships and politics of community life bleed into market outcomes. The way that individuals move through their communities is reflected in how they move in the market; market decisions are less about an individual’s accumulation of material goods, and more about being a way to, “safeguard his social standing, his social claims, his social assets. He values material goods only in so far as they serve his end” (Polanyi 48). The critical takeaway from Polanyi is the idea that the market cannot be separated from society because the market is simply a tool by which individuals and communities seek to meet their needs, and needs are informed by social and geographic locations, political alignments, and religious beliefs, all of which are rooted in different power dynamics and societal structures. Through Polanyi, we can see clearly how economic liberalism’s desire to make the market an impersonal, autonomous system is impossible.

Whereas Polanyi helps us understand how society has bled into the market, Wendy Brown helps us understand how the market has bled into society. Her studies on neoliberalism as it exists in the United States today show that it has led to the economization of all things, namely the self and the state. Economization refers to the fact that everyone begins to evaluate all aspects of society on the basis of economic value. In this process, everyone in society begins to seek out ways in which to, “maximize their capital value in the present and enhance their future value, and both persons and states do so through practices of entrepreneurialism, self-investment, and/or attracting investors” (Brown 22). Neoliberalism seeks to economize ways of being in community, and to bring market mechanisms into relationships to oneself and others. As neoliberalism attempts to affirm free markets and to push for dis-embeddedness, it

enacts policies of deregulation and privatization that shift societal structures from communal ways of being to strictly individualized and isolated relations. Each individual becomes defined by their economic value, which is calculated in their ability to produce, sell, market, and invest. Brown emphasizes that the processes of deregulating the market and privatizing public goods are implemented by those with political and financial power. This leads us to continue our analysis on market embeddedness by understanding that alongside our preferences and needs, bringing our relationships into the market inevitably draw in the power dynamics that exist within them. These power dynamics are the result of a variety of social contracts including but not limited to, political contracts, racial contracts, gender contracts, and religious contracts. We begin to see how the market is far from impersonal that each market decision engages with power dynamics which allow us to see how structures of inequality have emerged and are fortified through “free” market mechanisms. Is it truly a free market if its functions are constrained by and informed by power relations?

To speak of the market is to speak of value. Under capitalism, different people have different economic values based on what they’re able to offer to the market. This indicates that humans have values beyond their physical bodies and personal attributes, but also the land that they occupy and the labor and capital that they are able to provide. Under capitalism, land, labor, and capital are intimately tied to what we consume and how we consume. The broader question that must be asked is how land, labor, and capital are intimately tied to power relations, and more specifically to white supremacy. How might white supremacy inform the way we interact with these aspects of capitalism, and how might that inform the way interact with one another? It is necessary to understand how folks are both racialized and then valued in capitalism in these terms. Brown’s discussion of economization helps us see how conceptualizations of the value of land, labor, and capital are intimately connected to ideas of human value.

Understanding the roots of the free market system illuminate how its processes have always been racialized. Through reading Locke, we see how the inception of private property, a key aspect of capitalism, is informed by racialized and generally exclusionary harmful foundations pertaining to a commercial culture organized around the values of productivity and control of land. His attitude towards land represents the sentiments of settler colonizers and capitalists, who believe that land is only seen as valuable as a means of production. “As much land as a man tills, plants, improves, cultivates, and can use the product of, so much is his property,” states Locke, establishing the core value of free market capitalism (1980 21). His devotion to Christianity informs this perspective, as seen in this quote: “God, when he gave the world in common to all mankind...God and his reason commanded him to subdue the earth, i.e. improve it for the benefit of life, and therein lay out something upon it that was his own, his labour” (Locke 21). This is the cornerstone of the free market, which thrives on

the production and consumption of resources. It is, as Locke would say, God's will to have mankind produce, for to do otherwise would be a waste. The capitalist believes that without labor, land would "scarcely be worth anything" (Locke 27). Capitalism is sustained through the necessity of production, which is based on the idea that all land, labor, and capital ought to be used in this process of production so as to be useful or seen as valuable. In a capitalist society, and its inherently settler colonial attitudes, value is dependent on productivity.

Ideologically opposed to Locke is Robert Bunge, an Indigenous Lakota Sioux writer who asserts that land is valuable beyond what it offers to production. In "Land Is A Feeling," Bunge provides a perspective on land that aims to emphasize the difference in the white settler perspective and Native American perspective, stating that, "to the native American, [land] is the mother of all that lives, the Ur-source of life itself, a living, breathing entity – a person" (2). Bunge asserts that to the Native American, the land is a provider and a being to be cared for, rather than something to be exploited for the sake of production. There is a deep connection between the land and those that inhabit it, one that encompasses identity, life, and meaning. To sever that connection by viewing land as merely a means of production is a white settler perspective that ultimately leads to religiously sanctioned exploitation and abuse. Bunge notes that the "European newcomer to America had a land ethic based on sanctions originating in both the Bible and Classical Greek thought – namely, Genesis I:28," which claims that man ought to 'subdue' and 'have dominion over...every living thing that moveth upon the earth'" (4). The key part of this text reading is when Bunge makes the connection between the white man's relationship with land and the white man's relationship with others. In reference to the colonial mindset, he says that the "lack of respect for growing, living things soon led to lack of respect for humans too" (2). In viewing land as something to be cultivated and dominated instead of something that has inherent value, one begins to view a human as something to be used instead of someone that has inherent existential value. This ideology leads to the emergence of unjust power relations.

Where does this leave the person of color? Locke's idea of who belonged to society centered on the idea of reason. Those who are rational are able to consent to forming civil society, or the body politic. Those who are not, are stuck in a state of chaos in which, "all government in the world is the product only of force and violence, and that men live together by no other rules but that of beasts...and so lay a foundation for perpetual disorder and mischief, tumult, sedition and rebellion" (Locke 7). The opposite of this society, the one in which rational men agree to create, is a "community for their comfortable, safe, and peaceable living one amongst another, in a secure enjoyment of their properties, and a greater security against any, that are not a part of it" (Locke 52). Placing these words in the context of the white settler colonial state, we can see a distinction is developed between civil society and Indigenous societies. The civil man is capable of reason, government, and agreement, and the

Indigenous man is only capable of violence, force, and unruliness. This sets up a dynamic in which the Indigenous person is not only incapable of joining civil society, but is, by nature, directly opposed to it. The Indigenous person is not just a threat to civil man but to private property, the ultimate belonging of concern. The civil man is a cultivator, a harvester, a planter, and a worker, rooted in rationality, productivity, and morality. The Indigenous man, violent, uncontrollable, and animalistic, is useless. The white settler is of value while the Indigenous person is not.

Mills' work, *The Racial Contract*, analyzes the devaluation of the nonwhite person, concluding that the social contract conceived of by Locke was ultimately an agreement between other white people (men, specifically) that actively cast aside nonwhite communities. Indigenous people are "deemed childlike, incapable of self-rule and handling their own affairs, and thus appropriately wards of the state" (Mills 13). It is incredibly profitable for the white man to view the nonwhite person as a child that needs looking after because it allows for him to take ownership over the nonwhite person in the name of taking care of them. The white person sees the nonwhite person as someone lacking direction and moral grounding, thus justifying the white man's desire for control and paternalism. It is important to note that Friedman also echoes these sentiments of paternalism in his conceptions of the marketplace. He believes that the only types of people that cannot properly participate in the market are madmen and children. He states that they are not intellectually capable of making choices for themselves and thus are unable to engage in the market as an equal competitor. When read next to Mills, it becomes clear that the categories of madmen and children can be understood to include those who are not seen as capable by the dominant capitalist class. The infantilizing of people of color was done purposefully to ensure economic domination. Mills points out that the concepts of discovery and exploration that exist presuppose that, "if no white person has been there before, then cognition cannot really have taken place" (45). This belief that nonwhite people are incapable of thinking for themselves leads to the creation of the Western ideal in which Europe "emerges as the global locus of rationality" (Mills 45). An assumed lack of morality and rationality justifies "the need for Europeanization if moral redemption is to be possible" (Mills 46). Thus, all of society that is untouched by European, Western, white ideals is inherently worthless and only gains value when Europeanization happens. Actions based on these ideals is white supremacy at work. White supremacy is global and categorizes everyone into two categories: white and nonwhite. These categories could also be understood as valuable and worthless. Since the market cannot exist outside of society, this leads to an assumption that white people are the only ones valuable in the so-called free, opportunity-creating market.

So, we end up back to the concept of the market, only this time with the acknowledgement that nonwhite people have no stake in the market as it exists in its white supremacist global context. The simultaneous and connected structures of free market capitalism and white supremacy have not only dehumanized Nonwhite people, but have resulted in their abuse and exploitation in the market. We return to Brown's theory of economization, which emphasizes economic value as the most prominent indicator of human value under capitalism, to explain how this happens. This parallels with Bunge's reading on land and worth; everyone is deemed as worthless if they are not actively working towards creating value, whether that be through external production or internal transformation. The idea is reminiscent of Bunge's assertion that once land loses its meaning, humans do as well. As if the white man did not already have the tools to debilitate the nonwhite person, the economization of society as brought about by neoliberalism and more generally by ideological defenses of the capitalist market present the white man with more opportunities to undermine and devalue nonwhite communities. Measuring the economic value of a human is calculated in their ability to produce, sell, market, and invest. If someone is unable to give another economic benefit or advantage, then the capitalist mindset says they are irrelevant. White supremacy's role in economization returns us to the idea that those untouched and undeveloped by European values cannot properly contribute to society. Thus, even in an economic sense, the nonwhite person is unable to properly assert their value. It is then justifiable to reject the integration, involvement, and investment of nonwhite people because such decisions are not economically sound.

This conflicts with Friedman's depiction of the market as a place free of coercion. To counteract the argument that people of color still choose to participate in the market, we ought to remember that a choice made under external economic pressure is not a free choice. In order to survive at all, nonwhite people must interact with a market that routinely disenfranchises them. To say that involvement in the market is voluntary is an irresponsible conclusion to make, as nonwhite people, who are devalued from the market, still need access to resources, goods, and services in order to meet their own needs. The interaction that a white man has with the market is infinitely different than the interaction that a person of color has with the market, simply because one has the ability to make decisions freely and the other does not. Conclusively, one could say that the nonwhite person is coerced into entering the market, as there are no other means in which they can sustain themselves. Participating in a system that is built to harm and exploit you contributes to the constant dehumanization and degradation that nonwhite people face living in a white supremacist society. Since both white and nonwhite people are involved in the market, a power structure arises within the market itself in which the white man has the ability to bend the market in his favor at the cost of the nonwhite person. All this is done in the name of protecting the nonwhite person— "I know what you

need, so heed my instructions.” Nonwhite people are thus either excluded from some markets or coerced into the purchasing of overpriced products and incompetent services because they have no other options. Whatever the white men wish to sell to nonwhite communities, and at whatever price he deems acceptable, are the only options available because the white men are in control of the market. What is supposedly a system of equal opportunity and freedom, is in actuality a system that allows for the domination of one group over another in the name of economic maximization and production.

The market continues to feed white supremacy in so far as white supremacy continues to power the market. Capitalism thrives off of white supremacy because it creates a justification for the exploitation that is necessary for individuals to chase profit and hoard the means of production. To separate society and the market is to ignore the ways that they uphold each other, both in the realms of economic power and societal relationships. The market is a function of white supremacy just as white supremacy is a function of the market. The use and abuse of nonwhite communities to propel white institutions into further economic, social, and political gain is attributable to the reality that all social forces exist in a direct relationship to white supremacy. Free market capitalism, which Friedman, a white, property-owning man, places all of his faith in, is classified as functioning properly only because it is working in his favor. If the pursuit of self-interest continues as an unquestioned ideology, which it will under capitalism, then the white man will never confront the fact that nonwhite people fuel his success. If capitalism continues, the domination and oppression of nonwhite people will never be challenged by the white ruling force. It is also important to recognize that it is not just individual self-interest that is keeping white supremacist logics in the market. These logics have been so deeply entrenched in the free market capitalist system that it enacts white supremacy on structural levels, meaning that all those that operate under this market system are subject to perpetuating white supremacist social relations and a white supremacist market system. Unfortunately, the system is working exactly as it should and exactly as Bunge said it would, with the land, “consumed, used-up, depleted” and the nonwhite human stripped of their inherent value, dehumanized to the point of becoming an object of the market (10).

Works Cited

Brown, Wendy. *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution*. New York: Zone Books, 2015.

Bunge, Robert. "Land Is a Feeling." Institute of Indian Studies Report of Papers Presented at the Spring Conference, April 19-21, 1979. Vermillion: University of South Dakota, 1979.

Friedman, Milton. *Capitalism and Freedom*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962.

Locke, John. *Second Treatise of Government*. Hackett, 1980.

Mills, Charles W. *The Racial Contract*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014.

Polanyi, Karl. *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2007.

Tucker, Robert C., Karl Marx, and Friedrich Engels. *The Marx-Engels Reader*. New York: Norton, 1978.



Short Communications

This section of the journal was designed primarily, though not exclusively, for the science disciplines. It consists of preliminary data, initial findings, and other brief investigations into a field of inquiry. As an interdisciplinary journal, we wanted to be mindful of the ways in which science and empirically-based social science writing can differ from humanities and qualitative social science writing. Because publications in the sciences are often multi-authored, in which case student researchers might not be the first authors, we wanted to create a space where our science students' research could still be showcased. Science journals in many disciplines have a section like ours (called variously "short communications," "conversations," or "letters") where authors can publish independent work, or roll out individual findings within larger research projects as they emerge. We have developed Short Communications on this model to serve our students in the various science and social science disciplines.

Anthropogenic Debris in the Puget Sound: Review, Methods, and Analysis

Koryna Boudinot, Biology

Diana DiMarco, Marine and Conservation Biology

Faculty Mentors: Peter J. Alaimo, PhD and W. Lindsay Whitlow, PhD

Faculty Content Editor: Mark Jordan, PhD

Student Editor: Ciara Murphy

Abstract

Microplastics are widespread aquatic pollutants that contaminate waterways and originate from human sources, such as packaging or cosmetics. They are smaller than 5.0 mm and include both manufactured plastics (primary), or environmentally degraded plastics (secondary). Concerns about the potential impacts of microplastics through chemical pollutant adsorption, marine organism ingestion, and biomagnification indicate the importance of further investigation into the quantity and types of microplastics in the Puget Sound. Our initial visual analysis using light microscopy identified plastics in samples of both sediment and surface water. An improved plastic extraction method and chemical analysis procedure was developed. In this improved process, samples were filtered through a series of sieves and vacuum filters followed by an adapted enzymatic digestion using proteinase-K in SDS, then density separated using zinc chloride prior to ATR FT-IR analysis. Spectra from various locations were then analyzed to identify microplastic type. This purification method paired with ATR FT-IR analysis is an efficient method that avoids plastic degradation and bias of manual sorting, two known problems of previously published methods, and thus aids in the identification of microplastic contaminants. This allows for increased confidence when making comparisons between identified microplastics.

Anthropogenic debris, specifically microplastics (MPs), are ubiquitous in the environment and are found in aquatic, terrestrial, and atmospheric environments (Masura et al. 2015; Prata 2018). MPs consist of manufactured plastics (primary), or environmentally degraded plastics (secondary), and are defined as plastics that are smaller than 5 mm (Masura et al. 2015). Examples of primary MPs include the microbeads found in cosmetic products, such as facial soaps, while secondary plastics are often the result of degraded materials including single-use plastics, such as plastic bags, bottles, straws, and packaging materials (Masura et al. 2015). Microfibers shed from synthetic clothing are an especially common form of anthropogenic debris. These particles typically enter the marine environment from non-point sources, including runoff into rivers, water treatment plants, and industrial factories, and are spread throughout the world's marine environments by ocean currents (Masura et al. 2015). In the marine environment they can accumulate in seafloor sediment, while larger plastic debris ends up in floating garbage patches and washing up on shorelines around the world (Cole et al. 2011).

MP research has examined the widespread effects of MP ingestion and toxicity on various forms of life. Early research showed that Albatross chicks on Sand Island, Midway Atoll, were being fed plastic pieces by their parents, leading to starvation (Auman and Ludwig 1997). Ingestion of macroplastics, larger than 5mm, are harmful for birds since they often clog the gastrointestinal tract, leading to starvation. MPs are known to be ingested by numerous organisms and recent studies have shown the transfer of hydrophobic toxins from MP-adsorbed particles in the environment to organisms across trophic levels (Masura et al. 2015). Polyethylene microplastics have been shown to adsorb pesticides that have shown to lead to increase toxicity when ingested by marine plankton (Bellas and Gil 2020). Once ingested, these toxins can wreak physiological havoc on bodily tissues, such as the liver, and they have been shown to be especially harmful to the endocrine system (Rochman et al. 2013). Biomagnification of toxins can also have similar health consequences in humans and other animals at higher trophic levels (Cox et al. 2019). The effects of MP ingestion are continuing to be researched and are helping scientists understand the physiological consequences of microplastics.

Due to the increasing global abundance of MPs, it is imperative to define baseline pollution levels and to determine chemical compositions of MPs. Our research at Seattle University has focused on developing a method of MP purification from saltwater, freshwater, and sediment that can be used to determine chemical compositions. We conducted a broad review of the MP extraction-identification methods in the literature to understand current practices in the field. As leaders in the field, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has published recommendations for quantifying synthetic particles from waters and sediments that are based on procedures developed in 2015 (Masura et

al. 2015). Many research institutions in the Pacific Northwest have adopted the methods published by NOAA; however, there is substantial room for improvement. For example, the NOAA method requires numerous steps, including sieving, peroxide oxidation, gravimetric analysis using density separation, and microscope examination. The NOAA procedure only requires gravimetric analysis, using density separation, and visual analysis, using a dissecting microscope, for MP validation, thus simplifying the procedure. Unfortunately, visual identification of MPs using a dissecting microscope is tedious and suffers from observer bias (Hidalgo-Ruz et al. 2012). The NOAA method also lacks a systematic chemical verification method, which is required to determine the composition of MPs. Other studies have shown that using Fourier-transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR), which obtains an infrared spectrum of absorption of a solid, liquid, or gas, enables reliable identification of MPs with high resolution over a wide spectral range and is preferable to visual sorting as a method of analysis (Löder et al. 2017). Variation in methods used in different research institutions shows that there is a need for standardization of field methods and purification procedures. The protocol we developed for enzymatic purification and chemical analysis of MPs is outlined below and can be used to determine baseline levels of anthropogenic pollution.

MPs were isolated and purified from sediment and water as follows: about five liters of surface water including suspended particles or sediment were collected from various locations (Figure 1) and were filtered through a series of metal sieves to remove particles larger than 5 mm (Figure 2). The filtrate was dried under a vacuum and the mass of the dried solids were recorded. Samples were transferred to glass containers and a homogenization buffer was added (400mM Tris-HCl, 0.5% SDS, pH 8). This mixture was incubated at 60° C for 60 minutes to induce protein denaturation, which is more effective at purifying MPs than the NOAA peroxide oxidation method (Karlsson et al. 2017). Proteinase-K was added, followed by CaCl₂, then incubated for >2 hours at 50°C, shaken at room temperature for 20 minutes, and incubated at 60°C for another 20 minutes (Löder et al. 2017). After enzymatic digestion, samples were suspended in a solution of ZnCl₂ at a density of 1.7 g/cm³ to separate the plastics by density. The top fraction, containing the MPs, was collected throughout a period of several hours. The isolated material was then rinsed with purified milli-Q water and left to air dry in a clean environment over the course of several days. Using this method, we were able to remove all identifiable organic matter while preserving the chemical composition of the MPs. Subsequent analysis was performed by ATR-FTIR which generated clear spectra of the polymers. Chemical composition was then determined from the fingerprint region of the FTIR spectra, along with diagnostic C-H stretching bands in the spectral region.

This extraction-identification method avoids plastic degradation and the bias of manual sorting, aiding in the identification of microplastic polymers and allowing for increased

certainty in analysis. This method and subsequent research results can be used or adopted by community science groups to continue MP research in the Puget Sound. We plan to continue this project through a long-term collaboration with scientists at the Seattle Aquarium to measure MP concentrations and to track changes over time in the Puget Sound. Continued monitoring of MPs in the Puget Sound is essential in creating environmental policy changes that are required to regulate and limit anthropogenic waste.

When thinking about MPs as a global environmental and social justice issue, it is especially important to bridge the gap between research establishments and community science organizations. It is imperative to acknowledge our position of power as students of an academic institution with access to funding and laboratory resources. As students, we can facilitate collaboration with community science organizations to create positive change around environmental issues. There are multiple organizations recognized as community science partners by the Seattle Aquarium, including the Puget Soundkeeper Alliance, Discuren Foundation, City of Seattle, City of Burien, King County, University of Washington, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Environmental Science Center, Highline Schools, Seattle Schools, Seattle Rotary, WSU/Island County Cooperative Extension Beach Watchers, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and Fisheries, and Oceans Canada Shorekeepers. Collaboration between academic and community organizations removes barriers to science and increases accessibility to contribute to high level research. We have found that community science organizations are invaluable due to their ability to collect water samples at a much larger capacity than students at an undergraduate university. These samples can be sent to laboratories where the MPs can be isolated and analyzed with methods such as those we have developed. It is vital for us to work together with community science groups through creative methods of collaboration in order to monitor MPs on a broader level, which is necessary for an understanding of their roles as pollutants. Therefore, we hope our work can be utilized to generate reliable data to be used by the community with the goal to ultimately advocate awareness with policy makers and regulatory groups.

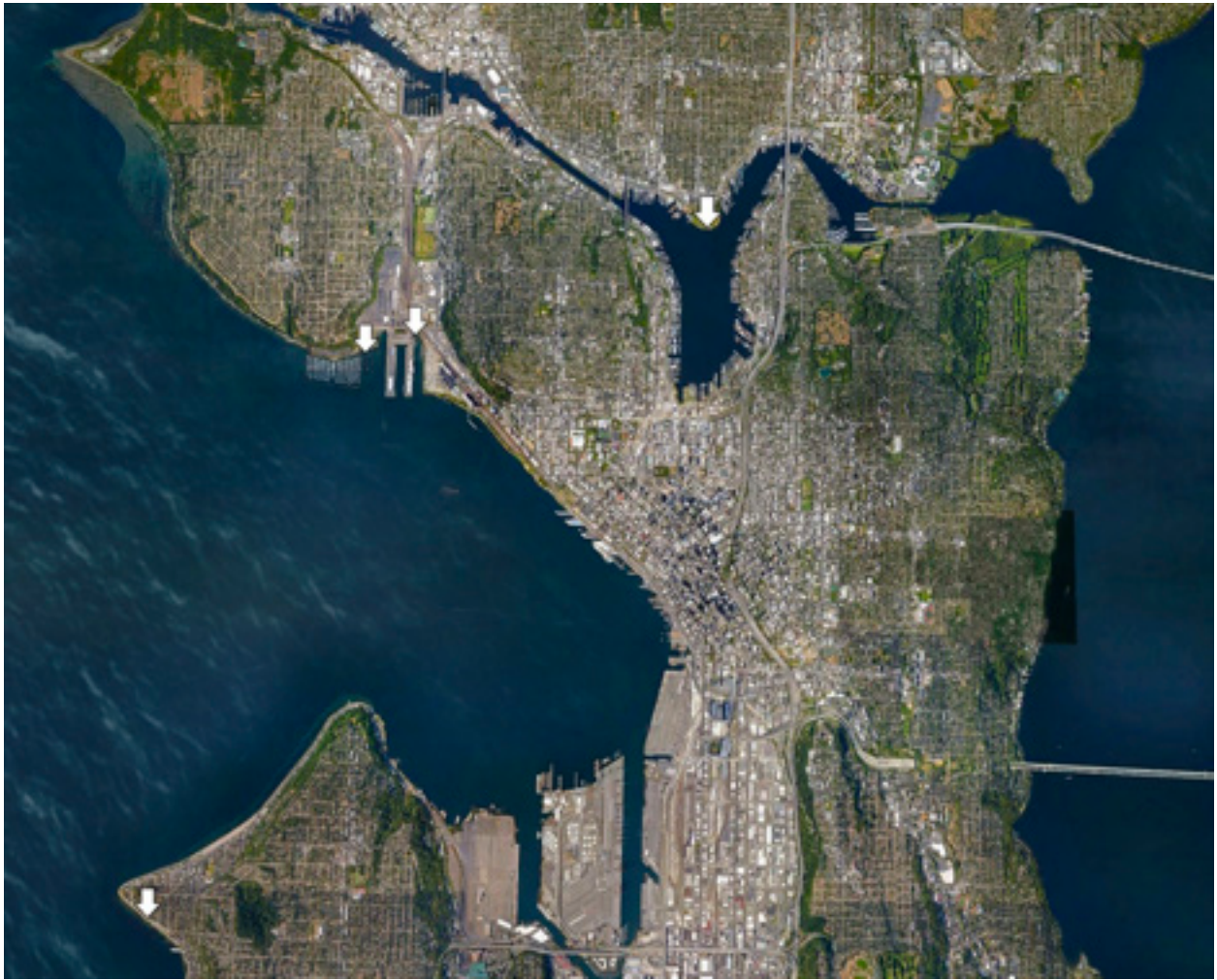


Figure 1 Sediment and water sample locations denoted by white arrows. Initial sediment and water samples were collected from Alki Beach, Gas Works Park, Elliot Bay, and Elliot Bay Combined Sewer Overflow Outlet.

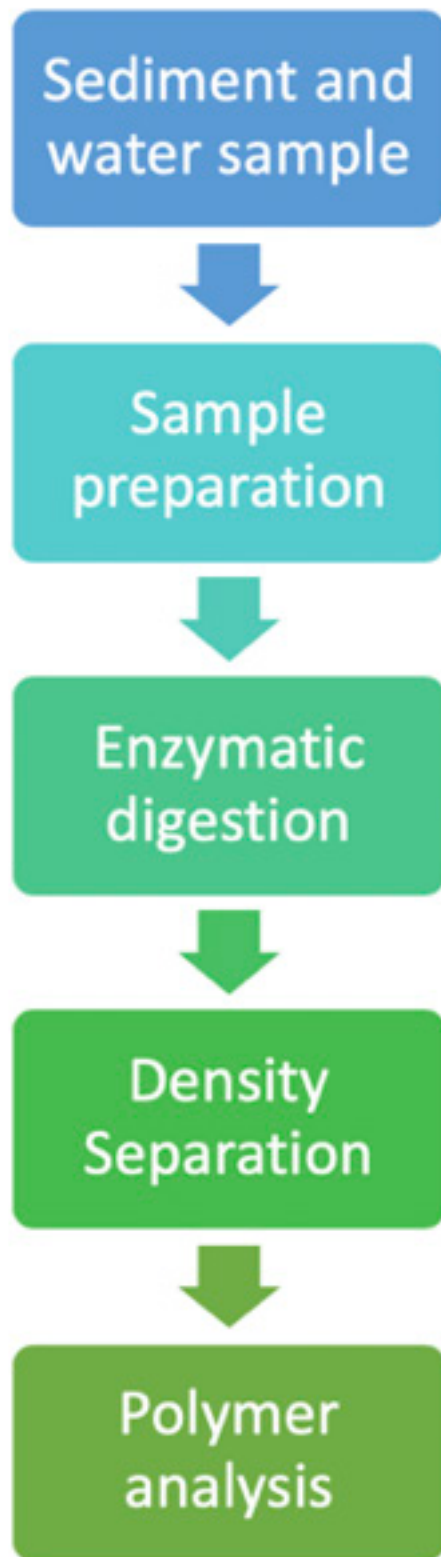


Figure 2 Purification and analysis methods developed for water and sediment samples.

References

- Auman, H, Ludwig, J. 1998. Plastic ingestion by Laysan Albatross chicks on Sand Island, Midway Atoll, in 1994 and 1995. *Albatross Biol Conserv.* 239-244. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237813671>
- Bellas, J, Gil I. 2020. Polyethylene microplastics increase the toxicity of chlorpyrifos to the marine copepod *Acartia tonsa*. *Environ Pollut.* 260. doi:10.1016/j.envpol.2020.114059
- Cole M, Lindeque P, Fileman E, Halsband C, Goodhead R, Moger J, Galloway TS. 2013. Microplastic ingestion by zooplankton. *Environ Sci Tech.* 47(12):6646-6655. doi:10.1021/es400663f
- Cox KD, Covernton GA, Davies HL, Dower JH, Juanes F, Dudas SE. 2019. Human consumption of microplastics. *Environ Sci Tech.* 53(12): 7068-7074. doi:10.1021/acs.est.9b01517
- Hidalgo-Ruz V, Gutow L, Thompson RC, Thiel M. 2012. Microplastics in the marine environment: a review of the methods used for identification and quantification. *Environ Sci Tech.* 46(6): 3060-3075. doi:10.1021/es2031505
- Karlsson TM, Vethaak AD, Almroth BC, Ariese F, van Velzen M, Hassellöv M, Leslie H. 2017. Screening for microplastics in sediment, water, marine invertebrates and fish: method development and microplastic accumulation. *Mar Pollut Bull.* 122(1-2): 403-408. doi:10.1016/j.marpolbul.2017.06.081
- Löder MGJ, Imhof HK, Ladehoff M, Löscher LA, Lorenz C, Mintenig S, Piehl S, Primpke S, Schrank I, Laforsch C, Gerdt G. 2017. Enzymatic purification of microplastics in environmental samples. *Environ Sci Tech.* 51(24): 14283-14292. doi:10.1021/acs.est.7b03055
- Masura J, Baker J, Foster G, Arthur C. 2015. Laboratory methods for the analysis of microplastics in the marine environment: recommendations for quantifying synthetic particles in waters and sediments. NOAA Technical Memorandum NOS-OR&R-48.
- Prata JC. 2018. Airborne microplastics: consequences to human health? *Environ Pollut.* 234: 115-126. doi:10.1016/j.envpol.2017.11.043

Rochman CM, Hoh E, Kurobe T, Teh SJ. 2013. Ingested plastic transfers hazardous chemicals to fish and induces hepatic stress. *Sci Rep.* 3: 1-7. doi:10.1038/srep03263

Supplemental References

Andrady, AL. 2011. Microplastics in the marine environment. *Mar Pollut Bull.* 62(8):1596-1605. doi:10.1016/j.marpolbul.2011.05.030

National Ocean Service. 2018. What is the biggest source of pollution in the ocean? <https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/pollution.html>

Seattle Aquarium. 2020. Community science. <https://www.seattleaquarium.org/community-science>

Van Cauwenberghe L, Janssen CR. 2014. Microplastics in bivalves cultured for human consumption. *Environ Pollut.* 193: 65-70. doi:10.1016/j.envpol.2014.06.010

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Kaley Duggar, who helped us develop the protocol. We would also like to acknowledge Dr. Peter Alaimo and Dr. Lindsay Whitlow for their generous support that has been invaluable. Finally, we would like to thank Julie Masura at UW Tacoma and Shawn Larson at the Seattle Aquarium for sharing their knowledge and providing guidance.

The Threat of Climate Change on Alpine Birds and Their Habitats

Leticia Santillana Fernandez, Marine and Conservation Biology

Faculty Mentor: Kristin Hultgren, PhD

Faculty Content Editor: Kristin Hultgren, PhD

Student Editor: Erin Kiuttu

Abstract

Alpine birds are high-elevation specialists with unique adaptations such as delayed and reduced breeding and the physiological ability to withstand hypoxic, arid, and windy conditions—unfortunately, their populations are expected to decline due to anthropogenic climate change. These birds are short-migrating species, usually only migrating vertically up to the highest peaks for the breeding season. With the changing landscape and climate, scientists have been trying to understand the risk alpine birds face and whether they will change their distribution or decline. Abiotic changes such as drastic retreating of glaciers, reduced snowpack, increased temperatures, and increased precipitation as rain are shrinking the available breeding and foraging habitat of alpine birds. Indirectly, these abiotic changes are triggering biotic changes; for example, forest and shrub vegetation are invading alpine tundra, and snowpack decline is reducing snowbed habitat available for foraging. Additionally, the environmental cues triggered at lower elevations are becoming increasingly mismatched with higher elevation conditions, causing birds to migrate earlier to regions that are still completely covered in snow. Studies focused on understanding alpine bird responses to climate change have found heterogeneity in the birds' responses. Unfortunately, this complicates conservation efforts because it limits our ability to apply one species' response to another. Going forward, conservation efforts should focus on understanding specific bird ecology and on restoring and protecting alpine habitats.

Introduction

Mountain and alpine regions cover about 25% of the Earth's terrestrial surface, and they provide resources for a quarter of its biodiversity (Scridel et al. 2018). More specifically, alpine habitats make up 3% of the terrestrial surface, which is about four million km² (Martin 2001). These complex ecosystems not only accommodate diverse flora and fauna, but their glacial and snowpack content provide humans with a large fraction of the water they consume. The alpine life zone is the region above the natural tree-line and tends to be composed of snowfields, rocky terrain, and tundra vegetation. Although elevation may be a determinant of where an alpine ecosystem begins, the best determinant is actually climate; high winds, low effective moisture, low temperatures, and short growing seasons typically characterize alpine habitats (Martin 2001). In addition, alpine habitats decrease in elevation from smaller latitudes to larger latitudes and from inland to the coast (Martin 2001). Due to these characteristics, many alpine fauna and flora have adapted to sustain themselves in highly variable and extreme environmental conditions. Alpine birds have developed specialized physiological, morphological, and behavioral characteristics to survive such conditions. Birds in alpine ecosystems have developed adaptations for the hypoxic (reduced oxygen concentration) and arid conditions of high elevation environments, such as increased energy expenditure and delayed breeding schedules in comparison to birds at lower elevations (Martin 2001). Although it may not seem worth it to inhabit alpine ecosystems, alpine birds have the advantage of a decreased exposure to parasitism or disease; they also tend to be short-migrating species, which means their breeding sites are closer in proximity to their winter habitats (Martin and Wiebe 2004). Because alpine birds are highly specialized organisms, any changes in their habitats can have a drastic impact on their population densities.

High-elevation regions are extremely vulnerable to changes in climate and are particularly at risk of disappearing due to anthropogenic global warming (Scridel et al. 2018). Historically, alpine habitats are logistically challenging to research and monitor due to their extreme weather conditions and rugged terrain, so the data on alpine species is scarce. However, anthropogenic climate change has become an increasingly prevalent topic in the field of conservation because of the enormous threat it poses for species and entire ecosystems. As a result, in the past two decades, more and more research has been focusing on the ecological responses of alpine and mountain species to changing temperature and precipitation patterns (Chamberlain et al. 2016).

The **heterogeneity**¹ in responses to changing **biotic**² and **abiotic**³ factors due to climate change has been identified as a common trend in modern ecological research (Walther et al. 2002). Since 1880, the Earth's temperature has increased by approximately 0.8°C; most of the warming has occurred since 1975 (Earth Observatory). This could have the potential to

drastically change the ecosystem dynamics of alpine habitats considering that climate is the main determining factor in their distribution. Alpine habitats are also threatened by habitat loss and degradation due to urbanization, farming and recreational activities (Chamberlain et al. 2016). Monitoring entire alpine ecosystems proves to be an arduous task, but because birds are known to be great bioindicators of environmental change, scientific efforts are paying more attention to the climate change responses of alpine birds (Siegel et al. 2010). In this review, I will be discussing the abiotic and biotic responses of alpine ecosystems to climate change, and more importantly the biology and responses of alpine birds to these changes.

Biology of Alpine Birds

Phenology and Migration

Alpine birds are highly specialized organisms that evolved to survive in the harsh conditions of alpine ecosystems. Most alpine birds tend to be altitudinal migrants, which means they inhabit lower mountain elevations during the colder winter months and migrate to the highest elevations to breed (Lovette and Fitzpatrick 2016). Just like most migratory birds, alpine species use their biological clocks and **photoperiods**⁴ to decide when and how to migrate back to their breeding sites. Birds are incredibly capable of monitoring time through light cues, changes in day length, and changes in hormone levels (Lovette and Fitzpatrick 2016). Additionally, young nestlings calibrate their biological clocks to the earliest setting required by advancing seasons through the photoperiods they experience in the nest before their first migration (Both 2010). The majority of alpine birds are short-distance migrants that typically only partake in vertical migration, and their winter and breeding habitats tend to be close in proximity.

Physiology and Morphology

Because they live in high elevations for a large part of their lives, alpine birds have developed adaptations to withstand the arid, hypoxic, icy, and windy conditions of the alpine life zone (Martin 2001). To prevent predation, most alpine bird species have developed **cryptic coloration**⁵ and other behaviors to enhance camouflage in a habitat that is sparsely vegetated and has few hiding locations. Certain species, such as the white-tailed ptarmigan (*Lagopus leucura*), have a higher red blood cell concentration at higher elevations to endure the hypoxic conditions. Alpine birds must expend more energy to survive due to their relatively small body size and lower ability to store energy. Fortunately, many of these species have evolved fat deposits and extra feathers for increased insulation (Martin 2001). However, they also face overheating during the day due to varying ground temperatures; this is another reason

why these species move up to cooler, higher elevations during the summer months. Alpine perching birds have evolved long pointed wings and shallowly forked or square-ended tails to increase stability and flight efficiency in the strong, irregular winds of high elevations. Various alpine birds such as the Gray-crowned rosy-finch (*Leucosticte tephrocotis*) (Figure 1b) take shelter from the winds under or beside rocks and cliffs.

Reproduction and Life History

Surviving the alpine ecosystem requires extraordinary adaptations, and many researchers have found that alpine birds' behavioral plasticity is what allows them to thrive, especially in regard to breeding. In comparison to other migrating birds, alpine birds tend to have a low annual reproductive potential due to slow laying rates, few eggs laid per nest, lengthy periods of development, and a higher chance of reproductive failure (Martin 2001). Furthermore, alpine birds' breeding seasons tend to be scheduled three to six weeks later than related lower elevation species. This means breeding occurs in a habitat that is still mostly covered in snow (Antor 1995). Alpine habitats tend to be easier to endure for larger animals that can store greater amounts of energy—alpine birds, which have a relatively small body size, must work much harder to incubate and protect their small eggs from cold and strong winds. During the breeding season, some alpine species build their nests in rock crevices or cliffs (e.g., rosy finches and bluebirds), while others nest on highly exposed tundra slopes (e.g., pipits and horned larks). Although the nests in crevices and cliffs experience less exposure to predators and extreme climate, they do tend to experience colder environments than nests in the tundra (Martin 2001). The young nestlings tend to hatch helpless and require the care of both parents. Because snow is still abundant, parents inhabiting the highest elevations tend to feed their nestlings arthropods found on the snow (Antor 1995). Fortunately, alpine birds tend to be reproductively resilient, which means they can still maintain normal biological processes like breeding when experiencing some sort of disturbance. Martin and Wiebe (2004) summarize the various coping mechanisms that breeding alpine birds may carry out when faced with extreme environmental conditions or disturbances. They mention that some short-term responses might include not breeding, risking their own survival to breed in the same way, or limiting the parental investment of the eggs or offspring. On the other hand, long-term responses might include shifting the timing of breeding site migration by using different environmental cues or developing a higher tolerance to stress. Alpine birds may carry out short-term responses or long-term behavioral or physiological adaptations depending on the severity and length of the environmental disturbance. We could expect that, in the face of climate change, alpine birds will experience amplified reproductive failure due to their pursuit of short-term responses to temporary drastic environmental change.

Foraging Ecology

Alpine zones have a very patchy distribution of resources, and selection of foraging microhabitat for alpine birds is extremely dependent on the varying environmental conditions of this habitat (Martin 2001; Brambilla et al. 2018). Above the tree-line, plant productivity decreases with increasing elevation, so fallout (organic material blown in by wind currents from lower elevations) is an ecologically valuable resource in the arid alpine habitat. Further, alpine habitats have both low insect biomass and low vegetative biomass (Antor 1995). However, foraging resources can be quite abundant, even though they are present for short periods of time and only in conducive environmental conditions. Alpine birds tend to eat seeds and insects, but their foraging patterns are flexible and vary seasonally. In the spring, they feed on **arthropod fallout**,⁶ which can be relatively nutritious and abundant when snowfields are still intact. In the summer, on the other hand, alpine birds feed on food sources (e.g., insects and grains) that become uncovered as the snow fields recede (Martin 2001). A study by Antor (1995) that was focused on alpine birds breeding in the Pyrenees found that the exploitation of snowfields for foraging increases with elevation. He also found that alpine bird species that are more accustomed to lower elevations forage in alpine tundra because alpine tundra provides larger, higher-quality arthropods than snowfields (Antor 1995). However, another study demonstrated that birds prefer to forage in substrates where they can detect prey most feasibly instead of where prey is most abundant (Getty and Pulliam 1993). Therefore, snowfields can actually be significantly profitable for alpine birds because they are local sources, and prey are easy to detect and capture against the white substrate (Figure 1). The strong hind limbs, small feet and wing characteristics previously mentioned are what help alpine birds be extraordinarily mobile for ground foraging and exploiting localized, variable resources (Antor 1995).



Figure 1 Examples of alpine birds that forage on snowfield arthropods are (a) the white-winged snowfinch (*Montingringilla nivallis*), (b) the gray-crowned rosy-finch (*Leucosticte tephrocotis*), (c) the alpine accentor (*Prunella collaris*), and (d) the American pipit (*Anthus rubescens*).

Abiotic Factors Affected by Climate Change

Temperature and Precipitation

Climate change, as mentioned before, has become a major threat to alpine ecosystems because of its global effect on temperature and precipitation. Overall, climate change has brought about increased temperatures and precipitation, as well as increased variability in climate across the board. In the alpine zone, these shifts in climate are most drastic in the autumn and winter months and less drastic in the summer months (Bjork and Molau 2007). Although temperature and precipitation are already quite variable in the alpine, climate change is causing even more pronounced and uncertain variability in precipitation patterns.

Moreover, the increased temperatures are causing more precipitation as rain rather than as snow, especially in the winter season (Bjork and Molau 2007; Lapp et al. 2004). Because temperatures are increasing, snow cover and snowpack are intact for a significantly shorter duration. A study in the Swiss Alps found that the winter season was terminating 50-60 days earlier at the higher elevations and 110-130 days earlier at the medium elevations close to 1000 m in altitude (Beniston et al. 2003). Snow accumulation and shrinkage models in Lapp et al. (2004) showed that climate change is also resulting in a substantial decline in over-winter accumulation of snow. In general, climate change is reducing snowpack depths and shifting snow melting dates to earlier in the spring (Bjork and Molau 2007). Changing temperature and precipitation patterns are key predictors for the future distribution of alpine habitat and alpine species.



 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: 24px; font-weight: bold;">1883</p>	Abiotic/Ecological responses	Effects on alpine birds
 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: 24px; font-weight: bold;">2013</p>	Increased temperature Increased precipitation Disjunction of low and high elevation cues/phenology Grasslands colonized by forest/shrubs Decrease in snowpack	Upslope shift Downslope shift Early arrival to breeding site before snow melt Decreased/changed foraging habitat Decreased foraging

Figure 2 The ecological changes and effects on alpine birds due to climate change are summarized above. However, there is evidence that responses are heterogenous depending on the behavioral plasticity of the species. Photographs are of Lyell Glacier in Yosemite National Park (National Park Service 2019).

Glacial and Snowpack Shrinkage

In the past century, there have been two major periods of glacial shrinkage: one from the 1920s to the 1950s, and the other from the 1980s to present day. Based on satellite data and photographic analyses, glaciers are still receding and are expected to disappear in the next 50 to 250 years if current deglaciation rates persist (Singh 2008; Basagic and Fountain 2011). A study at the Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve (NDBR) gathered satellite data showing a significant reduction of ice and snow cover. Area of snow and glaciers in the Himalayas was reduced from 90% area cover in 1986 to 35% area cover in 2004 (Singh 2008). Similarly, in the Sierra Nevada, glaciers are receding at a rate of about $0.0012 \text{ km}^2\text{y}^{-1}$ (Basagic and Fountain 2011). Scientists have been observing comparable trends in other glacial areas such as the mountains of Nepal and Tibet and the European Alps since the beginning of the twentieth century (Singh 2008). Evident deglaciation is shown in the two photographs of Lyell Glacier in Yosemite Falls (Figure 2), taken 130 years apart (National Park Service 2019).

It is evident that climate change is reducing glaciers and snowpack—abiotic factors that serve an incredibly important role in alpine ecosystems—which thus threatens the flora and fauna that depend on them (ACIA 2005). Alpine hydrology is extremely dependent on the runoff and streamflow from glaciers during the warmer months. Shrinkage of glacial reservoirs is leading to earlier and decreased spring runoff and drier summer conditions (Basagic et al. 2011). Unfortunately, glacial retreat and changes in runoff not only affect alpine ecosystems, but also increase stream water temperatures and the possibility of summer droughts in lower elevations. Increased summer precipitation and earlier snow melt is causing more hydrological disturbances (i.e. flooding) and, therefore, increasing the amounts of bare ground and reviving vegetation. All of these situations have the potential to cause lower elevation flora and fauna to migrate upslope in search of better conditions. Increasing temperatures are also causing the degradation of permafrost, which leads to increased debris flow and landslides that could damage alpine bird habitat (Cannone et al. 2007). All of these changes in snowpack, glaciers, and climate are changing alpine terrain and impacting the abiotic and biotic resources available to alpine species.

Ecological Responses to Climate Change

Through my review of literature, there has been a lack of consensus as to how the changes in abiotic factors and the ecological responses to climate change affect alpine birds. Most recent literature suggests that there is extensive variability in the responses that alpine birds experience to changing climatic conditions (Scridel et al. 2018; Tingley et al. 2012). Conversely, studies from the early 2000s suggest there is some heterogeneity in responses by all bird species, but alpine and mountain bird species tend to respond in more consistent ways

such as migrating upslope (Walther et al. 2002; Crick 2004). Furthermore, alpine bird responses to climate change have been found to be shaped by microhabitat properties (Brambilla et al. 2018). A short summary of the most important responses and effects are shown in Figure 2. In this section, I will discuss ecological responses to climate change and the varying responses of alpine birds that have been mentioned in previous studies.

Changes in Vegetation

Plant productivity in mountain ecosystems decreases with increasing elevation above the tree-line, which makes food sources relatively scarce for alpine and nesting birds. We are realizing that climate change is progressively threatening these food sources that alpine birds highly depend on. It is known that vegetation responds immensely to climatic changes, and this is no different in alpine ecosystems. Research collectively shows that forests, shrubs, and mountain flora in general are responding to climate change—specifically increasing air temperatures—by shifting upwards and invading alpine grasslands and tundra (Singh 2018; Bjork and Molau 2007; Cannone et al. 2007; Chamberlain et al. 2013; Scridel et al. 2018). Alpine grasslands are incredibly important foraging microhabitats for alpine birds during the breeding season. A study in the European Alps found that this colonization of forests and shrubs severely impacts the distribution of alpine bird species in open habitats (Chamberlain et al. 2013). A similar study in the European Alps found that alpine plants are shifting upwards in elevation by one to four meters per decade (Walther et al. 2002). The upward migration of plants is one of the earliest responses of fast climate change, and this can lead to the loss of many nival plant species (species of the permanent snow zone) and high alpine plant species (Singh 2018; Pauli et al. 2003). This shift can produce major changes in community dynamics and distribution of alpine vegetation, as well as in foraging habitats of alpine birds (Cannone et al. 2007; Figure 2).

Effects of Snowpack Change

Similarly, there is evidence that alpine grasslands are migrating upwards and replacing snowbeds—lands covered in snow for long periods—that are important sources of fallout arthropods for birds (Cannone et al. 2007; Brambilla et al. 2018). Late in the growing season, after food in the tundra has lowered in quality and become less abundant, snowbeds provide alpine birds with wind-dispersed invertebrates and high-quality food sources at the melting margins of snowfields (Bjork and Molau 2007; Brambilla et al. 2018). Unfortunately, increasing temperatures due to climate change decrease snowpack in the winter and cause early melting of snowfields in the spring and summer (Brambilla et al. 2018; Lapp et al. 2004). This leads to the possibility of invasion by plant communities that can physiologically establish in intermediate snow cover, which may decrease snowbed habitat. Additionally, the shortening

of the snow cover season is reducing the overall surface area of frost-sensitive, snowbed plant species (Pauli et al. 2003). Increasing temperatures lead to drier soils in the final stages of the growing season, significant water loss, and degradation of permafrost, which can create landslides, debris flow, and changes in plant community dynamics (Bjork and Molau 2007; Cannone et al. 2007). Based on this information, foraging habitat of alpine birds can therefore be reduced not only by forest and shrub invasion of grasslands, but also by decreased snow cover and grassland invasion of snowbed communities (Figure 2). However, a study in the Colorado Rocky Mountains observed no change in the timing of snowmelt or in the beginning of the growing season from 1973 to 1999 (Inouye et al. 2000). It would be interesting to see if this observation has changed since the study was conducted.

Phenological Mismatch

Alpine birds are also threatened by the disjunction between phenology—the timing of biological events such as breeding and migration—and climate change responses among regions. One study found that climate change triggers responses at distinct rates among different levels of the food chain, meaning organisms and their food are developing a growing mismatch in their phenology (Both et al. 2009). Based on this study, birds' breeding phenology will not match the time of peak abundance of their food source (Figure 2). Another study conducted by the same leading author discussed the inflexibility of migration due to photoperiod, which is another reason for the disjunction between a bird and its food source. Changes in photoperiod can only occur through evolution of genetic material, so birds have not been able to match the phenology of their food source because they cannot change their genetics as rapidly (Both 2010; Figure 2). However, this study was general and did not focus specifically on alpine species. This topic was not widely present in studies on specialist alpine birds, but is important to understand regardless because of the underlying need for alpine birds to evolutionarily adjust to the changing environment. Conversely, a study by Inouye et al. (2000) found no evidence of flowering phenology changing in high elevations due to climate change. This means there is asynchrony between the low and high elevation cues, causing the phenology of altitudinal migrants to be mismatched with the phenology of higher elevation ecosystems (Inouye et al. 2000). In consequence, alpine birds will migrate to higher elevations for breeding and, upon arrival, find that higher elevations are still experiencing winter conditions (Figure 2). If they run out of food rapidly after they arrive at the higher elevations, then alpine birds are forced to wait at slightly lower elevations until more snow starts to melt (Inouye et al. 2000; Both et al. 2009; Crick 2004). Therefore, the disjunction between low and high elevation environmental cues and phenology is causing alpine birds to arrive to breeding sites both before enough snow has melted and before food sources become readily available (Figure 2). Phenology and environmental cues are extremely important to

the behavior of alpine birds, and shifts in these cues can be detrimental on the individual and population levels.

Heterogeneity in Range and Migration Shifts

Another observation presented is that responses to climate change by alpine birds are heterogenous and therefore unpredictable on a species level. Scridel et al. (2018) found a lack of consistent elevational shifts by mountain bird species due to climate change. Likewise, another study conducted in western North America found that there are elevational shifts of birds' breeding distributions, but the shifts are not unidirectional—51% of the birds studied showed a statistically significant range shift upslope (Tingley et al. 2012). The inconsistency in direction and magnitude of these elevational shifts is due to changes in temperature and precipitation. Tingley et al. (2012) found that increasing temperatures drive alpine bird species to shift their breeding range upslope to seek refuge in the cooler temperatures of higher elevations. On the contrary, increasing precipitation drives certain species to shift their breeding range downslope, likely because lower elevations have more access to physical refuge from precipitation (Tingley et al. 2012). To generalize this, if alpine ecosystems are experiencing more pronounced increases in temperature than in precipitation, one would expect alpine birds to shift their distribution to higher elevations (Figure 2). Alternatively, if increases in precipitation are more pronounced than increases in temperature, one would expect alpine birds to shift their distribution to lower elevations (Figure 2). These observations spark concern in the scientific community because there are limited ways to conserve alpine birds due to different responses to climate change and, consequently, different conservation needs.

Discussion

A diversity of ecosystems depends on alpine ecosystems for their water reservoirs and other resources. Climate change is threatening alpine ecosystems as increasing temperatures and precipitation change the biotic and abiotic factors that these regions contain and depend on (Basagic and Fountain 2011; Brambilla et al. 2018; Cannone et al. 2007; Lapp et al. 2005). The scientific community has few diverse sets of evidence that show how alpine birds are affected by and therefore respond to changing environmental conditions. Fortunately, as the scientific community and the public become increasingly concerned with climate change, researchers are focusing more and more on montane and alpine habitats and species.

In this section, I hope to synthesize the evidence and trends that have been presented by studies on alpine birds and their habitats. Multiple studies conclude that the upwards elevational shift of vegetation immensely decreases the foraging habitat of open habitat alpine

birds (Brambilla et al. 2018; Cannone et al. 2007). The decrease of alpine tundra due to the invasion of forest and shrub vegetation shrinks ground foraging habitat (Brambilla et al. 2018; Chamberlain et al. 2013; Singh 2018). Additionally, the invasion of snowbed communities by alpine grasslands can decrease snowpack distribution and, therefore, decrease arthropod fallout foraging opportunities for alpine birds (Bjork and Molau 2007; Brambilla et al. 2018; Cannone et al. 2007). Glacial and snowpack shrinkage due to climate change will also impact the foraging and breeding habitats available to alpine birds, especially in the coming decades if retreating rates persist (Cannone et al. 2007; Brambilla et al. 2018). Moreover, phenological shifts are occurring among the different levels of the food chain and along the elevational gradient; these shifts could be affecting the distribution and breeding habitat of alpine birds (Inouye et al. 2000; Both et al. 2009; Both 2010). Further, the changing temperature and precipitation patterns appear to be greatly impacting the direction and magnitude of the elevational shifts of the birds' breeding habitats (Tingley et al. 2012; Scridel et al. 2018). Variability in alpine bird responses to climate change is what makes this issue so complex.

Directions for Future Research and Conservation

In their review, Scridel et al. (2018) discussed the conservation strategies presented by various studies that focused on the impact of climate change on mountain and alpine birds. It is evident that there is a need for more detailed studies of alpine birds and their habitats. Because responses to climate change can be quite heterogenous and species-specific, understanding the ecology of alpine bird species is essential to knowing what conservation efforts to implement. Some studies encourage studying physiological tolerance and ecological needs of species, while others find it important to invest in researching the climate and habitat factors, such as the effects of weather variability on habitat suitability (Scridel et al. 2018; Brambilla et al. 2018). Researchers could also work to understand if there is a difference in energetic values provided by food sources from snowpack compared to those of alpine grasslands. If climate change affects the foraging habitats of alpine birds, this information could help us know if alpine birds would be able to survive on only one of those food sources (Scridel et al. 2018). Furthermore, alpine birds should be monitored to see if climate change will have an effect on their population size, distribution, reproductive success, and overall survival rates.

Land and habitat management are also incredibly valuable strategies for the conservation of alpine birds. Various studies suggest that better management and restoration of alpine grasslands and open habitats can be beneficial to the conservation of alpine bird species and their foraging habitats (Scridel et al. 2018; Brambilla et al. 2018; Chamberlain et al. 2018). Because forest and shrub vegetation and tall grasses are starting to invade alpine tundra due to increased temperatures, researchers believe shrub clearance and targeted

grazing of alpine tundra will help maintain the low sward habitat necessary for foraging (Chamberlain et al. 2016). Restoring their foraging habitat would be beneficial in increasing the resistance and resilience of alpine birds as they face various other climate change-induced threats. Policymakers and scientists should strive to develop habitat restoration plans for mountain regions to maintain bird habitat. It would be particularly advantageous to restore microhabitats of alpine birds that are developed or near human developments. For example, we could increase the amount of protected high-quality alpine habitat, as well as restrict future construction of ski resorts and leisure infrastructure in these areas.

Implementing legislation that protects alpine birds and their habitats, including those that restrict anthropogenic stressors, will improve mountain species' resistance and resilience through climate change. A combination of all these conservation strategies will be needed to successfully help alpine birds and their habitats withstand climate change (Scridel et al. 2018). However, scientists and politicians must invest in research for these high elevation specialists in order to make accurate conservation decisions. Overall, we should pursue conservation strategies to improve the situation for alpine birds and understand how climate change will affect not only their habitats, but ecosystem services we also depend on.

References

- ACIA. 2005. Arctic climate impact assessment. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 989-1018. <https://www.amap.no/documents/doc/arctic-arctic-climate-impact-assessment/796>
- Antor RJ. 1995. The importance of arthropod fallout on snow patches for the foraging of high-alpine birds. *J Avian Biol.* 26(1):81-85. doi:10.2307/3677216
- Basagic HJ, Fountain AG. 2011. Quantifying 20th century glacier change in the Sierra Nevada, California. *Arc, Antarctic, and Alp Res.* 43(3):317-330. doi:10.1657/1938-4246-43.3.317
- Beniston M, Keller F, Koffi B, Goyette S. 2003. Estimates of snow accumulation and volume in the Swiss Alps under changing climatic conditions. *Theor Appl Climatol.* 76:125-140. doi:10.1007/s00704-003-0016-5
- Bjork RG, Molau U. 2006. Ecology of alpine snowbeds and the impact of global change. *Arct, Antarctic, and Alp Res.* 39(1):34-43. doi:10.1657/1523-0430(2007)39[34:EOASAT] 2.0.CO;2

- Both C, van Asch M, Bijlsma RG, van den Burg AB, Visser ME. 2009. Climate change and unequal phenological changes across four trophic levels: constraints or adaptations? *J of Anim Ecology*. 78:73-83. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2656.2008.01458.x
- Both C. 2010. Flexibility of timing of avian migration to climate change masked by environmental constraints en route. *Current Biology*. 20:243-248. doi:10.1016/j.cub.2009.11.074
- Brambilla M, Resano-Mayor J, Scridel D, Anderle M, Bogliani G, Braunisch V, Capelli F, Cortesi M, Horrenberger N, Pedrini P, et al. 2018. Past and future impact of climate change on foraging habitat suitability in high-alpine bird species: management options to buffer against global warming effects. *Biological Conservation*. 221:209-218. doi:10.1016/j.biocon.2018.03.008
- Cannone N, Sgorbati S, Guglielmin M. 2007. Unexpected impacts of climate change on alpine vegetation. *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environ*. 5(7):360-364. doi:10.1890/1540-9295(2007)5[360:UIOCCO]2.0.CO;2
- Chamberlain DE, Negro M, Caprio E, Rolando A. 2013. Assessing the sensitivity of alpine birds to potential future changes in habitat and climate to inform management strategies. *Biological Conservation*. 167:127-135. doi:10.1016/j.biocon.2013.07.036
- Chamberlain DE, Pedrini P, Brambilla M, Rolando A, Giradello M. 2016. Identifying key conservation threats to Alpine birds through expert knowledge. *Peer J* 4:e1723. doi:10.7717/peerj.1723
- Clark, D. 2019. Gray-crowned Rosy-finch no. 2, Walker, ID 2019 [Photograph]. *Flickr*. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/50655108@N05/49179649982/>
- Crick HQP. 2004. The impact of climate change on birds. *Ibis* 146(1):48-56. doi:10.1111/j.1474-919X.2004.00327.x
- Deutsch, S. 2019. American pipit [Photograph]. *Flickr*. https://www.flickr.com/photos/material_guy/49170753038/in/photostream/
- Dictionary.com. n.d. Abiotic. In Dictionary.com. [Accessed 2020 Mar 6]. <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/abiotic>

Dictionary.com. n.d. Biotic. In: Dictionary.com. [Accessed 2020 Mar 6]. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/biotic>

Dictionary.com. n.d. Photoperiod. In Dictionary.com. [Accessed 2020 Mar 6]. <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/photoperiod>.

Earth Observatory, NASA. World of Change: Global Temperatures. [Accessed 23 January 2019]. <https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/world-of-change/DecadalTemp>

Getty T, Pulliam HR. 1993. Search and prey detection by foraging sparrows. *Ecology* 74:734-742. doi:10.2307/1940801

Hayhoe K, Cayan D, Field CB, Frumhoff PC, Maurer EP, Miller NL, Moser SC, Schneider SH, Cahill KN, Cleland EE, et al. 2004. Emissions pathways, climate change, and impacts on California. *PNAS* 101(34):12422-12427. doi:10.1073/pnas.0404500101

Höfs, C. 2017. Alpenbraunelle – Alpine Accentor [Photograph]. *Flickr*. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/83763447@N08/38005829571/>

Ingram K, Kocher S. 2015. California Naturalist Series: Natural History of the Sierra Nevada. UC Agriculture & Natural Resources 8535. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/291331209_California_Naturalist_Series_Natural_History_of_the_Sierra_Nevada

Inouye DW, Barr B, Armitage KB, Inouye BD. 2000. Climate change is affecting altitudinal migrants and hibernating species. *PNAS* 97(4):1630-1633. doi:10.1073/pnas.97.4.1630

Jenni L, Kery M. 2003. Timing of autumn bird migration under climate change: advances in long-distance migrants, delays in short-distance migrants. *Proc R Soc Lond.* 270:1467-1471. doi:10.1098/rspb.2003.2394

Lapp S, Byrne J, Townshend I, Kienzle S. 2005. Climate warming impacts on snowpack accumulation in an alpine watershed. *International J of Climatology* 25:521-536. <https://doi.org/10.1002/joc.1140>

Lovette IJ, Fitzpatrick JW. 2016. *Handbook of bird biology*, 3rd ed. Chichester (WS): John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

- Lundmark Jensen N. 2015. White-winged Snowfinch (*Montifringilla nivallis*) [Photograph]. *Flickr*. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/121321155@N06/16567997356/>
- Martin K, Wiebe KL. 2004. Coping mechanisms of alpine and arctic breeding birds: extreme weather and limitations to reproductive resilience. *Integr Comp Biol* 44:177-185. <https://doi.org/10.1093/icb/44.2.177>
- Martin K. 2001. Wildlife in alpine and sub-alpine habitats. In Johnson DH, O'Neil TA. *Wildlife-habitat relationships in Oregon and Washington*. Oregon State University Press: 285-310. <http://alpine.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2013/02/kmartin.pdf>
- Merriam-Webster. 2020. Heterogeneity. In Merriam-Webster.com. [Accessed 2020 Mar 6]. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/heterogeneity>
- Merriam-Webster. n.d. Phenology. In Merriam-Webster.com. [Accessed 2020 Mar 6]. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/phenology>
- National Geographic. n.d. Camouflage. In National Geographic Resource Library. [Accessed 2020 Mar 6]. <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/camouflage/>.
- National Park Service. 2019. Repeat photography of the Lyell Glacier showing 130 years of ice loss. National Park Service. <https://www.nps.gov/yose/learn/nature/glaciers.htm>
- Pauli H, Gottfried M, Grabherr G. 2003. Effects of climate change on the alpine and nival vegetation of the Alps. *J. Mt. Ecol.* 7:9-12. <http://www.mountainecology.org/index.php/me/article/view/134/117>
- Scridel D, Brambilla M, Martin K, Lehikoinen A, Iemma A, Matteo A, Jahnig S, Caprio E, Bogliani G, Pedrini P, et al. 2018. A review and meta-analysis of the effect of climate change on Holarctic mountain and upland bird populations. *Ibis* 160:489-515. doi:10.1111/ibi.12585
- Siegel RB, Pyle P, Thorne JH, Holguin AJ, Howell CA, Stock S, Tingley MW. 2014. Vulnerability of birds to climate change in California's Sierra Nevada. *Avian Conservation and Ecol.* 9(1):7. doi:10.5751/ACE-00658-090107

Siegel RB, Wilkerson RL, Goldin Rose M. 2010. Bird monitoring protocol for national parks in the Sierra Nevada Network, Natural Resource Report NPS/SIEN/NRR--2010/231. Fort Collins (CO): National Park Service. https://www.birdpop.org/docs/pubs/Siegel_et_al_Bird_Monitoring_Protocol_for_the_NPs_of_the_SNN.pdf

Siegel RB, Wilkerson RL, Saracco JF, Steel ZL. 2011. Elevation ranges of birds on the Sierra Nevada's west slope. *Western Birds*. 42(1):2-26. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/232176137_Elevation_ranges_of_birds_on_the_Sierra_Nevada's_west_slope

Singh CP. 2008. Alpine ecosystem in relation to climate change. *Space Applications Centre* 14(1-4):54-57. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/C_P_Singh2/publication/274896439_Alpine_ecosystems_in_relation_to_climate_change/links/552bfa550cf21acb091f260c/Alpine-ecosystems-in-relation-to-climate-change.pdf

Tingley MW, Koo MS, Moritz C, Rush AC, Beissinger SR. 2012. The push and pull of climate change causes heterogeneous shifts in avian elevational ranges. *Glob. Change Biol*. 18:3279-3290. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2486.2012.02784.x

Tingley MW, Monahan WB, Beissinger SR, Moritz C. 2009. Birds track their Grinnellian niche through a century of climate change. *PNAS*. 106(2):19637-19643. doi:10.1073/pnas.0901562106

Walther G, Post E, Convey P, Menzel A, Parmesan C, Beebee TJC, Fromentin J, Hoegh-Guldberg O, Bairlein F. 2002. Ecological responses to recent climate change. *Nature*. 416:389-395. doi:10.1038/416389a

Notes

¹**Heterogeneity:** State of being diverse; variability

²**Abiotic:** Nonliving physical and chemical components of the environment

³**Biotic:** Living components of the environment

⁴**Photoperiod:** Period of daily light exposure received by an organism and its physiological reactions to it

⁵**Cryptic coloration:** Tactic used to disguise and blend into surroundings

⁶**Arthropod fallout:** Dead invertebrates carried by the wind currents and deposited at the top of mountains



Full-Length Research Articles

This section of the journal is dedicated to full-length research projects in any discipline. These might be final essays for a class, a capstone project, a study abroad essay, an independent study, or any multi-authored papers for which the student contributor is first author. We have chosen not to separate these essays into disciplinary divisions, but we do indicate the major field of study for each author. These essays have been chosen for their academic promise, for their participation in Seattle University's vibrant research community, and for their representation of majors across the university.

Identity and Social Support: LGBTQIA+ Individuals and Help-Seeking Behaviors

Erin Alberts, Psychology

Natasha Rohrsetzer, Psychology

Faculty Mentor: Michael J. Spinetta, PhD

Faculty Content Editor: Michael J. Spinetta, PhD

Student Editors: Helen Hills and Annika Le

Abstract

LGBTQIA+ students face unique stressors: coming out and/or transitioning gender; non-affirming campus climates; and limited access to inclusive academic, health, and mental health services. Although LGBTQIA+ identifying people face these unique stressors, they are historically an underserved community on college campuses. Past literature shows that LGBTQIA+ people have higher rates of suicidality as well as higher rates of mental health issues; however, past research has not focused on their help-seeking behaviors. University campuses can be highly competitive, unhealthy, and stressful environments for students, which can be heightened for LGBTQIA+ people. Due to the fact that LGBTQIA+ college students are at a higher risk for mental health issues, it is imperative that their help-seeking behaviors are studied. Thus, this research investigates if being part of the LGBTQIA+ community (gender identity and/or sexual orientation status) affects help-seeking behaviors and the types of help that people seek. Findings suggest that the more open and “out” one is with their sexuality and gender, the more likely they are to be affected by societal stigma as well as seek help from various resources.

Access to inclusive and proper mental health services is central to the general well-being of all college students. However, there is still very little known about the experiences of LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual) students with university-based health services (Hood, Sherrell, Pfeffer, & Mann, 2018). Individuals who identify as LGBTQIA+ experience significant mental health support inequalities compared to their heterosexual and cisgender peers (McDermott, Hughes, & Rawlings, 2018). Compared with heterosexual students, sexual minority students endorsed higher rates of psychological distress (18% vs. 26%, $p < .001$) and mental health–related academic impairment (11% vs. 17%, $p < .001$) (Dunbar, Sontag-Padilla, Ramchand, Seelam, & Stein, 2017).

Research suggests that campus climate along with staff perceptions of LGBTQIA+ identifying people can impact the ways that people seek help (Woodford, Kulick, & Atteberry, 2015; McDermott et al., 2018; Hood et al., 2018). Seattle University’s campus climate is unique because it is a Jesuit Catholic institution. Therefore, understanding LGBTQIA+ individuals’ help-seeking behaviors in the context of religiosity is important when assessing campus climate. Research has shown that homonegative experiences with religion may have a negative influence on mental health outcomes (Lassiter et al., 2017). Negative school climate can affect the role of school support resources in LGBTQIA+ students’ lives (Kosciw, Palmer, Kull, & Greytak, 2012). For example, the 2015 Climate Assessment Project at Seattle University found that LGBQ and asexual respondents were less likely to feel “very comfortable” or “comfortable” and that 52% of LGBQ and asexual students considered leaving Seattle University compared to 36% of their heterosexual peers (Rankin, 2015).

The acronym LGBTQIA+ in this study includes all of the identities of research participants. All differing acronyms reflect the identities studied in past research, e.g., LGB refers only to lesbian, gay, and bisexual and does not include queer, transgender, intersex and asexual people in the research unless otherwise stated.

Help-seeking. Help-seeking is commonly defined in research by the ways that people deal with stress, their overall behaviors and beliefs towards various resources, the services they seek, and the perceived barriers to those services (McDonald, 2018; McDermott, 2015; Hatchel et al., 2019). Help-seeking beliefs are defined as people’s attitudes and understanding of help-seeking and the beliefs that they hold about help-seeking in general (Hatchel et al., 2019). LGBTQIA+ individuals may have different outlooks on help-seeking due to their identities and perceptions of stigma (Goldbach & Gibbs, 2015). However, despite the heightened stress that LGBTQIA+ people face (18% vs. 26%, $p < .001$), researchers found that LGBTQIA+ people are more likely to seek out mental health services (1.87 [95% confidence interval: 1.50-2.34] times more likely) and utilize their resources when compared to their heterosexual peers.

Barriers to Help-Seeking. Research has shown that within the healthcare field, LGBTQIA+ individuals experience unique barriers such as discomfort discussing sexual orientation

with providers, mistrusting providers due to expectations of discrimination, and fear of being “outed” (Dunbar et al., 2017). Although LGBTQIA+ individuals struggle with unique stressors, they are often underserved and have limited access to inclusive mental, emotional, and physical spaces on campuses compared with their heterosexual peers (Bouris & Hill, 2017; McDermott et al., 2018; Hood et al., 2018). The key barriers to help-seeking explored in the literature consist of a limited understanding of LGBTQIA+ identities, societal stigma, and discrimination (Dunbar et al., 2017; Nadal, Whitman, Davis, Erazo, & Davidoff, 2016). These barriers to care are rooted in societal stigma and are a result of the lack of research done with LGBTQIA+ individuals (Kosciw et al., 2012).

Stigma. Previous research on the topic of LGBTQIA+ help-seeking behaviors focuses on minority stress. Minority stress is defined as stressors that are specific to people with a sexual minority status: coming out, stigma due to orientation, societal stigma, and both internal and external perceptions of stigma (Goldbach & Gibbs, 2015). Heteronormative culture, “relating to, or based on the attitude that heterosexuality is the only normal and natural expression of sexuality” (Heteronormative, n.d.), creates hostile environments for LGBTQIA+ individuals (Mink, Lindley, & Weinstein, 2014). Due to the stigma that surrounds the LGBTQIA+ population, many young adults within this community are at higher risk of developing mental health issues (McDonald, 2018). The researchers found that LGBTQIA+ youth are likely to only seek help when they were already in crisis (McDonald, 2018). Preventative mental health care is not utilized due to their perceptions of societal stigma, with societal stigma acting as a barrier to help-seeking (McDonald, 2018; Goldbach & Gibbs, 2015).

There is a lack of research centering the experiences of gender non-conforming and transgender people. One article focused on the experiences of individuals of diverse sexual and gender identity by researching different variations of microaggressions, which are often a less obvious form of stigma that individuals face (Nadal et al., 2016). Stigma can prevent people from seeking help, add stress, and put them at higher risk for negative mental health outcomes (Nadal et al., & Davidoff, 2016; Mink et al., 2014; McDonald, 2018).

Stress. According to the Collegiate Center for Mental Health, the majority of college students arrive on campus with no prior history of mental health treatment (Bouris & Hill, 2017), yet an estimated 17% or more of college students suffer from serious psychological distress (Bouris & Hill, 2017). Due to these high-stress and anxiety-inducing environments, it can be concluded college campuses need to provide more services to their students (Dunbar et al., 2017).

Outness. The amount that people are out, or their “outness,” has been studied in relation to the ways that people seek help and to their overall perceptions of campus climate. One study found that there was a relationship between outness on campus and the perceived ability of LGB individuals to be open ($r = 0.11$, $p < 0.01$), to have positive instructor relations

($r = 0.14$, $p < 0.01$), to have other LGB friends ($r = 0.18$, $p < 0.001$), to be satisfied with their institution ($r = 0.16$, $p < 0.01$) and to be accepted on campus ($r = 0.14$, $p < 0.01$) (Woodford et al., 2015). The results of the study reveal that being out to more people is correlated with a more positive on-campus experience (Woodford et al., 2015).

Previous researchers hypothesized that the more out a person is, the more stigma and harassment they will receive (Woodford et al., 2015; Nadal et al., 2016). However, newer research has shown that various amounts of internal and external stigma are present at various stages of “outness” (Woodford et al., 2015; Nadal, Whitman, Davis, Erazo, & Davidoff, 2016).

Due to the lack of research that currently exists on these topics, this study aims to further explore the needs of LGBTQIA+ individuals. To assess the factors that negatively impact help-seeking for members of the LGBTQIA+ community, we will examine the sources of stigma, the barriers that stand in the way of getting support, and the factors that influence outness. By gaining a better understanding of the increased support that is needed for these individuals, on-campus services can specifically target the needs of the entire student body, rather than solely those of cisgender and heterosexual students.

Methods

Participants

144 participants completed 101 surveys. The survey was distributed via Qualtrics through SONA systems, email, and social media sites such as Facebook and Instagram. The majority of our participants were members of the Seattle University community, with a few individuals recruited from the investigators’ social media accounts. Participants were not required to answer every question on the survey and could withdraw consent at any time.

Measures

Demographics. Participants completed a demographics questionnaire that contained questions regarding their sex assigned at birth, their gender identity, their sexual orientation, their racial identity, their age, and the number of years they have completed in higher education. Participants had the ability to leave any question unanswered, while still maintaining their anonymity.

Stress. The Brief COPE Scale (Carver, 1997) and the Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, 1994) were utilized to measure and gain an understanding of the participants’ stress levels. The Brief COPE Scale was used to understand how participants cope with stressors in their lives. A 4-point Likert scale was used to assess the coping mechanisms that participants implement in the face of stress, with measurements consisting of 1 (I have not been doing this at all) to 4 (I’ve been doing this a lot). To measure participants’

stress, the Perceived Stress Scale was implemented into the questionnaire. Four brief questions, regarding feelings and thoughts that the participant may have encountered over the past month, were asked, using a 5-point Likert scale from 0 (never) to 5 (very often). Both of these scores were added together to create two separate sums, one of the Perceived Stress Scale and the other of the Brief COPE scale.

Outness Inventory. In order to understand the level at which LGBTQIA+ students are “out” to the people in their lives, the Outness Inventory was utilized (Mohr & Fassinger, 2000). To gain a full understanding of the various groups that people are out to at Seattle University, the scale was adapted to include classmates at SU, professors at SU, and staff/faculty at SU. Due to the fact that many participants may not have relationships with certain groups on the scale, such as extended family members, “Not Applicable” was added as a category. The Outness inventory utilizes a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (person definitely does not know about your sexual orientation status) to 7 (people definitely know about your sexual orientation status, and it is openly talked about) (Mohr & Fassinger, 2000). The scale was totaled to analyze the entirety of each participant’s overall outness to all of the people and groups on the scale.

Help-Seeking. In order to assess the participants’ intentions for seeking help, a General Help-Seeking Questionnaire (Wilson, Deane, Ciarrochi, & Rickwood, 2005) was used. The GHSQ asks participants how likely they are to seek help from the given support options when having a personal or emotional problem. The degree to which they would likely seek help from various support options was assessed using a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (extremely unlikely) to 7 (extremely likely). The scores from the scale were added together, creating a sum, to examine the entirety of people’s likeliness to seek help.

Barriers to Help-Seeking. Societal systems contain various factors that create barriers for those seeking help. In order to assess these potential barriers that individuals face, The Barrier to Seeking Psychological Help Scale (Topkaya, Sahin, & Barut, 2017) was implemented into the questionnaire. The BSPHS prompts participants with various factors that often discourage people from seeking psychological help from a professional. Using a 5-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), the participants were asked to indicate their experience with each barrier. There were five subcategories that were implemented into the survey that focused on the fear of being stigmatized by society (questions 2, 6, 9, & 14), trust in the mental health professional (questions 4, 12, 16, & 17), issues with self-disclosure (questions 1, 5, & 8), perceived devaluation (questions 11, 13, & 15), and a lack of knowledge (questions 3, 7, & 10). Each of the subcategory questions was added together to find if there were specific barriers to help-seeking that people struggled with.

Stigma. Two questions in the questionnaire assessed for stigma. The first question asked participants to indicate how much they feel LGBTQIA+ students are stigmatized on the Seattle University campus on a 5-point Likert scale, from 1 (not at all) to 5 (extremely). The

second question asked participants to identify which on-campus communities, from a list of 20, most stigmatize LGBTQIA+ individuals. All scores were summed to determine levels of stigmatization and its most prevalent sources.

Qualitative Data. Four qualitative questions were implemented at the end of the questionnaire. The first question asked participants to describe their experience with seeking help from on-campus resources, and the second question asked them to describe their experience with seeking help from off-campus resources. The third qualitative question asked participants if they have ever sought out emotional support, and to provide three words that describe their experience. The final question asked those who identify within the LGBTQIA+ community to describe whether they feel as though being part of the LGBTQIA+ community has had any effect on the support they have received from on-campus resources.

Results

The sample of participants included self-identified females (81.2%, $n=82$), males (12%, $n=12$), and gender non-conforming individuals (7%, $n=7$). The majority of our participants were Caucasian (72%, $n=72$), followed by Mixed Race (13%, $n=13$), Latinx/Hispanic/Mexican American (5.9%, $n=6$), Asian (5.9%, $n=6$), Black (2%, $n=2$), and self-identified (2%, $n=2$). From our sample of participants, we had the most diversity within our sexual orientation group. 52% identified as heterosexual, 13.9% as queer, 11.9% as homosexual, 9.9% as bisexual, 6.9% as pansexual, and 5% as questioning. Refer to Table 1 for a visual representation of the participant demographic results.

An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to examine the main effect of sexual identity and the types of support individuals seek, sexual identity and stigma, and sexual identity on one's likeness to be out. There is a significant main effect on sexual identity and the types of support individuals seek. Post-hoc corrected comparisons indicated that heterosexual individuals are significantly less likely than their pansexual, bisexual, and questioning peers to seek help from a doctor or general practitioner ($M= -1.73$, $SE= 0.56$, Cohen's $D= 0.99$). Heterosexual individuals are also significantly more likely than their pansexual, bisexual, and questioning peers to seek help from religious/spiritual leaders ($M= 1.6$, $SE=0.54$, Cohen's $D= 0.70$). However, homosexual and queer individuals are more likely than their pansexual, bisexual, and questioning peers to seek help from religious/spiritual leaders ($M= 1.36$, $SE= 0.55$, Cohen's $D= 0.788$) (see Figure 1). There is no significant main effect on sexual identity and stigma, but there is a significant main effect of sexual identity and an individual's likeness to be out. Post-hoc corrected comparisons indicate that homosexual/queer individuals are significantly more likely to be out than their pansexual/bisexual/questioning peers ($M= 18.82$, $SE= 4.99$, Cohen's $D= 1.2$).

Frequencies were run to assess the answers to three questions about outness. The first was whether or not people had come out. Possible answers included: yes (19.8%, $n = 20$), to some people but not all (21.8%, $n = 22$), and no (1%, $n = 1$), with a total of 43 people answering the question (42.6%). The next question was regarding the amount of time that people had been out. Possible answers included: 0-6 months (4%, $n = 4$), 6 months to 1 year (2%, $n = 2$), 1-2 years (8.9%, $n = 9$), and 2+ years (26.7%, $n = 27$), with a total of 42 people answering the question (41.6%). Finally, the question was asked if SU had affected their decision to come out. Possible answers included: yes (13.9%, $n = 14$), possibly (11.9%, $n = 12$), and no (25.7%, $n = 26$), with a total of 52 people answering the question (51.7%).

Along with that, an ANOVA was also used to examine gender identity, the types of support individuals seek, and how this relates to feelings of stigma. There is a significant main effect on gender identity and the way in which individuals sought support. Post-hoc corrections indicated that female individuals are significantly more likely than male individuals to seek help from a friend ($M=1.48$, $SE= 0.47$, Cohen's $D= 0.92$). Along with that, Post-hoc corrections indicated that gender non-conforming individuals are more likely than male individuals to seek support from a friend ($M=1.86$, $SE= 0.63$, Cohen's $D= 1.22$) (see Figure 2). There is a significant main effect between gender and feelings of stigmatization, Post-hoc corrections indicate that those who identify as male are significantly less likely to feel stigmatized by society than those who identify as non-conforming ($M=-4.71$, $SE=1.79$, Cohen's $D= 2.79$) (see Figure 2).

Next, a linear regression analysis was used to predict sexual orientation in relation to help-seeking patterns and barriers to help-seeking. We found that sexual orientation is not predictive of the barriers to help-seeking patterns, $\beta=.019$, $t(1)=.148$, $p=.701$. $R^2 = .013$. Sexual orientation was not predictive of help-seeking patterns, $\beta=.037$, $t(1)= 3.473$, $p = .067$. $R^2 =.035$. We found that outness is predictive of an individual's fear of being stigmatized by society, $\beta=.214$, $t(1)=4.53$, $p=.04$. $r^2=.087$ (see Figure 4) and that outness is predictive of the specific barrier to help-seeking, specifically when the individual lacks knowledge of their resources, $\beta=.207$, $t(1)=4.97$, $p=.032$. $R^2=.097$. We then found that outness is not predictive of stress levels, $\beta=-.041$, $t(1)=.066$, $p=.799$. $R^2=.021$.

Similarly, we also used a linear regression to see whether or not the stigma that LGBTQIA+ individuals perceive is predictive of help-seeking behavior and barriers to their help-seeking. We found that the perceived stigma of LGBTQIA+ individuals is predictive of both help-seeking patterns, $.036$, $=.053$ and barriers to help-seeking, $.005$ (see Table 2).

Qualitative Results and Discussion

Qualitative results from our online survey were taken into account when analyzing our data as a whole. We asked four questions total, and the results of those questions are as follows.

Question 1: On Campus Help-Seeking. The first question asked was, “If there has been a time in which you have sought support from on campus resources, please describe your general experience. Do not refer to any specific individuals.” Many answers included CAPS; one person said:

“I sought help from CAPS a few times last year and it was not helpful at all. The wait time was too long... When I did finally get in, the professional I worked with did not understand my identity at all, and it made me not want to tell them about my problems for fear of being judged.”

The issues with CAPS, including feeling judged and students not being seen in a timely manner show why people have sought resources outside of the university’s psychological services: “CAPS was inadequate. My academic advisor is amazing, so she supported me and I trusted her to understand and respect my complex issues and queer identity.” These answers highlight many of the issues that students have experienced with CAPS. People feel as though CAPS is not treating students in a timely fashion, not engaging with students’ specific needs, and only helping students in the case of an emergency. 36 people answered this question in the survey and 24 of them mentioned CAPS in their responses.

Question 2: Off-Campus Help-Seeking. The next question asked was, “If there has been a time in which you have sought support from off campus resources, please describe your general experience.”

Answers from students receiving off-campus support differ from people’s experiences at CAPS: “I have had generally positive experiences seeking professional help off campus, but these resources are so expensive it is hard to get the amount of help I need.” It appears that although off campus resources are more helpful, they tend to be more difficult for students to afford: “I am currently seeing an off-campus therapist who is seeing me on a sliding scale and works specifically with trans* folks and eating disorders. It’s been going really well so far, but I’m also worried about the cost and my parents finding out.” Responses indicate that off-campus support resources are more helpful than on-campus resources, although challenges are still present off campus including commuting for appointments: “I currently am undergoing therapy services at an off-campus practice. They are very open to my identities and very accepting. It’s a drive, but worth it because the help is actually good.” People express that they

struggle with financing off-campus mental health support, and it is difficult commuting off campus even though they feel it is more helpful. Many people struggle with various aspects of mental health services, which speaks to the issues that both CAPS and other mental health services need to address when catering to the needs of their clientele.

Question 3: Three Words to Describe Overall Experiences with Help-Seeking. The next question asked was, “If there has been a time in which you have sought emotional support on or off campus, please provide three words to describe your experience.”

Respondents included 68 different words in their responses. Some of the most frequently used words reflected their difficulties with mental health services, such as “difficult,” “overwhelming,” “frustrating,” and “confusing.” The most commonly used word was “helpful,” which was used 11 times. “Comforting” and “relief” were also frequently used. Even though negative words were used, the fact that “helpful” was the most frequently used word suggests a sense of hope. Even though many people have had negative experiences with CAPS and faced challenges with off-campus therapy, they still feel as though they have been helped overall.

Question 4: LGBTQIA+ Specifics. The final question asked to only people who identify within the LGBTQIA+ community was, “Do you think being part of the LGBTQIA+ community has affected the support you have received from the university, if yes, please explain how it has affected you?”

One response to this question addresses many of the issues that are present for all LGBTQIA+ individuals receiving any support services both on and off-campus:

“Yes, I think that being queer and trans*/GNC means that any support I receive, even if it is helpful, isn’t really giving me the representation and understanding that I need to feel seen and heard as a queer and trans* person. There is no emotional/psychological/gender affirming support for LGBTQ folks on this campus.”

Students highlighted other issues around campus that have contributed to how they feel about the university overall: “After the drag show debacle, I haven’t felt comfortable on campus” and “there is not enough gender-neutral bathrooms on campus and I don’t see a lot of trans visibility on campus or support from staff/faculty about pronouns in classes.” Another student highlighted issues with CAPS, particularly with LGBTQIA+ students: “CAPS I feel does not know how to engage effectively with LGBTQ+ students and it makes the organization very off putting.” These responses reflect the lack of support for LGBTQIA+ individuals at Seattle University. Many of these responses highlight the growth areas of Seattle University. Students highlighted the need for specific support for LGBTQIA+ individuals and the need for more inclusivity on campus.

Overall, the responses to the qualitative questions highlight that students' needs are not being met by the university and changes need to be made in order to accommodate students.

Discussion

The primary aim of this study was to further explore help-seeking within the LGBTQIA+ community on university campuses, specifically at Seattle University. We looked at relating factors such as stress, stigma, outness, and barriers to help-seeking. Contrary to our main hypothesis, sexual orientation was not predictive of help-seeking and barriers to help-seeking. However, we found that there was a significant effect on sexual identity and the types of support people sought, as well as from whom. Specifically, we found that heterosexual individuals were significantly less likely to seek help from a general practitioner (, and more likely to seek support from religious or spiritual leaders) than their pan/bi/questioning peers. Pan/bi/questioning people may be less likely to seek help from religious/spiritual leaders because they are afraid of being stigmatized by them, which has been shown through the historical stigmatization the Christian/Catholic church has shown towards LGBTQIA+ individuals.

Stigma. We found that individuals who self-identify as either male or female are significantly less likely to feel stigmatized by society than those who identify as gender non-conforming. This is particularly telling of the effects of stigma that still exist for individuals outside of the gender binary. This sense of stigma can have effects on whether or not individuals feel comfortable and safe seeking support. For example, we found that there is a significant main effect of gender identity and the ways that people seek support ($p=0.006$). Particularly, gender non-conforming individuals are more likely than their male peers to seek support from a friend. This may be a result of *who* gender non-conforming individuals feel safest seeking support from. Seeking support from a friend, who you know and trust, may be the safest option for someone who is afraid of being judged or shamed for seeking support from a stranger.

A list of 20 on-campus resources were provided, on which participants could indicate where they perceive the most stigma stems from. Figure 5 indicates that within our sample, more individuals perceive stigma from the Jesuit community ($n= 54$) than any other community on campus, with Albers School of Business and Economics ($n= 23$) coming in second, and Housing and Residence Life ($n= 18$) third. As mentioned above, this feeling of stigmatization may stem from both the historical and current-day stigma that exists within religious communities towards LGBTQIA+ individuals.

Outness. Outness was scored based on how likely people are to be out to various resources. Results show that questioning individuals are the least likely to be out in

comparison with their homosexual, queer, pansexual, and bisexual peers ($p < .05$). Although questioning people are the least likely to be out, the results still show that they are out to some people. For a visual representation of these findings refer to Figure 3.

Outness and help-seeking were assessed in relationship with one another to explore whether one predicted or affected the other, or to see if they had a relationship overall. Table 3 indicates each help-seeking variable in comparison with each outness inventory variable. Overall the result of the table shows that there is a relationship between help-seeking and outness ($p = 0.041$), showing that the more “out” people are the more likely they are to seek help from more resources. Interestingly the variable that had the highest number of significant relationships with other variables is being out to professors at SU. The table shows that there are four significant relationships with this variable, indicating that if someone is out to their professors at SU, they are likely to seek help overall but specifically with academic advisors ($p = 0.001$), professors ($p = 0.017$), and phone help lines ($p = 0.042$). Overall the findings reflect that the more out people are the more likely they are to help seek which can give hope to people facing difficulties when coming out.

Stigma and Outness. Although outness was not predictive of stress levels ($p=0.799$), we did find that outness was predictive of an individual’s fear of being stigmatized by society ($p=0.04$) (see Figure 3). This shows that if people had a fear of being stigmatized by society, they were less likely to come out. This result is less hopeful; however, in tandem with the results with help-seeking it is helpful to know that even if the people who fear being stigmatized by society do come out, they are more likely to seek help from more resources.

Although this study resulted in many statistically significant findings, there were unfortunately many limitations. The sample size was small ($n = 101$) and consisted primarily of students from Seattle University, a small private Catholic University; therefore, if this study was to be applied to a larger population the sample would need to be larger and not a sample of convenience. The population of males ($n= 10$), and gender non-conforming ($n=7$) individuals was also quite small and, in the future, to better understand their needs, larger sample sizes should be utilized.

Future research should focus on the needs of LGBTQIA+ individuals with more specific help-seeking resources specifically tailored to them. Future research should also focus specifically on gender non-conforming individuals and trans individuals as previous research has often ignored the needs of gender-diverse individuals. Research should also focus more specifically on needs and resources at Seattle University for the overall student population. The results of the qualitative study show that many students’ needs are not being met with the on-campus resources that Seattle University provides.

Both the quantitative and qualitative sections of our research provide Seattle University with valuable feedback regarding help-seeking, perceptions of stigma, and outness of students

of the university. It is clear from the qualitative discussion that people would like to see better mental health support from CAPS and more resources (including additional funding) to LGBTQIA+ individual's needs. People in the qualitative section reported that they would like to see more gender neutral bathrooms, better support with pronouns, more mental health support, more emotional and psychological support, gender affirming support, more resources outside the Gender Justice Center (which is student volunteer run and under-funded), and an overall more inclusive campus environment. There are positive changes happening including the change to the Housing and Residence Life policy to be more trans and gender non-conforming friendly. However, it is clear more work needs to be done. The quantitative research also indicates that there are many positive and negative aspects of the Seattle University climate. This shows that people perceive LGBTQIA+ stigma but are also likely to seek help when they come out. Unfortunately, LGBTQIA+ students are affected by stigma at Seattle University; however, this could be remedied if the university took into consideration the findings of this research and the findings of the 2015 Campus Climate survey.

References

Bouris, A., & Hill, B. (2017). Out on campus: Meeting the mental health needs of sexual and gender minority college students. *The Journal of Adolescent Health: Official Publication of the Society for Adolescent Medicine*, 61(3), 271-272. doi:10.1016/j.jadohealth.2017.06.002

Carver, C. S. (1997). You want to measure coping but your protocol's too long: Consider the brief COPE. *International Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 4(1), 92. doi: 10.1207/s15327558ijbm0401_6

Cohen, S., Kamarck, T., and Mermelstein, R. (1994). A global measure of perceived stress. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 24, 386-396. Retrieved from <http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschoo/ departments/ Anesthesiology/ Wellness/ Documents/ PerceivedStressScale.pdf>

Dunbar, M. S., Sontag-Padilla, L., Ramchand, R., Seelam, R., & Stein, B. D. (2017). Mental health service utilization among lesbian, gay, bisexual, and questioning or queer college students. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 61(3), 294-301. doi:10.1016/j.jadohealth. 2017.03.008.

Goldbach, J. T., & Gibbs, J. J. (2015). Strategies employed by sexual minority adolescents to cope with minority stress. *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity*, 2(3), 297-306. doi:10.1037/sgd0000124

Hatchel, T., Ingram, K.M., Mintz, S., Hartley, C., Valido, A., Espelage, D., E., & Wyman, P., (2019). Predictors of suicidal ideation and attempts among LGBTQ adolescents: The roles of help-seeking beliefs, peer victimization, depressive symptoms, and drug use. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*. doi:10.1007/s10826-019-01339-2.

Heteronormative. (n.d.). In *Merriam-Webster online*. Retrieved from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/heteronormative>

Hood, L., Sherrell, D., Pfeffer, C. A., & Mann, E. S. (2018). LGBTQ college students' experiences with university health services: An exploratory study. *Journal of Homosexuality*,1-18. doi:10.1080/00918369.2018.1484234.

Kosciw, J. G., Palmer, N. A., Kull, R. M., & Greytak, E. A. (2012). The effect of negative school climate on academic outcomes for LGBT youth and the role of in-school supports. *Journal of School Violence*, 12(1), 45-63. doi:10.1080/15388220.2012.732546.

Lassiter, J. M., Saleh, L., Grov, C., Starks, T., Ventuneac, A., & Parsons, J. T. (2017). Spirituality and multiple dimensions of religion are associated with mental health in gay and bisexual men: Results from the One Thousand Strong Cohort. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*. Advance online publication. doi:10.1037/rel0000146.

McDermott, E. (2015). Asking for help online: Lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans youth, self-harm and articulating the 'failed' self. *Health*, 19(6), 561-577. doi:10.1177/1363459314557967.

McDermott, E., Hughes, E., & Rawlings, V. (2018). Norms and normalisation: Understanding lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer youth, suicidality and help-seeking, *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, 20(2),156-172. doi: 10.1080/13691058.2017.1335435.

McDonald, K. (2018). Social support and mental health in LGBTQ adolescents: A review of the literature. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, 39(1), 16-29. doi:10.1080/01612840.2017.1398283.

Mink, M. D., Lindley, L. L., & Weinstein, A. A. (2014). Stress, stigma, and sexual minority status: The intersectional ecology model of LGBTQ health. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Social Services*, 26(4), 502-521. doi:10.1080/10538720.2014.953660.

Mohr, J., & Fassinger, R. (2000). Measuring dimensions of lesbian and gay male experience. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*, 33(2), 66. doi:10.1080/07481756.2000.12068999

Nadal, K. L., Whitman, C. N., Davis, L. S., Erazo, T., & Davidoff, K. C. (2016). Microaggressions toward lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and genderqueer people: A review of the literature. *The Journal of Sex Research*, 53(4), 488-508. doi:10.1080/00224499.2016.1142495.

Topkaya, N., Şahin, E., & Barut, Y. (2017). Negative effects of barriers to seeking psychological help and their association with depression, anxiety, stress, and self-efficacy among college students. *Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, (Special Issue), 609-617. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED602790.pdf>

Wilson, C. J., Deane, F. P., Ciarrochi, J. V., & Rickwood, D. (2005). Measuring help seeking intentions: properties of the general help seeking questionnaire. *Canadian Journal of Counseling*, 39(1), 15-28. Retrieved from <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/d31b/e74288542a115e6cc61cd33b8367a5ed1fc6.pdf>

Woodford, M. R., Kulick, A., & Atteberry, B. (2015). Protective factors, campus climate, and health outcomes among sexual minority college students. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, 8(2), 73-87. doi:10.1037/a0038552.

Appendix A

Table 1 Descriptive statistics of the sample.

Gender	Female 81.2%	Male 12%	Non-Binary 3%	Gender Fluid 2%	Gender Neutral 1%	Self-identify 1%
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual 52.5%	Queer 13.9%	Homosexual 11.9%	Bisexual 9.9%	Pansexual 6.9%	Questioning 5%
Racial identity	Caucasian 72%	Mixed Race 13%	Latinx 5.9%	Asian 5.9%	Black 2%	Self-identify 2%

Table 2 Perceived LGBTQIA+ Stigma at Seattle University relationship with Barriers to Help-Seeking (Perceived Devaluation, Fear of Being Stigmatized By Society, Lack of Knowledge, Trust in the Mental Health Profession, Difficulties in Self Disclosure)

	Perceived Devaluation	Fear of Being Stigmatized by Society	Lack of Knowledge	Trust in the Mental Health Profession	Difficulties in Self- Disclosure
Perceived LGBTQIA+ Stigma at Seattle University	.206	.007*	.091	.016*	.002*

**Indicates Significant Relationship, P< 0.05*

Table 3 Outness Inventory Relationship with the General Help-Seeking Questionnaire

*Indicates Significant relationship. P< 0.05

	Mother	Father	Siblings	Relatives	Old Heterosexual Friends	New Heterosexual Friends	LGBTQIA+ Friends	Religious Community	Classmates at SU	Professors at SU	Staff/ Faculty at Su	Outness Inventory Sum
Intimate Partner	.002*	.063	.327	.039*	.160	.109	.031*	.838	.092	.723	.501	.202
Friend	.245	.054	.313	.486	.454	.048*	.003*	.290	.081	.564	.335	.076
Parent	.0001*	.0001*	.535	.240	.827	.384	.691	.257	.690	.808	.391	.140
Relative	.126	.149	.412	.606	.678	.373	.951	.943	.690	.494	.797	.552
Academic advised	.283	.626	.563	.892	.638	.616	.726	.659	.043*	.0001*	.065	.241
Professor	.536	.992	.242	.449	.837	.587	.675	.288	.102	.017*	.099	.693
RA	.086	.049*	.101	.007*	.590	.030*	.263	.061	.085	.083	.017*	.014*
Support Group	.483	.796	.715	.731	.675	.166	.080	.174	1.00	.963	.930	.802
MH professional	.663	.568	.500	.356	.960	.160	.461	.995	.574	.313	.394	.788
Phone Help line	.381	.337	.666	.346	.133	.068	.114	.789	.219	.042*	.520	.094
Doctor	.380	.913	.442	.711	.210	.505	.796	.676	.249	.750	.025*	.707
Religious leader	.074	.081	.741	.764	.456	.375	.124	.001*	.132	.081	.068	.128
Not seek help	.842	.932	.886	.326	.562	.207	.284	.734	.320	.483	.743	.889
Help- Seeking Sum	.021*	.025*	.684	.251	.620	.065	.088	.045*	.026*	.023*	.134	.041*

Appendix B

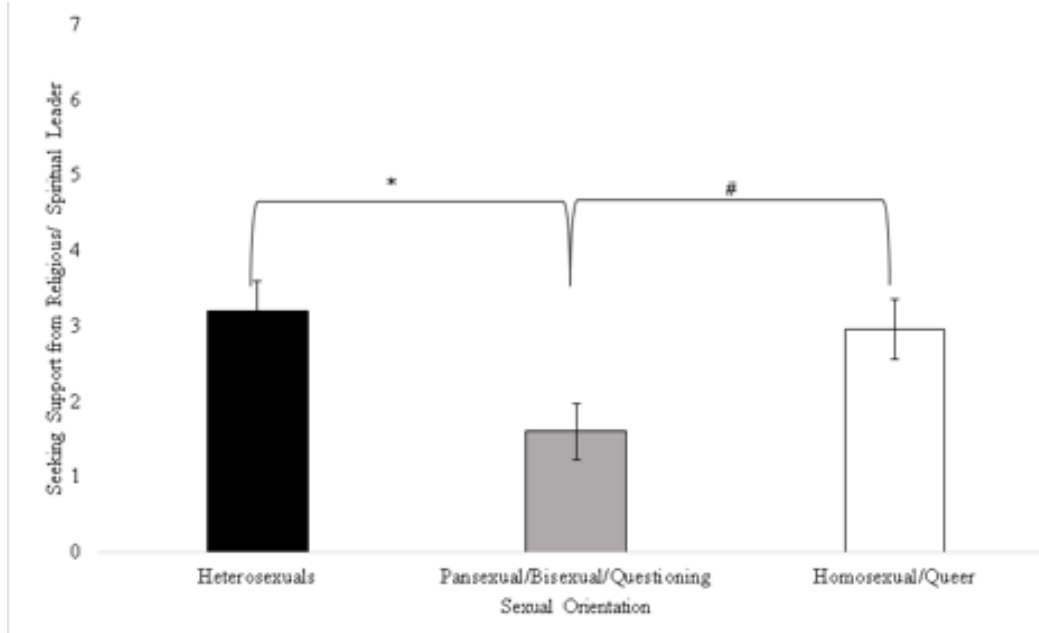
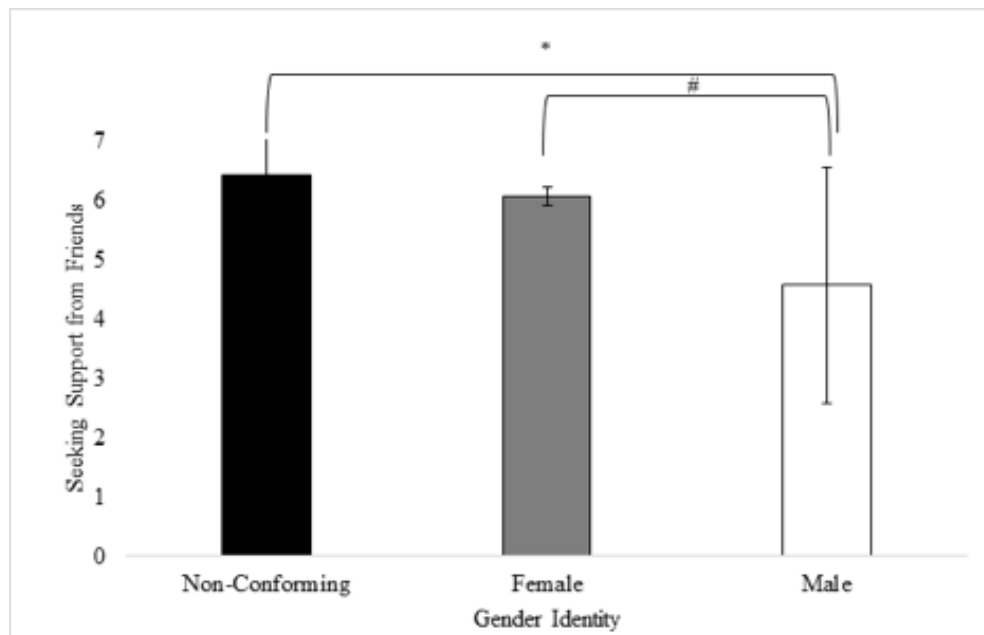


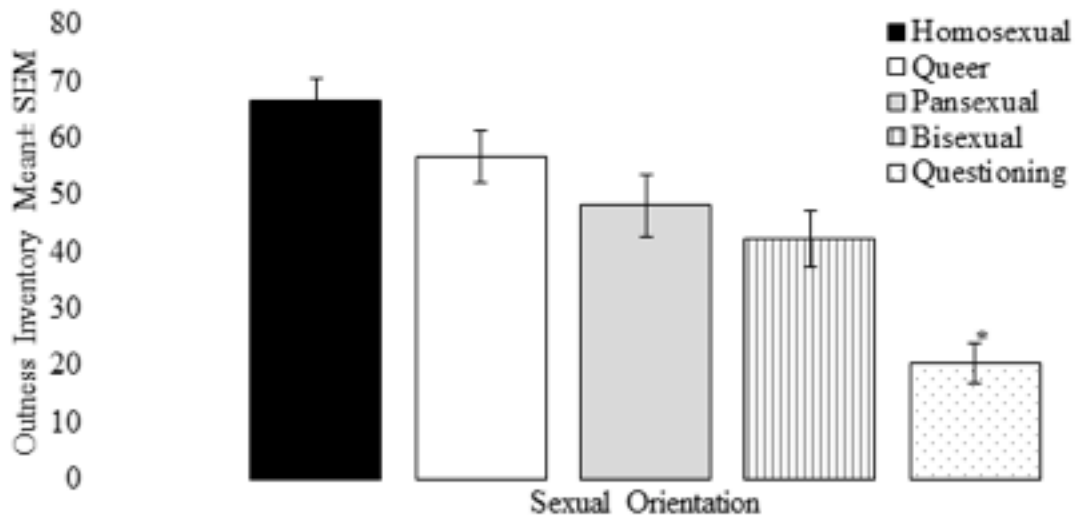
Figure 1 Likelihood of various sexual identities seeking support from religious/ spiritual leaders, based on the General Help-Seeking Questionnaire, Medium effect size, Cohen's $D=0.70$.



**Indicates statistically significant difference with gender non-conforming individuals and male individuals, $p < 0.05$*

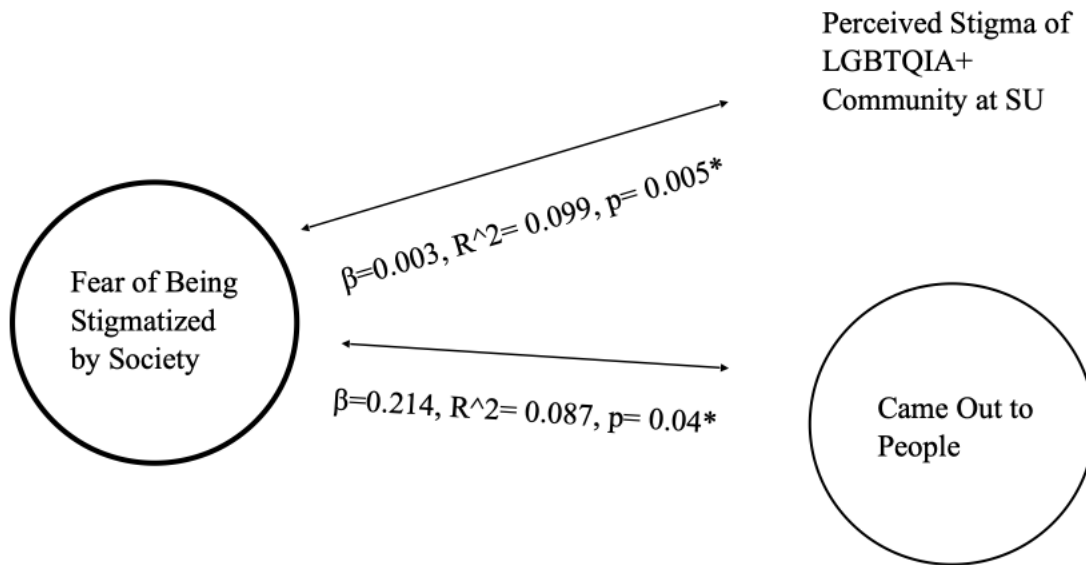
#Indicates statistically significant relationship with female individuals and male individuals, $p < 0.05$

Figure 2 Effect of gender identity on support seeking from a friend, $F(2, 66)=5.54$, $p=.006$, $D=1.22$



*Indicates Significant difference in Outness level, $p < 0.05$

Figure 3 Mean Outness Level and Sexual Orientation (Homosexual, Queer, Pansexual, Bisexual, and Questioning)



*Indicates significant prediction of Fear of Being Stigmatized by Society, $P < 0.05$

Figure 4 Fear of Being Stigmatized by Society is predictive of Perceived Stigma of the LGBTQIA+ community at SU and Coming Out to People.

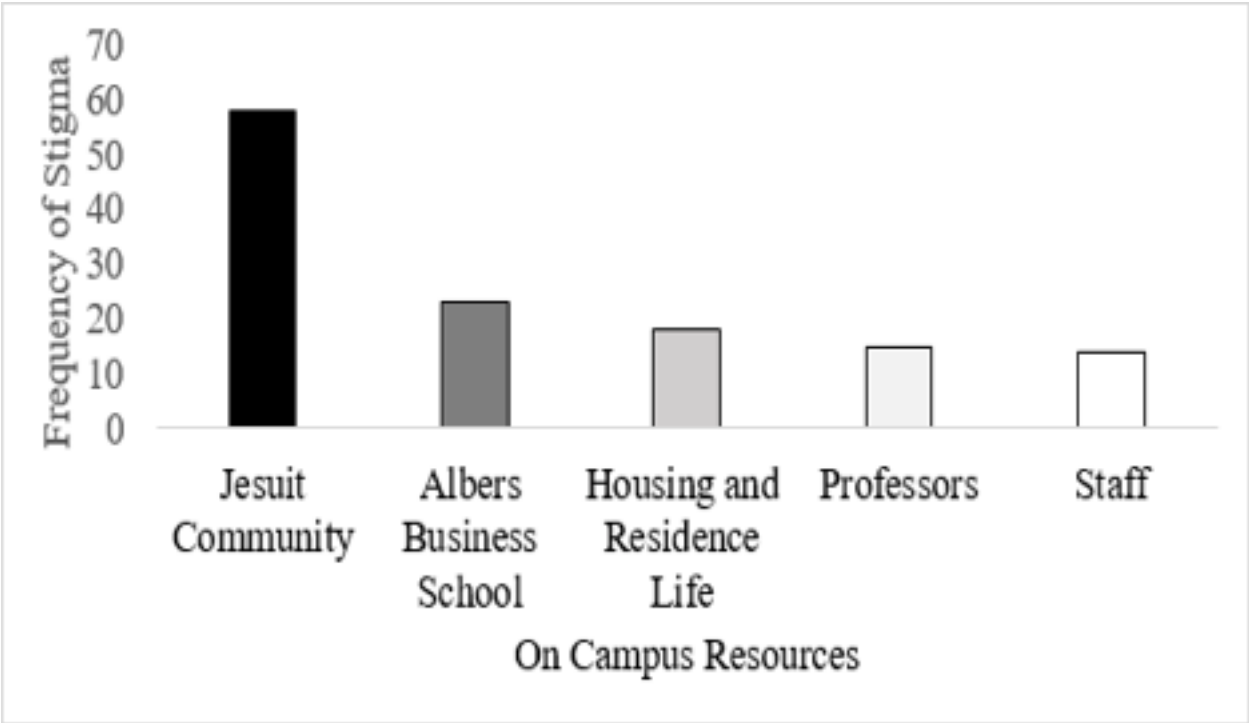


Figure 5 Frequency of perceived LGBTQIA+ stigma at various on campus resources at Seattle University.

“Do You Feel Better Now?” Reclaiming Holocaust Narratives and Delegating Responsibility in Spiegelman’s *Maus*

Elizabeth Ayers, English

Faculty Mentor: Allison Machlis Meyer, PhD

Faculty Content Editor: June Johnson Bube, PhD

Student Editor: Delaney Ryburn

Abstract

Through three stacked, interweaving timelines, Art Spiegelman's *Complete Maus* explores the power of intergenerational memory and cultural memory as history. *Maus*, a Holocaust graphic-memoir told by Art (the author, drawn as a mouse), relies on the inaccurate, undated, and unfocused memories of Holocaust survivor Vladek to piece together a narrative that rejects American requests for a story that will make readers "feel better" about historic — and present — atrocities. This reading of *Maus* asserts that — through stacking nonlinear timelines, through visual and written images of timelessness and intergenerational trauma, and through creation of "the super-present" — Spiegelman reveals the raw power of Jewish memory to help survivors keep living and moving through time as whole, embodied agents of change. *Maus* exposes the ways its readers' expectations serve readers themselves, and not necessarily past, present, or future generations of survivors. Demands for Holocaust narratives to assign meaning to genocide and wrap up events into a neat, contained frame lead *Maus* to question, who are these supposedly accurate and authentic narratives for? By reclaiming Jewish memory as that which ignites action, *Maus* demands that its audience face its own agency and passivity in perpetrating (even by lack of action) the ubiquitous conditions that allow events like the Holocaust to occur.

Introduction

While at once intimate and sociable, Spiegelman's *Complete Maus* has also struck many readers as an obscene representation of the Holocaust. Readers may be shocked by a Holocaust narrative with questionable objective accuracy, with no explications of the Holocaust being "the worst crime in human history/the 20th Century", with characters drawn as animals that represent their identities, and with a weaving set of narratives that result in a nonlinear, inconclusive story. *Maus* has had commercial success, despite defying consumer requisites. The self-conscious level of the graphic-memoir reveals the large stacks (and stakes) of reader expectations that are at odds with visual and narrative methods used to portray the lives of Holocaust survivors. Through Art's attempts to navigate the boundaries of noncommunicable emotional authenticity and factual accuracy, trauma and re-traumatization, periodization and lingering presences, his novel *Maus* rejects the task of assuaging consumers' yawning existential confusion in the wake of World War II and the wars that keep coming. In doing so, *Maus* overturns harmful conceptions of 'passive' Jewish victimhood and classifications of mass genocides as isolated incidents, instead offering a narrative about how people carry on — baggage in tow — as breathing, active memories of the past and agents of the present.

Reader Expectations: How They Work and What They Seek

The demand for Holocaust survival stories has created an unspoken but implied industry. In many ways, this industry can be compared to the consumption of "inspiration porn," a term that comedian and disability activist Stella Young coined to categorize news, movies, books, and other entertainment which portray disabled people in a patronizing light for the sole purpose of making able-bodied people feel good. Inspiration porn is often disguised as representation for disabled people or said to highlight their achievements — but the outcome is usually that it allows able-bodied people to compare their own lives to those of disabled people (Young). It seems that able-bodied people feel some cathartic gratitude or inspiration — perhaps like the calculations of gentile Holocaust narrative consumers. Meanwhile, the situation is duplicated when looking at popular misrepresentations of other minority groups. In his article "Why are Gay Characters at the Top of Hollywood's Kill List?", *Guardian* journalist James Rawson explores the motives of movie producers who kill off queer characters by the end of the movie, if not sooner. In Rawson's review of *Behind the Candelabra*, they state, "It is...a film about an [sic] lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender character who suffers and dies. It is a film that reminds viewers that any deviancy from heterosexuality will ultimately result in death by suicide, murder or Aids" (Rawson). The result is supposed to be compassion and acceptance for queer people — but have popular audience interpretations

reaped any better results than the reception of *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* has ended anti-Semitic mass shootings?

Popular Holocaust narratives tend to be treated differently: the audience may come away feeling more somber than they would after seeing *Soul Surfer* (2011), with less repressed guilt or reinforced savior complexes than the white viewers of *12 Years a Slave* (2013), and may remember the oppressed victims less casually than those in *Brokeback Mountain* (2005). Holocaust narratives, however, tend to carry similar messages of passive victimization, notions that the crimes were 'senseless' or beyond rational explanation, and a sober gratitude that "now is a better time," which in turn minimize any internal sense of action or need for additional emotional and cultural labor.

This connection between criteria for Holocaust stories and narrative tropes about other marginalized populations is important to make because it situates the arguments this essay will make in a broader — and perhaps particularly American — cultural context; one that tends to prefer digestibility over deep understanding and personal action. When consumers in this cultural context decide to discuss heavy topics like the Holocaust, we tend to request what Holocaust Study and Narrative Theory researcher Erin McGlothlin calls "sound bites that encapsulate a quick and easy 'Holocaust message' for a public that wants to settle the score with the past" (191-92). Holding McGlothlin's analysis of public sentiment in mind, I argue that readers have fabricated demands to which these narratives must abide: a Holocaust narrative should be told with the utmost factual accuracy; a Holocaust narrative should be told with attention to its classification as a unique event; a Holocaust narrative should be told with a serious, somber tone at all times; and a Holocaust narrative should be told with a clear beginning — Hitler's Rise to Power, and ending — liberation by Allied-Forces.

The demanded ending is exactly what *Maus* withholds from consumers. Instead, it articulates the reverberating effects of trauma on successive generations through nuanced visual and written representations of what accurate timelines are like, and through the organization of daily events and horrific experiences side by side. *Maus* manifests the kind of narrative we need in order to learn how to give more than thoughts and prayers to past victims and believe we will never let the Holocaust happen again. Instead, *Maus* demands that we come to the deep-seated realizations of our own culpability, demand accountability for ourselves and others, and labor for a culture that rejects the foundations of antisemitism and fascism, not simply the edifices they build.

Looking Past: Intergenerational Trauma and the “Super-Present”

Maus' rendering of intergenerational trauma violates, first, a sense of containment for the Holocaust to only first-hand survivors like Vladek and his murdered family members—a notion that may narrow the population for whom reparations are in order. Secondly, it disrupts a common classification of victimhood that could result in unwavering, and arguably patronizing, reverence for the victims who 'had it worse'. The fact that the text is equally, if not more, about Art surviving his parents as it is about Vladek's history results in a narrative that highlights Art as a survivor in more than the 'Holocaust story'. This portrayal breaks with the common notion that Holocaust survivors must be held in reverence above all others. Art often views his father as fallible 'despite' the fact that Vladek is a Holocaust survivor—in one instance, calling him a “murderer” for burning his mother's diaries (Spiegelman 161). This accusation violates the very criteria that the stories of first-hand Holocaust survivors are somehow a perfect, contained matter, and inadvertently takes away one of a person's most human traits – the ability to be imperfect.

In these more obvious instances, Art's stories of survival overpower his father's in a notable way, and may be the scenes that cause the most immediate discomfort to expectant readers. The deep complexities of intergenerational trauma are buried in what Erin McGlothlin argues is a third narrative strand separate from the narrative that follows Vladek's recollections and that follows the timeframe wherein Vladek retells the stories to his son (McGlothlin 182-84). Analyzing this extra, third story within a story that Spiegelman called the “super-present,” McGlothlin argues that this narrative strand depicts Art's own struggles with memory, inherited trauma, and the fallout from writing *Maus* (184-86). For the purposes of this essay, the super-present refers to the timelessness of intergenerational trauma, the undeniable presence of Vladek's past, and what exists in a dimension outside of explicable time and space but still exists in memory and bloodlines. The super-present continues to affect the present and future even after an event — the generally recognized time within which the known physical agents of trauma are acting — of cultural traumas like the Holocaust is over.

Within *Maus*' super-present, Art does a lot of thinking and navigating of surreal settings and situations that are simultaneously mashed together with elements of realism — like working at his desk (Spiegelman 201, 207), in his therapist's office (203-06), inside of family photos (274-75),¹ or walking to and from visits with his father (45). All of these moments are outside of the two clear narrative timelines and function as half-way personifications of Spiegelman's doubts, grief, and confusion. In “Auschwitz (Time Flies),” Art is confronted with an onslaught of interviewers and marketers atop a pile of dead bodies. Reporters' questions

pack each frame of a single page: “what message do you want [readers] to get from your book?”, “why should [young Germans] feel guilty?”, and “Let’s talk about Israel” (202). Art visually shrinks in size until, by the end of the last panel, he becomes a crying child overwhelmed with questions and expectations he cannot process or answer on behalf of others, let alone the entire Jewish population along with the Holocaust survivors his desk is built upon.

The representation of this scene belies the horrific context that the conversation within the speech balloons is taking place in. An uncanny visual setting— one that could be an ordinary office, but is made sickening by the desk’s elevation upon a platform of the bodies of Holocaust victims— creates a dissonance between the reality of the Holocaust and the reality of Art’s inherited trauma, along with the reporters who do not register the ground they stand on and their thus insensitive, poorly-formed questions. The last reporter’s ignorant questions, “could you tell your audience if drawing MAUS was cathartic? *Do you feel better now?*” (Panel 8), articulates both a detachment from their surroundings and the answers Art gives, revealing that the questions asked carry the exclusive purpose of getting the ‘publishable’ and ‘news-worthy’ answer. If the reporters had read *Maus*, noticed that Art’s desk is sitting on a mass, perpetually unearthed grave of guilt and exploitation, and listened to his answer, “I want... ABSOLUTION. No... No... I want... I want... my MOMMY!” (Panel 7), noticed his shrinking, and listened to his frustration, they would not think of asking the question, “do you feel better now?”.



Figure 1: Art speaks to marketers atop a pile of dead bodies.

This set of panels exposes how Art himself feels exploited during the process of drawing *Maus* — building his desk on the backs of dead Jews, and on the horror of their experiences — and others’ more explicit extraction of financial, emotional, and social capital from his narrative. While the literal situation may have happened, the visual setting in which it took place is unreal. This scene is at once within the presence of the dialogue and reporters and outside of a physical sense of time— within Art’s experience of the super-present. Here, he is left to bear the emotional burden of his ancestors’ past and to answer for them. Although Art was not present for the events of the Holocaust, it lives on in the aftermath he must reckon with. Emily Miller Budick sums this up in her essay, “Forced Confessions: The Case of Art Spiegelman’s *Maus*”:

The survival of the son becomes less figurative in the second of the two books, when the father actually dies, leaving the son to tell the story on his own and making of that telling something akin to much Holocaust narrative and historical writing generally: a story told in the living present about those who are no longer here to tell their stories themselves. (Spiegelman 381)

The reporters’ attempts to get the answers they want, such as, “the message of the Holocaust is the importance of tolerance” and “yes, let’s make millions off the vest,” show a dissonance between Art’s experiential reality and others’ selective consumption of Holocaust narratives in a way that borders exploitation.

Singular Linear History Isn’t Accuracy—It’s Limbo

Maus is always contending with pre-conceived demands for linear, factually accurate history, which often manifest in Art’s own insistence that Vladek tells the story in the order that would be digestible for his audience. If Art ever got this start-to-finish story, he never tried to put the comic book in that order. Rather, the lapses between the three narrative strands that Spiegelman decided to insert intermittently throughout the text reveal to readers not only how linear retellings of history are unrealistic to expect from survivors, but also how they fail to show the vital, qualitative accuracy that memory offers as it naturally unfolds. Rita Felski proposes that we think of history “like a crumpled handkerchief” (Felski 576) rather than a more digestible straight line, and that is how I argue *Maus* depicts memory. Moreover, I argue that *Maus* demonstrates how historical interpretation that takes the messiness of memory into account makes for the most accurate renditions. As much as *Maus* documents history, it reveals that history as a human invention is the same as a glorified memory.

Maus shows the dangers of flattening history into a straight line through its rich subtext, revealed when timelines abruptly switch tracks. For example, when Vladek counts his pills while talking to Art at the end of “My Father Bleeds History: Chapter Two/The Honeymoon” (41), he begins to tell his story of being on the warfront with a textbook start: “On September 1st, 1939, the war came. I was on the front, one of the first of...” Then, in the same speech balloon, the present timeline cuts in as Vladek spills his pills and exclaims, “ACH!” As Vladek leads into the story, it almost seems as if he will be fulfilling the listener Art’s expectations; he offers an accurate-sounding date and a serious, looming tone (“the war came”). In the next word, however, the “present” barges in with the pill crisis that seems to capture Vladek’s attention more so than his dredged-up memories of the war. The fragiley positioned “past” narrative strand then slips away with an unfortunate knock of the elbow, interrupting the impatient consumer’s coherent, smooth recalling of events. The dialogue on this panel overlays a present moment, revealing a literal connection between the past and present. Here, however, we see Vladek as human, as a grumpy old man who may be displaying some symptoms of OCD that could be more about trauma than eccentricity and who is a parent that — and I’m sure many of us can relate — seemingly blames their children for small mishaps as a result of grumpiness or unprocessed trauma. If this narrative had gone uninterrupted, into high school textbook-territory, Vladek would not have shown this moment of humanity, which allows us to see him as a person, not an unwilling martyr.

When Art and Vladek’s conversation abruptly turns into Vladek’s begrudging account of the injustices of aging, readers may have lost their chance at an easy transition into the “Vladek as soldier” part of the narrative — time is being lost, the narrative is interrupted... isn’t it insensitive of the author to juxtapose the distress of having to recount pills with his father’s war stories like that? On the other hand, it offers a kind of “accuracy” and “authenticity” that can’t be (pun absolutely intended) counted out: (1) how memory and remembering works psychologically, (2) the difficulties of trying to have a serious, balanced child-parent conversation, and (3) how people will have more than just a traumatic experience on their minds at any moment in time. In these ways, the past is there in a more slowly permeating, subtle way as it mingles with the present. Trauma, as depicted in *Maus* and in human experience, can easily fall into the background or come back into the foreground.

Felski echoes this dilemma of the past’s lingering presence as she discusses the ways in which the process of contextualizing a work of art can reduce it to a product that is confined to one time period, a socioeconomic shift, or a political climate (576-77). She writes that, when context dominates interpretation, “The macrolevel of sociohistorical context holds the cards, calls the tune, and specifies the rules of the game; the individual text, as a microunit encased within a larger whole, can only react or respond to these preestablished conditions” (577). This idea can also be applied to the narrative Art is trying to extract from his father. In places

throughout Volume I, especially, Art embodies reader expectations — urging his father to stay on track of linear time, asking for dates, coming in with a tape recorder like a journalist — instead of being depicted as deeply involved in his own soul-searching as in the later parts of the book.

When Vladek is free to remember the story come back in fragments — in between spilled pills as memories naturally float to the surface — Vladek’s ability to be grounded in physical place falls away. Art pushes him to delve headfirst into his memories as they happened linearly. These moments a physically spent, free-floating Vladek begs the questions: does expecting a trauma survivor to recall “accurate” details of their past not only retraumatize them, but also cut the conversation short? Who do these accurate details serve? Is this the kind of extracted accuracy really the most valuable?



Figure 2: Vladek rides his cycling machine.

Sometimes Vladek’s physical reactions can show the effect of these expectations, describing what is left unsaid through the comic drawings. One place where this is the case is when Vladek is on his cycling machine. When Vladek shows the weight of his trauma through body language — slumping on the bike seat, putting his face in his hands — he is pictured as riding against an empty background, creating the effect that he is moving forward, but not getting anywhere. This visual of Vladek riding and then stopping in emotional exhaustion usually follows a retelling of a traumatic memory — giving up his son (Spiegelman 83-84), or the gestapo taking his father at the stadium (93). For instance, as he speaks of his friends not coming out of the war and then of giving up his firstborn, Richieu (83), he stops riding suddenly, sitting with his shoulders’ slumped. While the mirroring of the panels make it look like both time and Vladek himself have progressed, he is still free-floating in white space, alone. In these moments where Vladek seems only able to express his pain through body language, it becomes visually evident that linear progression is a trick of the mind — or, on a more literal level, a trick of clever artwork.

This example at once suggests an odd timeless limbo and a façade of moving forward

when Vladek gets too caught up with his memories; it also reveals the presence of the past as a white space a person can slip into. These panels have no borders to contain the white space; in fact, as the whiteness flows into the margins of the pages themselves, it becomes confusing, engulfing, and empty in its embrace of everything around it. The only way that Vladek can get out of this limbo is to be brought back into a present frame or some kind of fuller, if more visually cluttered, reality by Art's interruptions. Ironically, even if these interruptions are Art's chastising his father for getting off the linear track (84), they snap him back into the reality of storytelling with his son from the yawning rabbit hole of his past when left unchecked. When asked to go on and on about their memories for the sake of extracting linear accuracy, Vladek shows signs of being retraumatized, wherein the brain is at risk of shutting down because the body is reliving the event. Reliving trauma in this way is not how brains naturally process information. In fact, when the brain cannot stop retelling stories to itself, psychiatrists call the process "rumination" defined as "obsessive repetition of the same thoughts to a degree which interferes with normal psychological functioning ("Rumination"). When people ruminate, the brain is trying to find a solution — a fruitless hunt for accuracy and a solution. In summary; rumination can shut down productive conversations about trauma, what happened, why it happened, and how people can move forward. I argue that these same risks are present when we ask survivors — in this case, Vladek — to relive, blow-for-blow, his traumatic experiences and to retell history without healthy interruptions whether they be asides, environmental distractions, or acknowledgements of feelings and emotions that have arisen. *Maus* affirms these consequences as they apply both to Vladek and Art, and points out the impossibility of encapsulating a complete, "true" history when abiding by readers' expectations that demand a tidy solution to a problem which cultural rumination cannot offer.

(Non) Conclusion

What does it say about us that the American industry for these narratives demand confinement of the Holocaust to a single unique event rather than an ongoing set of circumstances? What does it mean that *Maus* does not give into these criteria, even as its author is urged time and time again to conform *Maus* — already written, already published, there for interviewers to read beforehand — to a predetermined 'meaning' or tidy 'message' ("Art Spiegelman")? It means that we are asking for a resolution or a conclusion; maybe we are asking for a waiving or forgiveness for our own guilt as passive bystanders who continue to refuse access to refugees fleeing similar situations as the one we "will never let happen again." It means that we ask for someone else to do the work of tying up loose ends so that we don't have to do the work of *resolving* and *concluding* the foundations of institutional oppressions that a handful of popular memoirs written by survivors cannot labor for alone and cannot

prevent without active engagement. *Maus* shows the beauty, trauma, love, and frustration of reforming relationships with those whom one shares cultural memories. It also shows the limitations of such narratives to speak for everyone and to have a satisfying meaning. *Maus* does not refuse to do the work of forging meaning for the world; it shows that it cannot, and that the responsibility of providing meaning *and* change fall on the audience who must invest themselves in the mechanisms that allow horrific events to occur, not find a false resolution to ongoing atrocities.

Works Cited

"Art Spiegelman discusses *Maus* & *MetaMaus*—BBC News." *Youtube*. 10 Dec. 2011.

Brown, Kara. "I'm So Damn Tired of Slave Movies." *Jezebel*, 27 Jan. 2016, <https://jezebel.com/im-so-damn-tired-of-slave-movies-1755250873>. Accessed 21 Mar. 2019.

Chute, Hillary. "'The Shadow of a Past Time': History and Graphic Representation in 'Maus.'" *Twentieth Century Literature*, vol. 52, no. 5, 2006, 199-230. *JSTOR*, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20479765>.

Felski, Rita. "Context Stinks!" *New Literary History*, vol. 42, no. 4, 2011, pp. 573-591. *JSTOR*, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41328987>.

Hirsch, Marianne. "Family Pictures: Maus, Mourning, and Post-Memory." *Discourse*, vol. 15, no. 2, 1992-93, pp. 3-29. *JSTOR*, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41389264>.

McGlothlin, Erin. "No Time like the Present: Narrative and Time in Art Spiegelman's 'Maus.'" *Narrative*, vol. 11, no. 2, 2003, pp. 177-198. *JSTOR*, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20107309>

Miller Budick, Emily. "Forced Confessions: The Case of Spiegelman's *Maus*." *Prooftexts*, vol. 21, no. 3, 2001, pp. 379-398. *JSTOR*. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2979/pft.2001.21.3.379>

Rawson, James. "Why are Gay Characters at the Top of Hollywood's Kill List?" *The Guardian*, 11 June 2013, <https://www.theguardian.com/film/filmblog/2013/jun/11/gay-characters-hollywood-films>

"Rumination." *Oxford English Dictionary*, 3rd ed. March 2011.

Spiegelman, Art. *The Complete Maus*. New York, Pantheon Books, 1996.

Ugwu, Reggie. "The Unreality of Racial Justice Cinema." *New York Times*. 24 Oct. 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/24/movies/racial-justicecinema.html>. Accessed March 21st, 2019.

Young, Stella. "I am Not Your Inspiration, Thank You Very Much." *TEDxSydney*, April 2014, https://www.ted.com/talks/stella_young_i_m_not_your_inspiration_thank_you_very_much

Notes

¹For more on family pictures and their manifestation as their own type of presence, read Marianne Hirsch's "Family Pictures: Maus, Mourning, and Post-Memory."

Framing the Center: Belize and Panamá Within the Central American Imagined Community

**Isabeau Belisle Dempsey, International Studies and
Spanish**

Faculty Mentor: Serena Cosgrove

Faculty Content Editor: Serena Cosgrove

Student Editor: Ella Campbell

Abstract

This paper explores the historical roots and contemporary manifestations of Belize and Panamá's exclusion from the Central American "imagined community" — that is, the definition of which countries comprise "Central America." While there are seven countries that geographically exist in the region, not all seven are always classified as belonging to Central America due to factors such as differences in histories, racial distribution, and cultural expressions, among others. The aim of this article is to more fully explore and analyze the many reasons behind these exclusions and to propose a reconsideration of the narrative, thereby creating the possibility of an expanded and more inclusive "Central America."

Introduction: Who is “Central America”?



Figure 1 Map of Central America

Central America is a region with a difficult and tumultuous history, filled with shifting alliances and constant intra-regional warfare. It has long struggled to create a lasting, coherent identity for itself, in the way that many other regions throughout the world, such as Western Europe or the Middle East, have purportedly achieved. Despite sharing many commonalities with each other – including colonial histories and cultural traits – Central America does not seem to have one single definition of *who* it is. Since the colonial era, from the 16th century and on, the region has been unsure of which nations in the isthmus are included in “Central America.” Indeed, there are even debates over whether México ought to be considered a Central American state. At the center of this debate are Belize and Panamá, two Central American republics that have long been outliers in the region’s history. Meanwhile, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua, who will be referred to throughout the paper as “the Core Five,” have a profound history of interconnectedness and cultural overlap that has unified them in ways that Belize and Panamá have never experienced.

This paper explores the historical and contemporary exclusion of Belize and Panamá from the Central American “imagined community” — that is, the definition of “Central America,” accepted by any number of domestic and international parties — with the aim to more fully comprehend the many reasons behind this exclusion and to create a framework for addressing issues raised by the current definition. This paper will not argue in favor of creating a formal, internationally recognized regional organization, such as the European

Union. Rather, it aims to promote a re-visioning of whom the Central American imagined community is with the purposeful inclusion of Belize and Panamá, more in the vein of the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA), as an approach for the strengthening of the overall regional identity.

Divergent Histories: Overview of Regional History

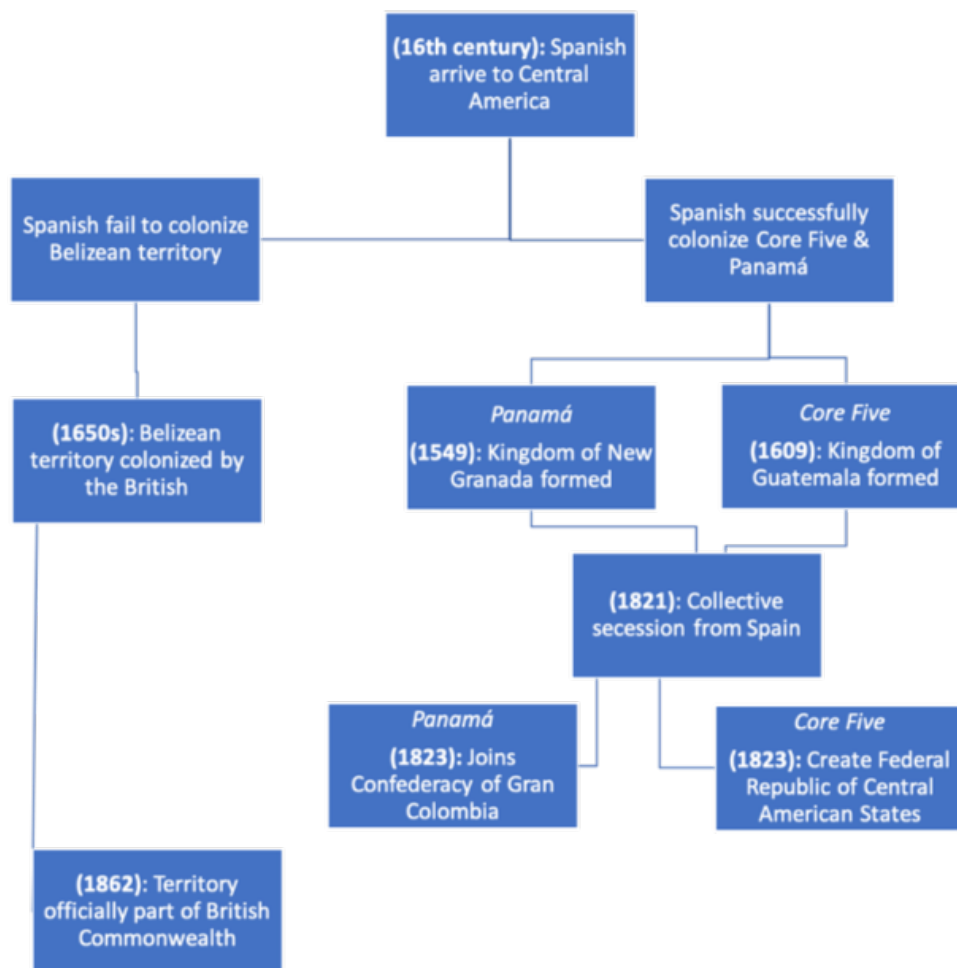


Figure 2 Outline of major colonial events 1500s - 1800s

In *A Brief History of Central America* (1989), Costa Rican scholar Hector Perez-Brignoli covers the main events of the region's formation, beginning with 16th century colonial history and spanning the late 1900s. What is fascinating about Perez-Brignoli's version of Central America's regional history is that he, quite purposefully, does *not* include Belize and Panamá:

In 1985 Belize and Panamá[á] became part of the region under the perspective we [the author and his readers] will adopt. Their membership arises barely a decade ago, however. Up until the Torrijos regime (1968-1981), Panamá[á] as an independent state hardly participated in Central American politics. The same could be said of Belize [...] For these reasons we have left aside any consideration of both countries' internal development. (p. xii)

The author notes that he will mention Belizean and Panamanian influence where relevant to the region's overall story, but that, ultimately, they do not fit into his definition. Perez-Brignoli's selectivity with Belize and Panamá's histories demonstrates plainly how peoples' perspectives affect their chosen definitions of "Central America," and how any combination of histories, political views, and cultural beliefs culminates in the understanding an individual might have of what constitutes Central America.

The contemporary exclusion of Belize and Panamá from the Central American imagined community arguably has deep historical roots that date back to the colonial era, when European conquistadores were carving out swaths of North and South American land and settling there. The Spanish colonized Central American soil, defining what would become the contemporary Core Five and Panamá during the 16th and 17th centuries. The only exception was Belize: an attempt was made by the Spanish to colonize this territory like the rest of the region, and though they experienced some degree of success, the indigenous Maya population resisted control and eventually drove the Spanish out in the mid-1500s. It was not until the 1650s that Belize saw another attempt at colonization, this time by the British, who settled the territory and officially claimed it as a colony of the Empire in 1862, dubbing it British Honduras. Panamá shares similar colonial roots with the Core Five, having been settled by Spanish explorers in 1510. However, the Panamanian republic's history diverges from theirs in the 18th century, when the Viceroyalty of New Andaluçia (later New Granada, then Gran Colombia) was established, including Panamá as well as present-day Colombia, Ecuador, and Venezuela. At this time, the Core Five were members of the Kingdom of Guatemala, which was formed in 1609 under the Spanish Empire. The establishment of these colonial boundaries would serve as future lines of separation when considering nation-to-nation sympathies and alliances.

Bearing these differing origins in mind, the defining point for Central America as a completely unified region—or, as a region that could be potentially unified—was the collective secession in 1821. In 1821, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, Costa Rica, and Panamá all declared their separation from Spain; but here, again, there is a divergence from the Core Five. In 1823, these five states joined together to create the Federal Republic of Central American States. William F. Slade (1917) delves into the formation of the Federal Republic

of Central American States, providing an analyzed overview of the timeline of events that culminated in the creation of the Federation in 1823. In his analysis of the Federation, Slade (1917) seems to posit the idea that the Central American union (consisting of the Core Five states) was doomed to fail before it was even formed and supports this claim by laying out a story of disunity that characterized the region. According to him, the main issue lay in each state's desire to be the one in charge: "No republic seemed altogether willing to enter into a federation unless it could be the dominant force" (p. 104). The Federation of Central American States lasted for sixteen strenuous years before disbanding in 1839. Panamá took a different route by not joining the Federation when it seceded, instead opting to become a part of the confederacy of Gran Colombia (formerly New Andalusia or New Granada) with Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Perú, and Bolivia. The confederacy dissolved in 1830, and Panamá was absorbed into Colombia, where it stayed until 1903. The Federation was the first attempt at regional unification, but not the last by far. What is relevant to note from this first instance of unification is how Belize and Panamá were not a part of the Federation, clearly born from distinctive colonial legacies—but more importantly, how this set a trend for how the region would function as a unit in the future. It is from these historical roots that "Central America" was created, a definition that has persisted into the modern day understanding of the region.

Regionalism & the Imagining of "Central America"

Benedict Anderson defines an imagined community as a "political community, both inherently limited and sovereign," describing it as "imagined" because "the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson, 1983, p. 6). It is a community that ignores physical realities and imagines itself as united, brought together by collective experience, identity, or custom (Fawcett, 2004, p. 432). But the central question to consider when discussing imagined communities is, "Who is doing the imagining?" That is, through whose perception is the community being perpetuated and reinforced? Without agents of imagination, there is no imagined community. If there is any lesson to be learned from the turbulent history of Central America, it is that a shared or similar history does not an imagined community make. So, who, then, is doing the imagining that creates the popular idea of contemporary "Central America," particularly the version that excludes Belize and Panamá? The foremost answer to this is Central Americans themselves. An example of this domestic imagining is found in the case of Belize's venture for independence, where the country appealed to the UN for its independence from Great Britain. Of the six other Central American states, only one supported Belize's independence: Panamá. Among the other states, there is a definite manifestation of the popular imagined community, and it pointedly did

not include Belize. Eventually, the rest of the region did back Belize's appeal, and this later acceptance into the fold through certain efforts demonstrates that there is flexibility in how the Central American community can be defined (see "Historical Tension" section). An imagined community is an entity that is created from a "deep, horizontal comradeship" (Anderson, 1983, p. 15-16), meaning a relationship where all members are recognized and appreciated equally, a comradeship that was displayed through Panamá's public support of Belize.

While an imagined community relies more upon shared characteristics and less on physical realities, geography can still play a vital role in solidifying a sense of community. Peoples inhabiting a shared area or region together are more likely to form similar characteristics to base a community around. "Regionalism" is the idea that distinct sovereign states in a region can form a united identity and is a key point when illustrating the current "Central America" and how it may be improved in the sense of seeking a more coherent, complete, and supportive interstate community. Regionalism can be understood in many ways, the most popular including geographical realities (states physically sharing a border), zones where people share similar behavioral patterns, and in the context of an imagined community, "states or peoples held together by a common experience and identity, custom and practice" (Fawcett, 2004, p. 432).

Somewhat in contrast to Fawcett's definition, which still centers culture and customs, Fredrik Söderbaum (2013) claims that contemporary regionalism has emerged in response to globalization, posing the question, 'For whom and for what purpose are regional activities carried out?' (p. 17), as the answers to those questions form the basis for regional unity. Söderbaum's research focuses on Southern Africa, a regional body that has been constructed around "corporations and capital interests in the formal economy" (p. 13); Southern Africa's regional identity is contingent on economic unity as well as geographical circumstance. Central America is also often seen primarily through a geopolitical lens because of its strategic location and its usefulness for outsourcing cheap manufacturing and labor (Chaverri, 1985). This is particularly true of the United States, whose influence has been pivotal in shaping the region into how it is perceived today. It can be argued that, just as leftovers from the colonial era have crafted the Central American identity, US American involvement has considerably defined who Central America is, both domestically and internationally. This can even be seen dating back to the 1800s attempt at unification: "The formation of a powerful independent Central American Federation was not palatable to the Cabinet at Washington, for the principal reason, that the monopoly of the Isthmus would no longer be in the hands of the Americans, but be open to the world" (Slade, p. 130). The Federation did not fit the United States' agenda, and it, therefore, found it necessary to redefine the Central American community so that it fell within the parameters of a geopolitically advantageous region. This is exactly similar to how the US intervened in 1903 to ensure Panamá's independence so that they might stake a claim to the

Canal. This shows a tenacious history of the US asserting its influence over Central America to craft the imagined community into a profitable body by ensuring the Central American republics were, and are, so reliant on US econopolitics that they have no choice but to conform to that perception. Though regionalism is generally thought of in terms of economic and political factors that tie independent states together, framing regionalism through an imagined community lens is no less legitimate and can be just as powerful an adhesive as economic interdependence, if not more so.

One of the main issues that arises when establishing an imagined community, or even a region, is legitimization, as this is typically achieved through international recognition. Although those involved in the community themselves will always have the most important perspective on who is included in that formation, much of the imagining is done through foreign agents. More often than not, this influence has a negative impact on how a community is created, especially in Central America, who has been the victim of Global Northern influence through the entirety of its recorded history. The Northern Triangle, for example, consists of Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador, and has been politically imagined due to their shared experience with civil war, violence, and drug trafficking—certainly, this is not a community that has chosen itself; rather, it has been defined by the international community. Why, then, can't the international community be persuaded to reimagine the current conception of Central America to include Belize and Panamá?

Motivators for Exclusion

Central America has a long legacy of attempted unification as a region, through several bids at merging a myriad of different country combinations under a varied list of leaders. There were eight efforts between 1842 and 1862 alone, often with a new mix of the Core Five nations (Slade, 1917, p. 102). However, as Perez-Brignoli phrases it, all attempts at a unified region ended in essentially the same manner: “wars, destruction, and death” (p. 92). Understanding that the Core Five have struggled to find common ground, regardless of all their shared history, is crucial to framing the question of Belize and Panamá.

I. Colonial Legacy

It is particularly easy to separate Belize from Central America based on the effects of its divergent colonial history. Having been colonized by the British, Belize is the only republic whose official language is English rather than Spanish. For many, that linguistic characteristic alone is enough to draw a distinct line around the imagined community, with Belizeans on the outside. This trait may also be applied to Panamá, who also maintains a high level of English proficiency due to its close relations with the United States and other English-speaking

countries that have Canal-related business interests. Although Spanish remains Panamá's official language, such a prevalence of English creates a similar disconnect to that experienced by Belize. In this same vein, Belize and Panamá's relationships with their respective colonizer states (in this context, meaning the United States for Panamá, rather than Spain) remain strong. Although the Core Five may have retained tangential relations with Spain, it in no way compares to the close ties Belize has with Britain and Panamá with the United States.

Panamá's relationship may be almost entirely based on economic relevance but dismissing it as merely that ignores the actual depth of their shared Central American history. When Panamá separated from Colombia in 1903 and declared independence, it was with the support of the United States fleet (Perez-Brignoli, p. 123). Since that event, the US has been directly involved in shaping Panamá into the Canal-focused business haven that, for better or worse, it is today. Despite later pushes to gain autonomy from the US, the US still remains a powerful influence in Panamá, resulting in intriguing Panamanian sympathies toward the US and its citizens, at least compared to the rest of the region (Theodossopoulos, 2010). Belize's relationship with the UK is equally as significant. Belize gained independence from Britain in 1981, nearly 200 years later than the rest of the region. Despite their national independence, they remain part of the English Commonwealth realm, resulting in continued British interest and involvement. This is especially evidenced by British willingness to deploy troops to defend Belizean territory from outside threats, namely from Guatemala, an action that has been taken numerous times throughout Belize's pre- and post-independence history (Bolland, 1988).

II. Historical Tension

The Guatemala-Belize tension is a significant factor for exclusion. Guatemala has an extensive history of claiming Belize as its own territory, dating back 150 years, when Guatemala claimed Belize as its twenty-third department. This claim was purportedly resolved with a treaty in 1859 between Guatemala and Britain, but Guatemala contested the treaty in the latter part of the 1800s, and the dispute has been ongoing since. When Belize first made its push toward independence in 1975, every single Central American nation voted "no" during the UN resolution to grant Belize's nationhood, likely in support of Guatemala's claims to the territory. Notably, the first Central American country to reach out to Belize after the vote was Panamá: in 1976, the two countries' leaders met at a summit meeting, at the end of which Panamá threw its support behind Belize. During the next UN vote in 1980, Belize won the rest of Central America's votes – aside from Guatemala, who continued to refuse to recognize its independence in 1981 (Young and Young, 1988). Although Belize won support from the republics by 1980, their initial reaction to support Guatemala is significant—it demonstrates how, to them, the Central American imagined community did not, and would not, include Belize.

III. Racial Prejudice



Figure 3 Distribution of the Black population in Central America (Source: CIA, 2018)

The distribution of Black people throughout Central America offers another reason behind who can be included in “Central America.” Racism and colorism are extremely pervasive throughout Central America, just like any other part of the world, and particularly those with fierce colonial histories that demanded colonized land be reshaped into sanctums for whiteness. The legacy of fierce racism, in its quest to establish a safe place for white Europeans and their descendants, is not something easily grown out of: “Racial prejudice never ceased to be a fundamental mechanism in the forging of the *Patria Criolla* (Creole Nation) [in Central America]. [...] The exclusion of Indians and [B]lacks was an inviable social norm[.] This exclusion found its echo well into the twentieth century in many segregation practices, both tacit and open, and in outright prohibitions” (Perez-Brignoli, p. 9). In other words, the Creole Nation developed from a social hierarchy based on the European conception of race, which prioritized whiteness.

This hierarchy is still in place and impacts contemporary Central American social structure and regional relationships, presenting a new perspective for understanding the exclusion of Belize and Panamá from the Central American community. Belize and Panamá have the highest Black/Afro-descendant populations in Central America, at 32% and 16%

respectively. The next highest percentage resides in Nicaragua, at 9%. From there, the numbers dwindle significantly until Guatemala's 0.5% and El Salvador's mere 0.1% (See Figure 2). Considering the influence of European notions of racial superiority, the comparatively significant presence of Black populations in Belize and Panamá may correlate to their exclusion from the Central American community. The racial hierarchy that was implemented in each republic can be expanded to fit a regional lens, placing Belize and Panamá at the bottom. The topic of slavery is hardly even spoken of in Salvadoran schools, undoubtedly due to the lack of Black history in their country (Euraque and García, 2013, p. 35). Exposure to Blackness in society is critical to shaping how Black people are perceived and treated.

The Garífuna are an Afro-indigenous group descended from the Carib people of the Caribbean and Africans who escaped slavery. The Garifuna arrived in Belize by way of Honduras from as early as 1802 and have since lived in Belize along the Caribbean coast, making up about 6% of the country's total population. The Garifuna are principally discriminated against for their race and for their culture, even within their home countries, let alone in other republics in the region. This discrimination is created out of colonial legacy, putting light-skinned / white people at the top of the social hierarchy, and dark-skinned / Black people at the bottom (Bonner, 1999). Although both Afro-descendant Creoles and the Afro-indigenous Garífuna are Black, because of Creoles' of European descent, they are higher on the social hierarchy than the Garífuna, who are much closer to their African roots. Returning to the Belize-Guatemala conflict, one can see the role racism plays through an explicit example against the Garífuna. In 1971, a Guatemalan playwright wrote a production called *Goodbye, Belize* that was based on the long-standing border dispute between Guatemala and Belize. The play features actors in Blackface—a racist tradition in theatre originating in the 19th century, where non-Black actors darkly color their skin in order to caricaturize Black people—dressed in traditional Garífuna clothes and dancing to Garífuna music. The most recent performance of this play was in 2018, presented in light of Guatemala's newest bid at claiming Belize's territory. This pointed ridicule of an Afro-indigenous group that only makes up a small portion of Belize's Black population makes it obvious that Guatemala perceives Belize as a Black country and considers that a shameful trait.

Slade asserts that perhaps the "seeds of separation" and disunion were sown during the colonial era (p. 79), meaning that it is impossible to disconnect Central America's struggle for unity from its difficult history as colonized land, almost putting the blame entirely on the Europeans. Though this argument does have some credence, stressing that these attitudes grew from the circumstances the countries were placed in through colonization, it would be irresponsible to let current discriminatory actions and ideals go unchallenged simply because of their roots.

IV. A Case for Self-Exclusion

Both domestic (Central America) and international agents (the US and UK, among other Global Northern entities) have had a hand in creating any number of imaginations of the Central American community. However, not all of the exclusion can be wholly attributed to the actions (or inactions) of the Core Five nor the Global North: there is also something to be said about self-exclusion on the part of Belize and Panamá from the Central American imagined community.

Panamá's self-exclusion is heavily related to the aforementioned consequence of US intervention. With an annual GDP per capita of \$15,575, Panamá is the wealthiest republic in the isthmus (International Monetary Fund, 2018a) – it is followed by Costa Rica at \$12,094 per capita (2018b), then the gap widens significantly, with the third highest GDP being Belize's \$4,862 (2018c). Panamá has, perhaps, the most positive international perception, or at least the most neutral, when compared to its regional counterparts. Rather than violence being its identifier, Panamá is more quickly associated with economic prosperity. It may be asserted that, from this economic strength, a sort of egoism has developed within the country, a self-importance that causes Panamá to disparage the rest of the region. Such close connection with major Global Northern powers like the United States and England could possibly lead to a dismissal of any need for those in Central America, who do not possess much econopolitical pull within the international context.

Belize's possible self-exclusion has a much different origin from that of Panamá: Belize's is a prejudice that has been referred to as "Hispanophobia," discrimination against Spanish-speakers. This is most likely born out of the history of the border dispute with Guatemala. Spanish-speaking Central Americans often receive pitiable treatment in Belize, forced into poor-paying jobs, very obviously marginalized within Belizean society: "Many Belizeans, particularly the Creoles of Belize City, refer to these people as "aliens" or "Spanish" and view them as something of a scapegoat for the nation's problems" (Bolland, 1988, p. 208). There is a fear of "Spanish takeover" in the country (Bolland, 1988, p. 215), which, again, has likely grown due to the Guatemalan claims. It is, therefore, in a sense, understandable that Belize may have some reservations of being involved in a community that has very openly displayed its willingness to exclude it.

While these examples of self-exclusion are, arguably, manifested from the circumstances that the Core Five or the Global North placed them in, it remains sensible to highlight them. By doing so, more avenues may be identified that Belize and Panamá could take in order to be included within the community. There are many definitions of Central Americas within Central America, each formed from their own characteristic and situational histories, and each perpetuated through a different imagining. Some of these have more strength than others in projecting what ought to be the accepted version of Central America, many of them conflicting,

especially when bearing in mind Panamá and Belize's own self-exclusion from the imagined community. Still, it is important to note that these imaginings are created from very specific circumstances and have remained the norm because they have gone unchallenged. Were there to be a push toward proper inclusion, in a way that is attractive for Belizeans and Panamanians as well as those in the Core Five, it may lead to the beginning of a reimagining. What is essential is that there be that push toward reimagining, rather than continuing to accept the established norm. Chaverri (1985) frames the situation by presenting us with an option: *"Habría que preguntarse si el legado del pasado es todavía tan grande como para excluir Panamá y Belice de Centroamérica, o si el peso de un accidente natural es razón suficiente para incluirlos [We should ask ourselves if the legacy of the past is still so important as to exclude Panamá and Belize from Central America, or if the weight of a natural accident is enough reason to include them]"* (Chaverri, p. 60).

Struggle for a Unified Region: Possible Futures for "Central America"

It is imperative to remember that, while there have been and continue to be efforts toward the creation of a "unified" Central America, more often than not, these attempts do not include Belize nor Panamá. This is why the need to reimagine "Central America" remains so crucial. Should the rest of the region successfully unite and continue on a path toward peace and development, where does that leave the excluded? While it could be argued that they have aid from their respective paternalistic colonizer states, and therefore have no real need for economic nor political support from their regional neighbors, it must again be reiterated that econopolitical factors are not—or should not—be the sole defining motivators for forming international relationships.

Within regional contexts, building positive relationships with your neighbors is critical and such relationships ought to be pursued for the mere sake of being surrounded by supporters, or even friends. As observed by Benedicte Bull, the contemporary push for regional integration already shifted its focus away from a genuine desire to create a community, and toward being economically useful for external markets – "[A]fter being reduced to a stepping stone in the process of integration into the global economy, the relevance of the integration process became dependent on the need to ensure the member states' commitment to the 'open' economic policies" (Bull, 1999, p. 967). With this being the driving force, the community will be built by evaluating economic usefulness, a characteristic that may be particularly troublesome for Belize, who has never been a notable economic powerhouse. Interestingly, the European Union has supported the region's struggle toward unification,

consistently holding talks with SICA (Central American Integration System) member states to discuss how the EU can support the SICA process and negotiations of Central American exports receiving preferential treatment (Bull, 1999, p. 963). Although it is evident the EU is likely offering its support with the end goal of economic gains for their own regional organization rather than for the best interests of the Central American states themselves, it is still worth noting how a unified Central America could have a significant—perhaps even influential—international impact. Strengthening their economic viability within the global market may have the positive consequence of supporting domestic development, as well as possibly demonstrating the benefits of maintaining good relations across the region, leading to deeper mutual appreciation, understanding, and inclusion.

Perez-Brignoli, too, suggests that a reimagining of the community is a necessary precursor to the region's overall recovery: "To overcome this [current political and economic] crisis implies that development options be reoriented, [such as] a radical redefinition of regional integration including other countries within the Caribbean basin" (p. 154). The Caribbean basin, among many other countries, includes both Belize and Panamá. Recalling Perez-Brignoli's original definition of Central American, which deliberately excluded Belize and Panamá, it is significant to note his observation that the region's continued existence may indeed lie in their future inclusion.

A repeated attempt at creating the Federal Republic of Central American states is not what is needed, as it is evident that an official organized body such as the Federation, which requires a single leader from one of the seven states to precede over the other states, is not a viable model. Indeed, while the European Union and other unions like it could serve as an adequate model to follow for the creation of a modern unified region, it too is likely not sufficient. Rather, Central America needs to recognize and value the individuality of each of its states, holding them all in equal regard without the added stress of meeting political and economic needs: "[P]eace is lasting only if it is based on strategies of social coexistence that are more equitable for everyone" (Perez-Brignoli, 1989, p. 178). So long as there is a possibility for one of the republics to rule over the other six, there will likely continue to be an unbeatable volatility throughout the entire isthmus. Perhaps there is the need for a mutualistic and supportive solidarity in place of a new Federal Republic. There is no simple solution to this deeply rooted issue. It is easy to continue viewing Central America as "*una cadena de repúblicas independientes* [a chain of independent republics]" and nothing more, united only by geographic circumstance (Chaverri, p. 64). Perhaps there is a fundamental incompatibility, the margins of difference between Belize and Panamá and the Core Five far too significant, similar to the gaps between Turkey and the EU. Regardless, there assuredly lies an abundance of possibility within the future of Central America. While it is easy to frame the dozens of failed unification attempts as indicative that achieving a regional community is a "utopian" dream

(Perez-Brignoli, p. 124), it might be better to consider the continued efforts as evidence that there is a real desire to come together.

Conclusion: Re-imagining the Imagined

Beneath the façade of a close-knit community of five countries reveals a history of constant conflict and ever-changing alliances. Although it remains obvious that much of the exclusion is borne from historical roots and contemporary choice based on those roots, perhaps the biggest reason behind the exclusion is simply an inability to unite at all.

The next step in this exploration into the Central American imagined community would be to pose the question to Central Americans themselves, especially Belizeans and Panamanians: Who, to you, is Central America? Do you feel included, and if not, why? Self-identification is even more important to constructing an imagined community than the collective abstractions of others. Perhaps it ought to be considered that most Belizeans and Panamanians are satisfied with the current status quo, having found community in other regions. Community, after all, is built from a sense of belonging together (Chavez, 1994), and if that is not found between the Core Five and their excluded kin, then there is no hope for connection. I, myself, am half-Belizean, and have felt firsthand the dissonance between Belizeans and the rest of the Central American community; it was my personal experience in finding comradeship with Panamanians on the fringes that inspired this investigation into the question of *why*? But I have also experienced the community beginning to reach out to Belizeans, including us in discourse about issues that impact Central Americans and weaving us into the regional narrative, solidifying our sense of belonging and strengthening the overall community. Witnessing these narrative shifts occur on a micro level bolsters my belief that communal unity is achievable on the macro level and has the potential to impact us all positively.

The topic of regionalism is arguably extremely Eurocentric, likely due to the European Union (the EU) being the most well-known and oft-researched example of a functioning multinational, regional body (Söderbaum, 2014, p. 14). The majority of sources I found throughout my research for this paper primarily talked about the European Union with few references to other world regions. Comparatively, finding sources about Central America often proves to be an arduous task, let alone papers covering topics relevant to this research question. The need to investigate and understand Central America and other regions in the world, and to platform researchers *from* those regions, is essential for the continued growth of academia: the academic community, too, can benefit from re-imagining itself.

In February of 1885, Guatemalan Liberal leader Justo Rufino Barrios declared, “Divided and isolated we are nothing, united we can become something and united we shall be.”

Although he spoke this in the context of unifying the region into a single Federal Republic, the sentiment still maintains the passion that lay beneath a desire for a connected Central America. The point is to have that desire expanded to fit Belize and Panamá within what it means to be “Central American.” The European Union, problematic as their history may be, would never have come together to form the relatively reliable regional body it is without first having the notion to imagine themselves as a linked community. Regions are fluid entities that change definitions depending on context and circumstance. The quest for an inclusive Central America has hundreds of years of precedent, and is not one that should be, or will be, so easily thrown away. A framework that cultivates cultural and historical connection, rather than centering on political and economic value, is essential for pursuing this idealized imagined community. Perhaps through this redefined community, Central America could grow from republics united by geographic circumstance and into a holistic region of interdependent, cooperative neighbors.

References

Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. New York, NY: Verso.

Bolland, O. N. (1988). *Colonialism and resistance in Belize: Essays in historical sociology*. Benque Viejo del Carmen, Belize: Cubola Productions.

Bonner, D. (1999). Beauty, propriety and status in a former British colony: European aesthetic theory and social distinctions based upon racial “appearances” in Dangriga, Belize. *Social analysis: The international journal of social and cultural practice*, 43(1), 119-140. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org.proxy.seattleu.edu/stable/23166562>

Bull, B. (1999). ‘New regionalism’ in Central America. *Third world quarterly*, 20(5), 957-970. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org.proxy.seattleu.edu/stable/3993606>

Central Intelligence Agency. (2018). *The world factbook: Ethnic groups*. Retrieved from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/fields/400.html#PM>

Chaverri, C. (1985). Hacia una definición de Centro América: El Peso de los factores geopolíticos [Toward a definition of Central America: The weight of geopolitical factors]. *Anuario de estudios Centroamericanos*, 11(1), 59-78. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org.proxy.seattleu.edu/stable/40682730>

Chavez, L. (1994). The power of the imagined community: the settlement of undocumented Mexicans and Central Americans in the United States. *American anthropologist*, 96(1), new series, 52-73. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org.proxy.seattleu.edu/stable/682646>

Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A Black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago legal forum*, 1, 139-167. Retrieved from <https://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1052&context=uclf>

Euraque, D., & García, Y. (2013). África y la diáspora Africana en los 9 programas curriculares en Centroamérica [Africa and the African diaspora in curriculums in Central America]. *Anuario de estudios Centroamericanos*, 39, 29-53. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org.proxy.seattleu.edu/stable/43871229>

Fawcett, L. (2004). Exploring regional domains: A comparative history of regionalism. *International affairs* (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944), 80(3), 429-446. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org.proxy.seattleu.edu/stable/3569018>

Gunew, S. (1997). Postcolonialism and multiculturalism: Between race and ethnicity. *The yearbook of English studies*, 27, 22-39. doi:10.2307/3509130

Hamadi, L. (2014). Edward Said: The postcolonial theory and the literature of decolonization. Retrieved from <https://eujournal.org/index.php/esj/article/viewFile/3689/3488>.

International Monetary Fund. (2018-a). Report for selected countries and subjects: Panamá. Retrieved from <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2019/02/weodata/weorept.aspx?pr.x=36&pr.y=6&sy=2017&ey=2021&scsm=1&ssd=1&sort=country&ds=.&br=1&c=283&s=NGDPD%2CPPPGDP%2CNGDPDPC%2CPPPPC%2CPCPIPC&grp=0&a=>

International Monetary Fund. (2018-b). Report for selected countries and subjects: Costa Rica. Retrieved from <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2019/02/weodata/weorept.aspx?pr.x=30&pr.y=15&sy=2017&ey=2021&scsm=1&ssd=1&sort=country&ds=.&br=1&c=238&s=NGDPD%2CPPPGDP%2CNGDPDPC%2CPPPPC%2CPCPIPC&grp=0&a=>

International Monetary Fund. (2018-c). Report for selected countries and subjects: Belize. Retrieved from <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2019/02/weodata/weorept.aspx?pr.x=17&pr.y=12&sy=2017&ey=2021&scsm=1&ssd=1&sort=country&ds=.&br=1&c=339&s=NGDPD%2CPPPGDP%2CNGDPDPC%2CPPPPC%2CPCPIPC&grp=0&a=>

International Monetary Fund. (2018-d). Report for selected countries and subjects: Guatemala. Retrieved from <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2019/02/weodata/weorept.aspx?prx=11&pry=3&sy=2017&ey=2021&scsm=1&ssd=1&sort=country&ds=.&br=1&c=258&s=NGDPD%2CPPPGDP%2CNGDPDPC%2CPPPPC%2CPCPIPCH&grp=0&a=>

Perez-Brignoli, H. (1989). *A brief history of Central America*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Said, E. (1979). *Orientalism*. Retrieved from https://monoskop.org/images/4/4e/Said_Edward_Orientalism_1979.pdf

Slade, W. (1917). The Federation of Central America. *The journal of race development*, 8(2), 204-276. doi:10.2307/29738239

Söderbaum, F. (2013). Rethinking regions and regionalism. *Georgetown journal of international affairs* 14(2), 9-18. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org.proxy.seattleu.edu/stable/43134407>

Tharps, Lori L. (2014). The case for black with a capital B. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/19/opinion/the-case-for-black-with-a-capital-b.html>

Theodossopoulos, D. (2010). With or without gringos: When Panamanians talk about the United States and its citizens. *The international journal of social and cultural practice*, 54 (1): 52-70.

Young, A. and Young, D. (1988). The impact of the Anglo-Guatemalan dispute on the internal politics of Belize. *Latin American perspectives*, 15 (2): 6-30.

Notes

¹ The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is a region that constitutes over fifty countries. These countries are united by shared characteristics like language (Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, Turkish), religion (Islam), economy (oil and gas industries), and historical backgrounds. Unlike the EU, it is not an official regional body, but rather a regional community tied together by these common traits.

² When referencing the Maya people, I use “Maya” in place of “Mayan” because, in my experience, both in-country in Belize and in US diaspora spaces, it is how Maya people refer to themselves. “Mayan” is typically only used in reference to the language family.

³ Belize’s territory was also included in the original Kingdom of Guatemala, but given that the Spanish paid little attention to this part of the territory, resulting in the British contesting Spanish rule over the land and claiming it for their own soon after, it has no real pertinence to the argument at hand.

⁴ The “Global North” is an alternative term for “the West” (or “First World” countries), popularized in recent decades by people in the Global South (“Third World” countries) who called for terms that were more equalizing and did not put the Global South at the bottom of the global political and economic hierarchy. The Global North includes colonizing European countries (England, Spain) and the United States, among other G8 countries that are not relevant to the context of this paper.

⁵ The Panamá Canal was built between 1881 – 1914, connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans with a waterway straight across the Panamanian territory. The Canal is the center of Panamá’s economy, providing the country with jobs both directly related to the Canal (such as its maintenance, mitigating its effects on the environment, etc.) and tangentially related (such as hotels for people visiting for Canal-related business).

⁶ The Commonwealth of Nations was officially established in 1926 and consists of 53 states, almost all of them colonized by the British Empire during the height of 19th century colonization.

⁷ A department (*un departamento*) is equivalent to a province or a state.

⁸ I opt to write capital-B “Black” rather than lowercase-b “black” because, to quote author Lori L. Tharps, “Black with a capital B refers to people of the African diaspora. Lowercase black is simply a color.” It is a recognition of a collective population whose experiences, as diverse as they are and as distanced from one another as they may be, can be appreciated with as much weight as any nationality.

⁹ Prejudice based on lightness or darkness of skin; colorism has clear roots in racism, but the difference is that people of the same race could potentially receive different treatment due to their skin tone’s shade.

¹⁰ Belize: 25.9% Creole, 6.1% Garifuna; Panamá: 9.2% Black (self-identified), 6.8% mulatto. Both from 2010 census estimates.

¹¹ 2015 Nicaraguan census estimate.

¹² 2001 Guatemalan census estimate; 2007 Salvadoran census estimate

¹³ I separate “light-skinned” from “white people” and “dark-skinned” from “Black people” in order to acknowledge that not all light-skinned people are racially white, nor are all dark-skinned people racially Black. I do this also to maintain space for addressing the impact of colorism: light-skinned Black people and other light-skinned people of color tend to receive better social treatment (more access to social opportunities such as jobs and housing, as well as less public harassment or racial profiling) than their darker-skinned counterparts, even if they are of the same race or ethnicity.

¹⁴ Calculated off the World Bank’s population total of 4,176,873 as of 2018.

¹⁵ 2018 population total: 4,999,441.

¹⁶ 2019 population total: 408,487. Given that Belize’s population is so small compared to Panamá and Costa Rica’s, it may be helpful to see the fourth highest GDP: with a population of 17,263,239, Guatemala’s 2018 GDP was \$4,582 (2018d).

¹⁷ “Hispanophobia” draws on the word “Hispanic,” which simply denotes someone who can speak Spanish and does not refer to a particular race, ethnicity, or nationality. Someone who is Spanish is a person who is from, or whose family is from, Spain—it is a nationality, not or a race or ethnicity. Both Spanish and Hispanic is different from being Latine/Latinx (Latine/

Latinx is the gender-neutral form of Latino/a). Someone who is Latine is from a country in Central or South America (with some debate over whether this includes Belize and other non-Spanish/Portuguese-speaking countries). A person can be Latine without being Hispanic—perhaps they are Salvadoran but do not speak Spanish. Hispanic, Spanish, and Latine/Latinx are terms that are easily confused and understanding their usage is critical.

¹⁸ Presumed to mean a fear of Spanish-speakers, both Belizean and non-Belizean, “stealing jobs” from English-speaking Belizeans.

¹⁹ The specific crisis Perez-Brignoli is referring to here is the Central American Common Market buckling under the pressure of the worldwide recession during the 1980s, and the impact this had on the Core Five’s economic and political stability.

²⁰ Some scholars argue that a reason why Turkey has been barred from the EU after decades of application and active campaign for membership is because of cultural and religious identities that are inherently conflicting with those of the EU members.

The Rise of Neo-Nationalism and the Front National in France

Austin Nelson, International Studies and French

Faculty Mentor: Maria Léon

Faculty Content Editor: Nova Robinson, PhD

Student Editor: Allie Schiele

Abstract

When the FN was founded in the early 1970s it was widely irrelevant. However, over the past three decades, the party has managed to enter into and reshape mainstream French politics. In the 1980s, economic, social, and political transformations aided the FN in their popularization. This paper looks at how similar transformations in the 21st century have enabled this neo-nationalist party to gain such unprecedented electoral success. More precisely, this paper looks at how these factors, identified as the 2008-2009 global economic crisis, changing immigration trends, and the presidencies of Nicolas Sarkozy and François Hollande, have all interacted and intersected to create a favorable climate for the rise of the FN by promoting fear and a sense of crisis.

Keywords: Front National, neo-nationalism, France

Introduction

Emanuel Macron's victory over Marine Le Pen in the 2017 presidential election was perceived as a symbolic rejection, not just of Le Pen's party, the Front National (FN), but also of a larger, growing movement of nationalist resistance to globalization that had been gaining popularity, known as neo-nationalism. The 2017 election was thought to have demonstrated that France was willing to try new 'alternatives' to traditional political parties (i.e. Macron's centrist political platform), rather than accepting the exclusionary neo-nationalist platform of the FN. However, Le Pen's loss did not mean that French voters had renounced the FN, nor did it symbolize a much larger rejection of neo-nationalism around the world. Le Pen's electoral results were historic for the party, as approximately 11 million French people voted for her in the second round, which were the most votes the FN had ever received. Rather than signifying the demise of the Front National, this election demonstrated that the party has become a serious political force in France.

Overall, this paper seeks to understand the nature of neo-nationalist parties by exploring both why the Front National has gained popularity in the 2010s and the origins of the party's power and support. This paper argues that just as economic, social, and political transformations aided the FN's popularization in the 1980s, similar transformations have taken place in the 21st century that have aided the party's resurgence. The consequences of the 2008-2009 economic recession, changing immigration trends, and the presidencies of Nicolas Sarkozy and François Hollande have interacted with one another to benefit the Front National. Collectively, these transformations have heightened fears and promoted the idea that France is in a state of crisis, legitimizing the message of the FN and demonstrating how the FN draws power from instability, fear, and crisis.

Historical Context: The Rise and Resurgence of the Front National

When Jean-Maire Le Pen founded the Front National in 1972, the party was not able to gain much support. The FN strove to present itself as a right-wing populist, anti-communist, and xenophobic movement advocating for the shrinkage of the public sector, lessening of state intervention, and drastic immigration restrictions (Davies, 1999). However, their political platform elicited no significant electoral response for nearly a decade, as it was seen as an extremist party that did not reflect the concerns of the public or the political agenda in France at the time.

The initial rise of the Front National took place during the 1980s and is linked to specific social, economic, and political transformations that occurred in France during this period. These transformations made the political platform of the FN more appealing as it brought some of the party's main issues to the forefront of the political agenda, which the FN then exploited in order to legitimize and develop its platform (Bréchon & Mitra, 1992). First, the country experienced an economic crisis in the late 1970s and early 1980s, which resulted in rising unemployment and diminished economic growth. Although President Mitterrand sought to implement neo-Keynesian economic policy to counteract economic turmoil, unemployment only increased, leaving many voters unhappy with the economic state of France (Stockemer, 2017). Second, immigration became a more pertinent issue in France due to Mitterrand's easing of immigration policy and an increase in immigrants from North Africa (Stockemer, 2017). These demographic changes began raising fears about increased crime rates in social housing projects (Stockemer, 2017). Lastly, in 1985 President Mitterrand changed the French electoral system from a plurality voting system to a party-list proportional representation system (Miller, 1986). This change made it easier for smaller parties like the FN to win seats in legislative bodies, explaining the party's electoral success in the 1986 legislative election.

The FN exploited the economic crisis, the changing economy, electoral system, and immigration trends in the 1980s by reshaping their political platform to center on immigration and security (Stockemer, 2017). The party used these changes within France in order to advance xenophobic and authoritarian sentiments in French politics, purporting that there was a connection between the increase in non-European immigrants and the rise of crime and unemployment in France. Additionally, Le Pen began upholding a more populist message that could attract a wider audience and address the growing lack of confidence in the established political system's ability to address key voter issues (Stockemer, 2017). The FN used populism both as a means to differentiate itself from mainstream parties and to present itself as the alternative to the French political system (Stockemer, 2017). Their new language stressed a discourse promoting "exclusionary conceptions of community" that countered multiculturalism and inclusion (Stockemer, 2017, p. 15). Le Pen emphasized the idea that power needed to be returned to the French people and that populist free-market capitalism was the best way to achieve this.

The FN's ability to use these economic, social, and political transformations to its advantage helped the party achieve its first electoral successes. In the 1984 European Parliament elections, the FN won 11% of the votes, giving them 10 seats in the European Parliament (France Politique, 2015). Two years later in 1986, the FN won 35 seats in the *Assemblée Nationale* (France Politique, 2015). In 1988, the party and Jean-Marie Le Pen won 14.38% of the vote in the presidential election (France Politique, 2015).

During the 1990s, globalization became an important issue in French national politics,

in part a result of the 1992 Maastricht Treaty, which established the European Union and eventually led to the creation of the Euro. In response to the treaty, the FN began transitioning towards economic protectionism and criticizing neo-liberalism, arguing that the government's commitment to global free trade was the reason the economy was declining (Bastow, 1997). Opposition to globalization was incorporated into the party's populist rhetoric by "[modifying] its divisive 'us/them' discourse to include new political "enemies" such as elites from the European Union and other supranational organizations" (Stockemer, 2017, p. 20). This seemed to further their popularity, as in 1993 the party won 12.7% of the votes in the parliamentary election and 14.9% five years later (Norsk Senter for Forskningdata, n.d.). In 1995, Le Pen captured 15% of the votes in the presidential election, a record percentage for the party at the time (Norsk Senter for Forskningdata, n.d.).

Through the 1980s and 1990s, the FN integrated its economic and political concerns into the French mainstream political agenda, forcing other political parties to engage with these topics (Davies, 1999). During this time many parties began appropriating elements of Le Pen's anti-immigration rhetoric as a strategy to advance their own political agendas. However, this worked to the FN's advantage, giving credibility to its rhetoric (Stockemer, 2017). The unforeseen progression of the FN into mainstream politics became visible in the 2002 presidential election, during which Le Pen became the first leader of a nationalist party to qualify for the second round of voting (Stockemer, 2017). However, this sparked massive anti-FN mobilization. The defeated PS candidate Lionel Jospin called for voters to unite, regardless of political affiliations, and vote for Jacques Chirac in order to block Le Pen from winning (Stockemer, 2017). French media outlets largely denounced the FN as a nationalist threat, tarnishing the credibility of the party as well as shrinking its electorate. This scandal, accompanied by racist and anti-Semitic comments from Le Pen and internal turmoil within the party, caused long-term damage to the FN and resulted in the party's subsequent alienation by the French public. The loss of the FN's electorate is exemplified by Jean-Marie Le Pen's performance in the 2007 presidential election, as he did not receive enough votes to qualify for the second round.

However, since Marine Le Pen took her father's place as leader of the FN in 2011, the party has experienced a revival. After becoming president, Le Pen launched a *dédiabolisation* ("de-demonization") campaign as a strategy to reverse the French public's negative perception of the party (Beardsley, 2017). This has included expelling controversial members, softening aspects of the party's political agenda, as well as altering the rhetoric of the FN (Stockemer & Barisione, 2017). Marine Le Pen reshaped the party's discourse to minimize its infamous xenophobic messages and replace it with more "respectful" populist rhetoric. While the party under Jean-Marie Le Pen was also characterized as populist, it was the radical element that prevailed, typically manifesting in racist, sexist, and anti-Semitic comments (Stockemer &

Barisione, 2017). Moving away from these radical elements, Marine Le Pen aimed to present the FN as a moderate party, as exemplified by her recent move to change the name of the party from *le Front National* to *le Rassemblement National*. However, her strategy was more indicative of a ploy to distance and disassociate the party from its fascist roots, rather than an actual change in the party's ideology. *Rassemblement* ("gathering" or "rally") has historically been affiliated with traditional right parties, while *Front* has been associated with radical parties on either side of the political spectrum.

There are very few ideological differences between the "old" FN of Jean-Marie Le Pen and the "new" FN of Marine Le Pen. The Front National continues to focus on the concepts of nation and identity, with a neo-nationalist ideology centered on preserving French national identity, society, and culture (Davies, 1999). The FN operates as the self-proclaimed "protector" of France, portraying the French nation as weak and vulnerable to the consequences of globalization and transnational issues like immigration, which threaten the state and therefore the French identity (Stockemer & Barisione, 2017). It is evident that the central basis for the FN, as with other neo-nationalist parties, is not an adherence to rightist or the leftist beliefs. Rather, its basis is rooted in promoting and defending the nation and national identity; thus, directly informing its political, economic, and social agendas. Due to this, the FN's platform tends to overlap with both right-wing and left-wing values. While the FN shares common ideological characteristics with the right, such as an emphasis on traditional values and anti-immigration rhetoric, the party's economic ideology departs from typical right-wing views. Additionally, the FN shares the far-left's anti-establishment populism, a disdain for supranational organizations, and support for social welfare programs. However, they remain distinct from left-leaning parties due to their nationalist desire to protect and increase the benefits of ethno-nationals while simultaneously cutting benefits for foreigners (Eger & Valdez, 2015).

Due to the changing global context and trends, neo-nationalist parties typically have to adjust how they promote their political agenda in order to remain popular, as explicitly exclusionary, racist, or xenophobic rhetoric is becoming more unacceptable (Banks & Marcus, 2006). In this way, Le Pen's emphasis on reshaping the FN's discourse can be perceived as an attempt to remain in mainstream politics by dismissing the party's racist origins, concealing the fact that the party maintains the same ideology, and using these tactics to appeal to a wider audience. However, this shift in discourse alone cannot explain the party's recent popularity. Rather, the FN's re-emergence in French politics echoes its initial rise in the 1980s. The economic, social, and political transformations that enabled the FN to first come to power in the 1980s mirror the global economic crisis of 2008-2009, changing immigration trends, as well as the presidencies of Nicolas Sarkozy and François Hollande. These contemporary transformations have collectively strengthened the rise of the FN in the 21st by causing instability and provoking fear.

Factors that have Contributed to the Rise of the Front National in the 21st Century

Economic: Global Crisis of 2008-2009

Economic instability is one of the most commonly cited contributing factors to the rise of the FN, as the party tends to gain more votes during periods of high unemployment and low economic growth. According to a study conducted by Manuel Funke, Moritz Schularick, and Christoph Trebesch (2015), far-right parties are the largest beneficiaries of economic crises. According to their research, “in general, voting for far-right parties increases from about 6% to about 10% following a financial crisis” (Funke, Schularick, & Trebesch, 2015, p. 14). In recent years, neo-nationalist and right-wing populist parties have benefited more from economic instability than traditional extreme right parties, having more pronounced spikes in electoral gains. As a result of these voting trends, the strengthening of opposition forces increases fragmentation within national political systems, resulting in a weaker and less effective government (Funke et al., 2015). These developments can hinder crisis resolution due to political polarization, therefore slowing down a country’s economic recovery.

Since the 2008-2009 global recession, France’s inconstant economic state mirrors the economic conditions that are conducive to the rise of neo-nationalist parties. France’s GDP has continuously fluctuated since 2009, yet it has not returned to its peak level in 2008. In 2015, GDP reached its lowest point since the beginning of the recession, leveling at \$2.438 trillion (World Bank, n.d.). However, since this point, France’s GDP has been slowly increasing, reaching \$2.583 trillion in 2017 (World Bank, n.d.). France’s total unemployment rate followed a similar pattern, gradually rising until reaching 10.36% in 2015, France’s highest rate since 1999 (World Bank, 2018). After peaking in 2015, France’s rate of unemployment has been slowly declining, reaching 8.812% in 2018 (World Bank, 2018).

Yet it is during this period of economic instability in France that the Front National made significant gains in their electoral success. The party experienced an approximate 10% vote increase in both departmental and legislative elections between the 2007-2008 and 2011-2012 elections. In the 2012 presidential election, Le Pen almost doubled her vote share compared to her father’s 2007 election results (Norsk Senter for Forskningdata, n.d.). Furthermore, in the 2009 European Parliament election, the party only won 6.34% of the vote, obtaining only four seats in the parliament and placing sixth nationally. Yet, in 2014, the FN won the majority by achieving 24.86% of the vote, which allotted them 24 of the 74 seats in parliament (European Parliament, 2014).

These electoral gains demonstrate how during periods of economic instability, the political rhetoric of neo-nationalist parties tends to have a greater appeal to voters. The FN’s economic agenda promotes economic “patriotism” and national preference, demonstrated

through proposals to implement high taxes on companies that manufacture their products outside of France or to revert back to using the Franc (“Le programme de Marine Le Pen”, 2012). France’s period of economic turmoil creates an appealing climate for the economic platform of the FN, as French people experiencing the consequences of economic instability are going to respond more positively to this platform since they are fearful for their livelihoods and wellbeing.

Moreover, this correlation between electoral gains for the FN and the poor economic state in France becomes even more evident when comparing voting trends and unemployment in various regions of France. In 2012, unemployment rates were the lowest towards the North, as seen in Somme Aisne (department 2; 13.83%) and Pas-de-Calais (department 62; 12.79%), and towards the South of France, in Pyrénées-Orientales (department 66; 13.67%) and Hérault (department 34; 13.77%) (Actualix, 2012). Based on the FN’s regional results in the 2012 presidential election, the party appears to have higher electoral success in departments towards the North and South of France, mirroring the regions with high unemployment rates. Several departments that had some of the highest unemployment rates in the country, such as Pas-de-Calais (department 62; 25.53%), Aisne (department 2; 26.33%), and Vaucluse (department 84; 27.03%), also appear to have voted the most for the FN (Norsk Senter for Forskningdata, n.d.) Therefore, these numbers suggest that regions of high unemployment tend to be significant electoral bases for the FN.

The FN tends to gain votes in regions plagued by unemployment and economic turmoil. Departments in the North and South were hit the hardest by the 2008 economic crisis, predisposing these regions to economic hardship. As a result of their status as centers of industrialized economic activity in decline, these regions had higher unemployment rates and lower wages compared to other regions in France. However, the recession caused unemployment in these areas to rapidly increase while economic productivity quickly declined. France’s economic crisis became particularly visible within these areas, heightening fears within the region. Likewise, lingering economic instability, as well as the French government’s inability to alleviate the situation, not only intensified economic insecurities in the region, but also made people fearful of globalization and neo-liberalism. The fear and insecurities sparked by the 2008 economic crisis have boosted the appeal of the FN’s protectionist and exclusionary platform.

Social: Changing Immigration Trends

The FN is arguably the most well-known for its anti-immigration stance that has been central to its ideology since its founding. When the FN made its first significant electoral gains in the 1980s, immigration trends in France were changing, as more people from non-European countries were moving to France. As immigration from outside Europe continues to steadily

increase in the 21st century, so have the public's fears about the impact of immigration on French society. The combination of these trends reinforces the FN's message that immigration is something to be feared.

During World War II and its immediate aftermath, Europeans were the dominant group immigrating to France. In 1946, immigrants from North Africa made up 2.3% of the total foreign population, while European immigrants accounted for 88.7% (Stockemer, 2017). However, for the rest of the 20th century the percentage of European immigrants moving to France continued to drop. By 1982, the percentage of European immigrants in France's foreign population reduced to 56%, whereas the percentage of African immigrants increased to 34% (Barou, 2014). Furthermore, European immigration has continued to decrease while African immigration continued to rapidly increase. According to the most recent data on immigration trends published in 2014, immigrants made up 9.1% of the total French population (National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies, 2018). Within this percentage, European immigrants made up 36.1% of the foreign population in France, while African immigrants made up 43.8% (National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies, 2018).

Increased visibility of non-European immigrants within France has shifted the public's perspective on immigration, specifically heightening concerns regarding the increase in immigrants from predominately Muslim countries. Immigration trends, like those France has experienced, are "one of the most common constructed threats to societal security . . . which is viewed as something that can change the receiving society's identity by shifting the composition of the population" (Alkopher, 2015, p. 431). A study by the Ifo Institute that analyzed how immigration impacts voting for far-right and far-left parties in France found that immigration increases support for far-right candidates, with little to no impact on voting for far-left candidates (Edo, Giesing, Öztunc, & Poutvaara, 2017). According to this study, "looking at different immigrant groups shows that the increase in the electoral support for the far-right is driven by [the presence of] low educated immigrants from non-Western countries" (Edo et al., 2017, p. 27). These researchers determined that heightened negative attitudes towards immigration are largely a result of concerns over "compositional amenities", or concerns regarding population composition of the receiving country in regards to characteristics like religion, race, ethnicity, and culture (Edo et al., 2017).

Surveys over the past three years in France echo the findings of the Ifo Institute's study, indicating that the French public has a more negative attitude regarding immigration. The 2016 Eurobarometer, which measures public opinion in EU member states about various topics, shows that the two main concerns of the French are immigration and terrorism (European Commission, 2016). The 2017 Special Eurobarometer reports that there is a disconnect between the French public's perception of the size of the immigrant population and its actual size. In this report, about 21% of the French public estimated that immigrants made up between

12% and 25% of the total population in France (European Commission, 2017). The average respondent estimated that the proportion of immigrants in the country was at 18.1%, while in actuality immigrants only comprised 9.1% of the total population (European Commission, 2017). Additionally, this survey showed that 38% of the French population sees immigration from outside the EU as a problem for France rather than an opportunity, while only 17% believed the opposite (European Commission, 2017). Lastly, a survey conducted by the Institute of International Affairs at the Chatham House did a poll in 2017 asking 10,000 people from 10 different European countries if “all migration from mainly Muslim countries should be stopped” (Chatham House, 2017). In this survey, about 61% of French people surveyed agreed that immigration from Muslim countries should be stopped, whereas only 16% disagreed with this statement (Chatham House, 2017). This data indicates that a significant portion of the French population sees rising immigration rates and the increasing presence of non-European, Muslim immigrants as a threat to the compositional “well-being” of the country.

Increasing immigration and heightened anti-immigration sentiments in France have benefitted the FN by strengthening the appeal of their anti-immigration message. This development becomes significantly more evident when comparing the geographic location of immigrants in France with the regions where the FN performs well in elections. A study conducted by Daniel Della Posa discovered a strong regional connection between immigration size and voter support for the FN. Della Posa’s research determined that immigrant population size has a positive relationship with FN support on a department level and a negative relationship on a commune level (Della Posa, 2013). However, Della Posa concludes that “department *etranger* population’s positive association with [FN] voting is considerably stronger in magnitude than commune *etranger* population’s counteracting negative association” (Della Posa, 2013, pp. 269-270). Thus, in other words, the FN-suppressing effects of the commune electorate have not been strong enough to negate the party’s positive electoral effects on the regional level.

Della Posa’s finding that large immigrant populations positively impact regional electoral support for the FN is exemplified by the party’s electoral success in Southern France, where immigration appears to be the highest outside of Paris. In a poll conducted by Le Monde in 2013, 97% of voters from Southern France emphasized that “there are too many immigrants in France,” and 85% of them stated, “I no longer feel safe” (Mestre, 2013). As non-European immigration has become more visible within southern regions, many voters perceive it as a threat. In return this fear has made reactionary anti-immigration attitudes and the rhetoric of the FN more appealing, creating a strong regional voter base for the party.

Political: The Sarkozy and Hollande Presidencies

The Sarkozy Administration (2007-2012)

Nicolas Sarkozy played an important role in integrating the FN ideology into mainstream politics in two notable ways. First, Sarkozy largely legitimized and normalized the FN's platform. Throughout his 2007 and 2012 presidential campaigns, Sarkozy capitalized on the rhetoric of the FN in order to attract the support of Marine Le Pen's electorate. While he is not the first mainstream politician to embrace the FN's neo-nationalist discourse in order to win an election, Sarkozy is seen as a central figure for the legitimization of the party's ideas since no other politicians had made use of this rhetoric "in such a persistent and open manner [as he has]" (Mondon, 2013, p. 29).

Sarkozy's role is most evident in his appropriation of the FN's populist, exclusionary, and fear-based language. During his 2007 presidential campaign, Sarkozy claimed that France was experiencing a crisis of national identity. He argued, "our republican model is in crisis. This crisis is first and foremost a moral crisis. . . a crisis of values, a crisis of landmarks, a crisis of meaning, a crisis of identity. The denigration of the nation is at the heart of this crisis" (Mondon, 2013, p. 33). Sarkozy claimed that people had stopped being proud of their "Frenchness" and that if he was elected, he would revitalize the French identity (Mondon, 2014). However, in doing so, Sarkozy was not attempting to address systemic failures or problems within the French state (Mondon, 2013). Rather, he was fostering fear and promoting the FN's exclusionary conception of French identity in which those who were "deviant" from traditional French culture became the "Other" and were portrayed as responsible for this crisis. Consequently, Sarkozy fabricated connections between immigration and this identity crisis, as well as immigration and security.

In order to avoid being labeled as racist, Sarkozy's rhetoric promoted a dichotomy that shifted the focus from heredity to integration. Consequently, this divided immigrants into two groups: immigrants who came legally and assimilated into French society, thus deserving to be French, and immigrants who had come illegally and/or appeared to be holding on to their original culture, therefore undeserving of becoming French (Mondon, 2013). This second group, often depicted as the Muslim community, was seen as a threat to the economic well-being of France through accusations this group was taking advantage of France by stealing social services, jobs, housing, and money that rightfully belonged to French citizens. Additionally, the portrayed incompatibility of these immigrants with French values was perceived as a threat to the preservation and longevity of French culture.

After Sarkozy entered office in 2007, his rhetoric and actions continued to match the discourse of the FN. He restricted immigration laws and significantly reduced the rights of immigrants, arguing that in doing so it would improve the state of France (Gastaut, 2012). Moreover, he continued to use these populations as scapegoats and specifically targeted

the Muslim community. In 2009, Sarkozy declared that “the burqa is not welcome on the Republic’s territory. It does not fit with the Republican concept of the dignity of women” (Gastaut, 2012, p. 339). Subsequently, in 2010 the *Loi interdisant la dissimulation du visage dans l’espace public* (the law prohibiting concealment of the face in public space) was passed in the Senate. This law prohibited women from wearing veils and attire that covered the face in public, such as the burqa and niqab, and was largely seen as a tool to specifically discriminate against Muslims (Gastaut, 2012). Sarkozy’s targeted discrimination continued in 2011 after he outlawed street prayers, an idea originally devised by Marine Le Pen (Vinocur, 2011). This was a clear, strategic attempt by Sarkozy to attract the FN’s electorate to his side for the 2012 presidential election, similar to his strategy from the 2007 election. Moreover, in an interview in 2012, Sarkozy solidified the FN’s normalization even further, stating that Marine Le Pen’s FN was a “democratic party” and their values were “in accordance with the values of the Republic” (Mondon 2014, p. 311). However, by the election in 2012, Sarkozy’s use of the FN’s rhetoric altered how people perceived Le Pen and her party, making the FN’s rhetoric and platform “widely accepted as part of the political establishment, clear of stigma” (Mondon, 2013, p. 38).

Sarkozy’s other main contribution to the rise of the FN is that his presidency furthered the French public’s distrust for the traditional political parties. Sarkozy’s approval rating during his presidency is indicative of the French public’s lack of trust in his leadership. Although his popularity peaked at the beginning of his presidency with an approval rating of 65% in July 2007, a year later the public’s support of Sarkozy drastically changed (Kantar TNS, 2012). In July 2008, only 33% of the French population expressed confidence in Sarkozy, while 65% expressed having no confidence (Kantar TNS, 2012). His presidency revealed that there were inconsistencies between his campaign platform and the actions he took in office. During his campaign, Sarkozy vowed to transform France in a way that would benefit the poor, those who felt scorned by globalization, and those who felt neglected by the traditional French parties. Yet, during his presidency there was little to no economic growth, tax reforms only benefitting the elite were introduced, unemployment skyrocketed, and France lost its AAA credit rating (Erlanger, 2012; Chrisafis, 2012). Those he initially claimed to represent ended up in worse standing following his time in office. Even with the impacts of the global economic crisis, it was clear that Sarkozy’s actions fell short of his campaign promises (Gastaut, 2012). Sarkozy’s emphasis on security, immigration, and identity generated more fear in France, but his policies did not ameliorate the condition of the French state. The public’s dissatisfaction with Sarkozy undoubtedly unfolded as dissatisfaction and distrust for his party, the *Union pour un Mouvement Populaire* (UMP). Between 2008-2011, the UMP experienced several electoral defeats, greatly weakening their influence in the French government, eventually resulting in UMP candidates distancing themselves from the President to salvage their political reputation

(Knapp, 2013). By the end of his presidency, 60% of the public expressed dissatisfaction with Sarkozy (Kantar TNS, 2012).

The unpopularity of and division within the UMP largely favored the FN in two significant ways. First, electoral defeat and internal turmoil, partly due to dissatisfaction with Sarkozy, resulted in the UMP dissolving in 2015. Following Sarkozy's loss in the 2012 presidential election, his reputation was severely smeared and his party had lost its electorate. As the UMP had been a significant competitor for the FN in elections, its fall aided the neo-nationalist party by making it the central contender for the right-wing electorate (Mondon, 2013). Second, the UMP's unpopularity augmented anti-establishment sentiments and distrust of traditional right-wing parties. Sarkozy's presidency communicated to the public that mainstream right-wing parties, such as the UMP, were unable to effectively address the problems plaguing France because they were part of the problem. This furthered the appeal of the FN as the alternative party France needed in order to be "restored".

The Hollande Administration (2012-2017)

In response to Sarkozy's presidency, the French public gravitated to the other side of the political spectrum, electing *Parti Socialist* (PS) François Hollande in 2012. Since Sarkozy's presidency communicated to the public that traditional right parties were unable to address the problems facing the French, the public elected Hollande with the hopes that the traditional left would be able to do what the right could not.

Although shortly after taking office Hollande had an approval rating of 61%, by the end of 2012 his rating drastically changed (Kuhn, 2014). For the rest of his presidency, Hollande had particularly low approval ratings, remaining below 30% from 2013 to mid-2015 (Kantar TNS, 2017). His ratings only improved following a terrorist attack in Paris in November 2015. However, by February 2016 his ratings had dropped again, with only 15% of the French public expressing confidence in Hollande (Kantar TNS, 2017).

Hollande's unpopularity is attributed to his inability to uphold his campaign promises, specifically those regarding unemployment and economic growth. When Hollande came into office, the French economy was still experiencing the consequences of the global economic crisis, with the unemployment rate at 9.7% and rising public debt (Kuhn, 2014). As a result of this economic context, Hollande was unable to reduce the unemployment rate. Due to an insufficient level of economic growth throughout his time in office, Hollande's policy measures aimed at reducing unemployment proved unsuccessful (Kuhn, 2014). The unemployment rate continued to skyrocket throughout the course of his presidency, peaking in 2015 at 10.39% (World Bank, 2018). Thus, the economy of France continued to remain in crisis, making Hollande appear ineffective and useless.

The populations hit the hardest by this economic instability were those with low

education levels and skills, specifically those working manufacturing jobs, which historically had been the main electorate of the PS (Kuhn, 2014). Therefore, as a result of Hollande's presidency, people lost trust in the left. This loss of support is exemplified by the PS performance in the 2017 presidential election. Not only was the PS candidate, Benoît Hamon, unable to make it to the second round of voting, but he placed 5th in the first round of voting, receiving both the lowest rank and number of votes a PS candidate has ever received in a presidential election (Bonnetous & Chapuis, 2017). Betrayed by Sarkozy (UMP) and then Hollande (PS), it became clear to the public that these traditional parties were no longer able to address the needs and concerns of the French people. This belief ultimately strengthened the appeal of the FN as an alternative party, neither for the left nor the right, but rather for the French.

Discussion and Analysis of Interactions

Separately, the economic recession of 2008, changing immigration trends, and the presidencies of Sarkozy and Hollande benefited the FN, as each presented an economic, social, and political justification for supporting the party. However, examining how these transformations interacted and intersected with one another provides a more holistic understanding of how these changes strengthened the rise of the FN.

The economic recession of 2008 strengthened the appeal of the FN's protectionist approach, particularly in regions with high unemployment and low economic growth. Rising immigration rates and the increasing presence of non-European, Muslim immigrants complemented this protectionist stance because it reinforced the FN's claim that there is a connection between immigration and unemployment. Sarkozy, through his appropriation of the FN's rhetoric, asserted that there was an additional relationship between immigration, security, and national identity, thus normalizing the FN's ideology. Moreover, the economic recession of 2008 and its lasting grip on the French economy greatly contributed to the public's dissatisfaction with both Sarkozy and Hollande, indirectly strengthening anti-establishment sentiments and reinforcing the appeal of the FN as an alternative political party.

Above all else, these factors demonstrate how the FN benefits from crisis and fear. The rhetoric surrounding these transformations communicates to the French public that their country is in a state of crisis— an economic crisis, an identity crisis, and a political crisis. The FN's platform underscores this message, promoting the idea that the French state has been weakened by the globalized world and the missteps of past presidential administrations. Moreover, these crises translate into multiple fears contributing to the FN's permanence: the fear of another global recession, the fear French culture is being threatened by the presence of "incompatible" cultures and religions, and the fear the French government is ineffective

and unable to address these crises. The FN has built its image around the prioritization of the French people, capitalizing on the notion that when people are afraid for their safety and wellbeing they will be drawn to what they believe will protect them. The FN thrives during times of heightened instability because the fear of difference is the basis of their ideology. This is exemplified by the FN's tendency to win the most votes in regions with high unemployment, low economic growth, and large immigrant populations, as these are areas where the "crises" are the most visible. In part, this is what distinguishes the FN from other extremist groups— the Front National is strategic and adaptive during times of crisis. Therefore, when chaos ensues within French society, the party is at its strongest.

Conclusion

Many assumed that Macron's victory in the 2017 election symbolized the end of the FN. His victory represented France's willingness to try a different approach rather than accepting the exclusionary neo-nationalist platform of the FN as an alternative to traditional political parties. However, Le Pen's loss did not mean that the FN was finished in French politics, nor did it symbolize a much larger rejection of neo-nationalism around the world. During this election, Le Pen won a historical amount of votes for her party.

This paper identified how the 2008-2009 global economic crisis, shifting immigration trends, and the presidencies of Nicolas Sarkozy and François Hollande have interacted with one another to strengthen the rise of the Front National. Ultimately, these transformations collectively support the notion that France is in a state of crisis, requiring an alternative party to take power, therefore bolstering the appeal of the FN. However, there are several other transformations that have contributed to the success of FN that have not been covered in this paper, such as how French politicians aside from Sarkozy and Hollande have normalized and legitimized the values of the party or the way *la laïcité* is implemented in France.¹⁶ Additionally, the analysis and understanding of how these transformations interact are limited in this paper. However, this analysis is not meant to provide a relatively simple explanation for a very complex situation. Rather, it is meant to contribute to a general gap in research and serve as a starting point from which other researchers may build.

Arguably now more than ever it is important to understand the source of the FN's support, as it provides powerful insights about other neo-nationalist parties. Since 2017, other neo-nationalist politicians have made instrumental gains in their own countries, such as Jair Bolsonaro's victory in the 2018 Brazilian presidential election or Matteo Salvini's terms as the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior of Italy. In the recent 2019 European Parliament elections, neo-nationalist parties made headlines not only because there was a historic number of these parties participating, but also because of their electoral results. Several

of these parties won majorities within their respective countries, such as the Front National, the League (Italy), the Freedom Party (Austria), the Swedish Democrats (Sweden), the National Alliance (Latvia), the Alternative for Germany, and several others (Damgé & Breteau, 2019).¹⁷ Moreover, understanding where the power and support of the FN comes from is also important for understanding the future of France. Since his inauguration in 2017, Macron and his policies have remained particularly unpopular, recently indicated by the *mouvement des gilets jaunes* (“yellow vests movement”), which calls for his resignation among other demands. The general dissatisfaction in France regarding Macron, among people who did not vote for him as well as those who did, could mean that Le Pen and her party will be seen as the best option for the upcoming French presidential election in 2022.

References

Actualitix. (2012, June 17). *Taux de chômage par département* [Unemployment rate by department]. Retrieved from <https://fr.actualitix.com/blog/taux-de-chomage-par-departement.html>

Alkopher, T. D. (2015). The political psychology of integration strategies: The case of the European commission’s interculturalism. *Journal of International Relations and Development*, 18(4), 428-454. <https://doi.org/10.1057/jird.2014.28>

Banks, M., & Gingrich, A. (2006). *Neo-nationalism in Europe and beyond*. New York: Berghahn Books.

Barou, J. (2014). Integration of immigrants in France: A historical perspective. *Global Studies in Culture and Power*, 21(6), 642-657. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.2014.882840>

Bastow, S. (1997). Front National economic policy: from neo-liberalism to protectionism. *Modern & Contemporary France*, 5(1), 61-72. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09639489708456354>

Beardsley, E. (2017, April 21). Marine Le Pen’s ‘brutal’ upbringing shaped her worldview. *NPR*. Retrieved from <http://www.npr.org/2017/04/21/525110143/marine-le-pens-brutal-upbringing-shaped-her-worldview>

Bréchon, P., & Mitra, S. (1992). The National Front in France: The Emergence of an Extreme Right Protest Movement. *Comparative Politics*, 25(1), 63-82. <http://doi.org/10.2307/422097>

Bonnefous, B., & Chapuis, N. (2017, 23 April). Présidentielle : Benoît Hamon décroche à la cinquième place [Presidential election : Benoît Hamon takes 5th place]. *Le Monde*. Retrieved from https://www.lemonde.fr/election-presidentielle-2017/article/2017/04/23/presidentielle-benoit-hamon-decroche-a-la-cinquieme-place_5116056_4854003.html

Chatham House. (2017). What do Europeans think about Muslim immigration? Retrieved from <https://www.chathamhouse.org/expert/comment/what-do-europeans-think-about-muslim-immigration>

Chrisafis, A. (2012, February 10). Nicolas Sarkozy: how a once popular president became a toxic brand. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/feb/10/nicolas-sarkozy-popular-president-toxic>

Damgé, M., & Breteau, P. (2019, May 28). Elections européennes 2019: La progression des partis Eurosceptiques en carte [European Parliament elections 2019 : The progression of Eurosceptic parties in the cards]. *Le Monde*. Retrieved from https://www.lemonde.fr/les-decodeurs/article/2019/05/28/carte-la-progression-dispersee-des-partis-souverainistes-au-sein-de-l-union-europeenne_5468624_4355770.html

Davies, P. (1999). *The National Front in France: Ideology, discourse and power*. London: Routledge.

Della Posa, D. J. (2013). Competitive threat, intergroup contact, or both? Immigration and the dynamics of Front National voting in France. *Social Forces*, 92(1), 249–273. <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/sot046>

Edo, A., Giesing, Y., Öztunc, J., & Poutvaara, P. (2017). *Immigration and electoral support for the far left and the far right* (CESifo Working Paper No. 244). Retrieved from http://www.cepii.fr/PDF_PUB/wp/2017/wp2017-20.pdf

Eger, M. & Valez, S. (2015). Neo-nationalism in Western Europe. *European Sociological Review*, 31(1), 115-130. <https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcu087>

Erlanger, S. (2012, January 15). As French vote nears, Sarkozy is haunted by grim economy. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/16/world/europe/frances-gloomy-economic-outlook-haunts-presidential-race.html>

European Commission. (2016, July). *Public opinion on the EU* (Standard Eurobarometer 85). Retrieved from http://data.europa.eu/88u/dataset/S2130_85_2_STD85_ENG

European Commission. (2018, April). *Integration of immigrants in the European Union* (Special Eurobarometer 469). Retrieved from <https://population-europe.eu/books-and-reports/special-eurobarometer-469-integration-immigrants-european-union>

European Parliament. (2014). *Result by national party* [Data file]. Retrieved from <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/country-results-fr-2014.html>

France Politique. (2015). *Les résultats électoraux du Front National* [Data file]. Retrieved from <http://www.france-politique.fr/elections-fn.html>

Funke, M., Schularick, M., & Trebesch, C. (2015). *Going to extremes: Politics after financial crisis, 1870-2014*. (CESifo Working Paper No. 5553). Retrieved from <https://www.lefigaro.fr/assets/front.pdf>

Gastaut, Y. (2012). The “immigration question”: Mainspring of Sarkozy’s presidency. *Contemporary French and Francophone Studies*, 16(3), 333-346. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17409292.2012.675648>

Kantar TNS. (2012). *Cote de confiance - Nicolas Sarkozy* [Confidence rating – Nicolas Sarkozy] [Data file]. Retrieved from https://www.tns-sofres.com/dataviz?code_nom=sarkozy&type=1

Kantar TNS. (2017). *Cote de confiance – François Hollande* [Confidence rating – François Hollande] [Data file]. Retrieved from https://www.tns-sofres.com/dataviz?type=1&code_nom=hollande

Knapp, A. (2013). A paradoxical presidency: Nicolas Sarkozy, 2007-2012. *Parliamentary Affairs*, 66(1), 33-51. <https://doi.org/10.1093/pa/gss070>

Kuhn, R. (2014). Mister unpopular: François Hollande and the exercise of presidential leadership, 2012–14. *Modern & Contemporary France*, 22(4), 435-457. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09639489.2014.957960>

- Mestre, A. (2013, August 8). "Sudiste" et "nordiste", les deux électors du FN ["Southerners" and "northerners", the two electorates] . *Le Monde*. Retrieved from https://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2013/08/07/face-nord-et-face-sud-les-deux-electorats-du-fn_3458468_823448.html
- Miller, J. (1986, March 18). New voting system aids Mitterrand. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/1986/03/18/world/new-voting-system-aids-mitterrand.html>
- Mon projet pour la France et la français. (2012). *Le programme de Marine Le Pen* [The political agenda of Marie Le Pen]. Retrieved from https://www.rassemblementnational.fr/pdf/projet_mlp2012.pdf
- Mondon, A. (2014). The Front National in the twenty-first century: From pariah to republican democratic contender?. *Modern & Contemporary France*, 22(3), 301-320.
- Mondon, A. (2013). Nicolas Sarkozy's legitimization of the Front National: Background and perspectives. *Patterns of Prejudices*, 47(1), 22-40. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09639489.2013.872093>
- National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (2018). *Étrangers – Immigrés* [Data file]. Retrieved from <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/3303358?sommaire=3353488>
- Norsk Senter for Forskningdata. (n.d.). *European Election Database- France* [Data file]. Retrieved from http://eed.nsd.uib.no/webview/index.jsp?study=http://129.177.90.166:80/obj/fStudy/FRPA19931_Display&mode=cube&v=2&cube=http://129.177.90.166:80/obj/fCube/FRPA19931_Display_C1&top=yes
- Stockemer, D. (2017). *The Front National in France: Continuity and change under Jean-Marie Le Pen and Marine Le Pen*. New York: Springer International Publishing.
- Stockemer, D., & Barisione, M. (2017). The 'new' discourse of the Front National under Marine Le Pen: A slight change with a big impact. *European Journal of Communication*, 32(2), 100–115. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323116680132>
- Vinocur, N. (2011, September 16). France bans street prayers. *Reuters*. Retrieved from <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-france-muslims-idUSTRE78F4CC20110916>

World Bank. (n.d.) *GDP (current US\$)* [Data file]. Retrieved from <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?end=2017&start=2006>

World Bank. (2018). *Unemployment, total (% of total labor force) (modeled ILO estimate)* [Data file]. Retrieved from <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.TOTL.ZS?end=2018&locations=FR&start=2007>

Notes

¹ Following this election, France reverted back to a plurality voting system for legislative elections.

² In the first round, Le Pen won 16.86% of votes, taking second place and beating the PS candidate Lionel Jospin (Norsk Senter for Forskningdata, n.d.). In the second round of voting, the Le Pen was able to attain 17.8% of the votes, resulting in his opponent Jacques Chirac becoming the next president of France (Norsk Senter for Forskningdata, n.d.).

³ Beginning between the first and second rounds of voting.

⁴ For example, under the leadership of Jean-Marie Le Pen, the FN proposed that France halt all immigration to France. Since Marine Le Pen took over, the party now calls for the number of immigrants France accepts to be reduced to 10,000.

⁵ This paper makes the strategic choice to continue to refer to the party as *le Front National*. In doing so, this paper asserts that the “new” party of Marine Le Pen and the “old” party of Jean-Marie Le Pen are essentially the same and seeks to ensure that this rebranding does dissimulate the racist and xenophobic ideology and history of the party.

⁶ In the departmental elections of 2011, the FN won 15.06% of the vote whereas in 2008 the party only won 4.85% (Funke, Schularick, & Trebesch, 2015). In the legislative elections of 2012, the FN won 13.60%, when in 2007 the party won 4.29% (Funke, Schularick, & Trebesch, 2015).

⁷ In 2012, Marine Le Pen won 17.90% (6,421,426 votes) in the first round, while in 2007 her father only acquired 10.44% (3,834,713 votes) (Norsk Senter for Forskningdata, n.d.).

⁸ For example, the FN proposes a drastic cut to the number of immigrants France accepts each year, from 200,000 to 10,000; employers, housing, and social welfare programs should prioritize French people; that *le droit du sol* be replaced with the *droit du sang*; that if an immigrant enters France undocumented for any reason they shall be deported with no exceptions; that demonstrations showing support for undocumented immigrants should be made illegal (“Le programme de Marine Le Pen”, 2012).

⁹ i.e. Town or city.

¹⁰ i.e. State or regional.

¹¹ Original: “*il y a trop d’immigrés en France.*»

¹² Original: “*je ne me sens plus en sécurité.*”

¹³ Only 34% of the French population expressed dissatisfaction with Sarkozy (Kantar TNS, 2012).

¹⁴ Sarkozy’s approval rating was at 37% (Kantar TNS, 2012).

¹⁵ His approval rating improved to 35% (Kantar TNS, 2012).

¹⁶ In simple terms, *la laïcité* is the French conception of secularism.

¹⁷ The FN won 23.3% of votes, the League won 34.3%, the Freedom Party won 17.2%, the Swedish Democrats won 15.4%, the National Alliance won 16.4%, and the Alternative for Germany won 11%.

Interrogating Colonial Legacies: Jeffrey Gibson's Indigenous Futurism

Mariah Ribeiro, Art History

Faculty Mentor: Ken Allan, PhD

Faculty Content Editor: Ken Allan, PhD

Student Editor: Michael Pazen

Abstract

In recent decades, post-colonial theory has allowed for scholars to re-contextualize American history, challenging the mythic narrative of the founding and settlement of the United States. This awareness of settler colonialism's effect on every aspect of society calls for widespread accountability towards dismantling colonial legacies within the Americas. Such a shift in understanding has inherent consequences for the arts, raising the question: how do visual arts and their institutions function within the settler-colonial context of North America? As the subjects of ongoing settler-colonialism, Native American artists are uniquely positioned to participate in the dismantlement of the colonial legacy of art museums. Accordingly, this essay examines how contemporary indigenous artists lead the post-colonial interrogation of the art museum by challenging Western art conventions, the colonial legacy of North America, and the assumptions of non-Native viewers through their art. I argue that indigenous modes of self-representation are instrumental in creating an effective post-colonial art rhetoric, and that Native artists achieve this representation by imbuing their art with a sense of self-determination that can be understood through indigenous survivance. Through an examination of Jeffery Gibson's recent exhibition, *Like A Hammer*, I explore how survivance is used to interrogate, re-appropriate, dismantle, and then rebuild the (re)presentations of indigeneity beyond the mythologized "Indian." As a result, this essay carefully considers how indigenous survivance interrupts settler-colonial narratives and museum spaces.

Introduction

In the summer of 1988, contemporary American artist Jimmie Durham co-published “The Ground Has Been Covered” in *Artforum* with art critic Jean Fisher. Within the first few paragraphs of Fisher’s contribution to the piece, she states: “Indigenous America is outside representation, unrepresentable, except as a phantasm masquerading under the misnomer ‘Indian’” (101). Here, Fisher defines the “Indian” as an invented category of false representations, a caricature of the diverse populations of the indigenous peoples of what is now called North America. The Indian has been embedded into the mythology of the history of the United States of America and has functioned as a justification for the violence of colonial settlement—i.e. genocide.¹ The Indian is a trope that, by 1988, Fisher was well equipped to dismantle, and Durham was plainly fed up with, but the issues they address go beyond misrepresentation. As Native arts scholar Nancy Marie Mithlo (Chiricahua Apache) notes, “images [can] have consequences—bias in sports imagery, children’s literature, or clothing advertisement result in psychological damage or even physical violence” (105). According to Mithlo, the importance of Native representation is far greater than dismantling stereotypes. The erasure of indigenous self-determined representation, political sovereignty, and the American Genocide from history are all at stake.

The history of Western engagement with indigenous American art goes back centuries, to the first contact between Europeans and the indigenous tribes of the Caribbean and Eastern Coastal territories. The earliest collections of Native objects were usually divided into two categories: the scientific and the aesthetic (Bernstein 57-74). As time progressed, these categories evolved and eventually shaped how indigenous art was treated within the Western art rhetoric. With the rising popularity of museums in the mid-19th century, Native art objects were often relegated to ethnographic museums, creating the myth of “the dying race” and producing the narrative and representation of the indigenous “Other” (Bernstein 57-74). According to Ruth B. Phillips, it was not until the 1930s that “aesthetic” indigenous objects started appearing in art galleries and museums as a part of an appreciation of “primitive art” (97-112). The 1960s and 70s marked a noted shift in the rhetoric surrounding Native art production, due in part to the counterculture hippie movement, which aestheticized and fetishized “The Indian,” and a thriving “primitive art market” (Bernstein 57-74). By the mid-80s, the effect of shifting considerations of Native art, as well as the transport of “new art history” from London to America, was visible both in scholarship and in art practice (Phillips 97-112).

The 1980s and 1990s ushered in an unprecedented era of indigenous self-representation within the arts that was led by indigenous artists such as James Luna, Edgar Heap of Birds, Kay WalkingStick, Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, and Harry Fonseca. Indigenous and non-Native,

allied art historians, critics, and curators—such as W. Jackson Rushing III, Paul Chaat Smith, Bruce Bernstein, Lorretta Todd and Gerald McMaster—followed suit and reshaped the rhetoric of indigenous art. Durham and Fisher were both key figures in this moment of contemporary Native art production, and their joint article is one of the key texts that has influenced the discipline of Native art and its study² (Hill). Though “The Ground Has Been Covered” was written in the wake of flourishing self-determination within the indigenous art community, the article was also deeply influenced by deconstructionist and post-colonial theory, evidenced by Fisher’s citation of Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, and Jacques Derrida. As Fisher illustrated over thirty years ago, post-colonial theory has allowed for the recontextualization of American history and all the facets which make up contemporary American society, including art. Since 1988, the mythic narrative of the founding and settlement of the United States has been proven to be just that: a myth. Work by indigenous academics, such as Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz and Glen Sean Coulthard (amongst many others), have not only made North American indigenous revisionist histories and post-colonial rhetoric more accessible, but they have also made it clear that the awareness of settler colonialism’s effect on every aspect of society calls for widespread accountability toward dismantling colonial legacies within the Americas.

With these insights in mind, this essay aims to examine the role of contemporary indigenous art in leading the post-colonial interrogation of the art museum. It is my intention to investigate how indigenous artists are challenging the colonial legacy of North America, of Western art conventions, and the assumptions of non-Native viewers through their art, specifically within the museum setting. Indigenous artists, when taking part in the dominant contemporary art discourse, are forced to negotiate with the histories of settler colonialism and genocide. They are also confronted by the legacy of museums in creating and maintaining settler narratives and the super-imposed segregation of Native art from mainstream art movements, both of which upheld and enabled the settler-colonial projects of Canada and the United States. Despite these challenges, Native artists—as the subjects of ongoing settler-colonialism—are uniquely positioned to dismantle the colonial legacy of art museums. Therefore, I argue that indigenous modes of self-representation are instrumental in creating an effective post-colonial art rhetoric. Further, I argue that Native artists achieve this self-representation by imbuing their art with a sense of self-determination that can be understood through the concept of “survivance,” or an assertion of indigenous identity (Vizenor 1). By first exploring how indigenous survivance inherently challenges settler-colonial narratives and museum spaces, I demonstrate how survivance becomes a productive tool that indigenous artists can use to engage the reality of colonization. I then examine indigenous artist Jeffrey Gibson’s recent museum exhibition, *Like A Hammer*, as an example of how indigenous survivance is utilized to interrogate, re-appropriate, dismantle, and then rebuild the (re)presentations of indigeneity within art discourse. Gibson’s artworks, such as

Freedom, references Modern art but incorporates Native materials and design aesthetics, clearly demonstrating how indigenous artists can refuse the categorization of “Indian” while still imbuing their art with indigeneity and a sense of survivance.

Decolonizing the Museum and Indigenous Survivance

In recent months, there has been a flurry of backlash against major museums for a variety of complex reasons. One message, however, seems clear: activists, institutions’ staff members, and the public are ready to hold art institutions accountable for both their public presentations and their more “private” actions. For example, in November of 2018, the Association of American Indian Affairs (AAIA) published sharp critiques of The Metropolitan Museum of Art’s exhibition *Art of Native America: the Charles and Valerie Diker Collection*, which was on display within their American art wing (Angeleti). The Charles and Valerie Diker collection is arguably the most significant privately-owned collection of Native art and artifacts in the country, yet many of the hundred-plus promised gifts and loans from the collection on display would be eligible for return under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) if they were not privately owned (Angeleti). Furthermore, the AAIA argued that the situation was exacerbated by the Met’s failure to, “consult with affiliated tribal representatives to perform their due diligence” (Angeleti). According to the AAIA, the Met’s, “first mistake was to call [the] objects art,” since many of the works within the exhibition are not art but ceremonial or funerary objects that, “could only have ended up in a private collection through trafficking and looting” (Angeleti). This indicates that the Met, one of the most prestigious and prominent art museums in the world, either knowingly or unknowingly used the Diker’s private collection to effectively evade NAGPRA while on some level misrepresenting the meaning of the objects and culture of the tribes to which they belong. Both situations would seem almost unfathomable considering the resources and capabilities of the Met, yet it still happened.

The demands for institutional accountability are becoming more widespread amongst diverse groups as calls to action have extended far beyond ethical representation. For example, in December 2018, a protest theater group began leading unofficial “Stolen Good Tours” at the British Museum in London, calling for the repatriation of stolen indigenous objects from around the world and asking the museum to end its sponsorship with BP Oil (Polonski). Days later, Decolonize This Place, a New York based activist group, started protesting the Whitney Museum of American Art for its connections to Safariland, the manufacturer of military grade tear gas that has been used against both protesters of the Dakota Access Pipeline and immigrants at the U.S.-Mexico border (Cascone). Most recently, the Guggenheim museum found itself as the site of a die-in protest, with activists demanding that the museum cut ties

with the Sackler family for the role they have played in the opium epidemic (Bashira). After the protest, the museum formally announced they would no longer accept donations from the family (Bashira).

These protests are not isolated events. Altogether, they paint a very clear picture of a larger movement coalescing to confront the reality of institutions' collection, management, and funding of the arts. These efforts to reject the narrative of art museums as a "neutral" space stem from practices of "institutional critique" starting in the 1960s and 70s, but the notion of "decolonizing the museum" is couched in a rhetoric shift past the post-modern, into the post-colonial (Krauss and Foster 688). As a result, undertaking a post-colonial reevaluation of museums' role in oppressive and exclusionary art practices means recognizing that they are foundationally colonial institutions that are, in North America at least, often sitting on unconceded indigenous lands. But beyond recognition, what does it really look like to "decolonize this place"? As Durham pointed out in 1988, "(white Americans) have made everything [their] turf. In every field, on every issue, the ground has already been covered" (99-104). Does this coverage include theory? This question is pertinent because although art history's and art criticism's engagement with post-colonial rhetoric is relatively recent, indigenous resistance against European colonization is not (Philips 97-112).

Decolonization has been an ongoing struggle since the beginning of colonization. In almost all ways, the indigenous struggle against the settler-colonial state precedes post-colonial theory, as indigenous poet Gwen Nell Westernman (Dakota/Cherokee) illustrates within the poem "Theory doesn't live here":

My Grandparents never talked
about theory, decolonization, or
post-colonial this or that.
They talked about
good times and bad times.
Their self-determination was
not a struggle against
colonialism affecting their
self-imagination.
They worked hard to survive.
They didn't imagine themselves
through story. They knew themselves
through the stories they heard
as they sat under the kitchen table
listening to the old people talk.

They didn't need theory
to explain where they came from—they lived it. (65-74)

Westernman's poem echoes Mithlo's earlier statement that Native art is inherently connected to issues of indigenous sovereignty and self-determination. In both arenas, and more frankly in all arenas of modern aboriginal life, the continuation of indigenous peoples and their knowledges and ways of being inherently resist settler-colonialism. As Dunbar-Ortiz points out, "surviving genocide... is resistance" (3).

Refusing to recognize the different stakes between the lived reality of settler-colonialism for indigenous people and for settlers erases the distinction between the settler-colonial strategy and the indigenous tactic. Within Michel de Certeau's seminal work, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, he defines a "tactic" as the non-proper or non-institutional creation of space, stating, "the place of a tactic belongs to the other" (xix). Strategy, on the other hand, can be defined as an institutional employment of will and power to create a space of domination (Certeau xix). De Certeau's conception of tactic parallels Anishinaabe theorist Gerald Vizenor's notion of "survivance." Survivance is a purposefully hard to define concept concerning indigenous assertions of identity and modes of address, but is nonetheless, "inevitably and just... in Native stories, natural reason, remembrance, traditions and customs" (Vizenor 85). Grant Arnold, curator at the Vancouver Art Gallery (VAG), notes that,

While, survivance can take many forms, its crucial feature is a sense of presence that emerges out of a rhetorical act to counter the historical absence and powerlessness established by and through the stereotypes and simulations of "Indian-ness" that circulate in the imagination of the colonizer. (20)

Survivance emphasizes a cultural reorientation towards the continuity of indigenous peoples' past, present, and future. Therefore, if survival is resistance, then "survivance" is an indigenous "tactic" of decolonization.

Native artists whose work engages in this "sense of presence...to counter... simulations of 'Indian-ness' that circulate in the imagination of the colonizer" (Arnold 20) are centered in an art practice of indigenous survivance; therefore, their art becomes a powerful tactic of decolonial resistance. Jeffery Gibson (Choctaw/Cherokee) is a contemporary artist whose practice effectively exemplifies the concept of survivance. Gibson observes the continuity of indigeneity in varying and complex ways, but there is a clear overlap in the concepts that he explores in his art with the ideas of Vizenor and de Certeau. By infusing his art with his own sense of survivance, Gibson challenges the colonial legacy of museums while simultaneously bringing indigeneity into (re)presentation as something other than the

mythologized “Indian.”

To further flesh out the concept of survivance and how it appears in art praxis, I explore the ways in which Gibson challenges accepted narratives and representations of Native Americans, asking viewers to reconsider colonial histories and the space of the museum. To accomplish this, I focus on how Gibson traces “continuity that extends from the past through the present to the future” (Arnold 20), while examining how his exhibition, *Like A Hammer*, embodied ideas of indigenous futurism by actively innovating contemporary art through his use of indigenous materials and engagement with non-dominant forms of culture.

Before advancing further into the case study, it is important to recognize the role that research, academia, and theory play in creating and reinforcing colonial epistemological dominance and systems of white supremacy. According to Māori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith in *Decolonizing Methodologies*,

Systems of classification and representation enable different traditions or fragments of traditions to be retrieved and reformulated in different contexts as discourses, and then to be played out in systems of power and domination, with real material consequences for colonized peoples. (93)

It is widely acknowledged that museums are foundationally a colonial space, and that both museum collectors and anthropologists have historically facilitated colonization and settlement (Lonetree 19). But what is often obscured and overlooked within contemporary academia is the continuation of the settler-colonial project and the ways in which scholars and researchers are instrumental to the everyday processes of settler colonization. Because of this, my project should be understood as a form of representation of indigeneity that is informed by a colonial legacy. For this reason, it is important for me to recognize my positionality as a settler on Duwamish land who inevitably reproduces colonial modes of knowledge production in my pursuit to better understand indigenous art. While this project is entrenched in colonial epistemologies and modes of knowledge production, I intend to emphasize the importance of self-determination for Native artists and synthesize how these voices, specifically Gibson’s, complicate the Western art discourse.

Indigenous Futurism: Jeffrey Gibson’s *Like a Hammer*

Anishinaabe scholar Grace L. Dillon formally defined indigenous futurism in 2003 as, “a movement that interrogates latest conditions in Native-centered worlds liberated by the imagination,” and is primarily a literary movement but is also explored through film, video, games, comics, fashion, visual arts, and music (Lukavic 97). During a lecture at the Seattle

Art Museum, Dillon described indigenous futurism as necessarily anti-Anthropocene—that is, against humankind’s dramatic, negative effect on the environment, land, and climate—but not in a regressive sense. Instead of calling for a return to the relationship human societies had with the land before the onset of modernity, indigenous futurism focuses on dramatically re-imagining the future as a departure from the contemporary.

Indigenous futurism grows out of or alongside the similar movement of Afrofuturism. Often thought of as starting with African American Jazz musicians of the 40s, Afrofuturism is a cultural aesthetic movement that combines science fiction, African history, and magical realism with the past, present, and future experiences of Black American society in order to positively reconceptualize what is possible (Yaszek 41-60). In Afrofuturism, time becomes a fluid concept where the “now is now, but the past is now and the future is too” (Lukavic 29). In this way, both Afrofuturism and indigenous futurism parallel notions of survivance, inherently disregarding the need to adhere to Western paradigmatic understandings of time and receive validation from the dominant white culture. It is in this way that Jeffrey Gibson embodies survivance, through aptly incorporating aspects of indigenous futurism within his art. Gibson’s art is centered on encouraging himself and his viewers to reimagine the future as something outside of Western paradigmatic colonial hierarchies and oppressive mentalities, an act which challenges settler-colonial control of colonized spaces such as the museum. Jeffrey Gibson’s *Like a Hammer* was the Seattle Art Museum’s (SAM) first special exhibition featuring a solo contemporary indigenous artist, which, according to *Seattle Times* writer Gayle Clemans, “[felt] very of the moment.” Clemans notes that Gibson’s exhibition seems like the culmination of increased engagement “in conversations about...contemporary Native American art, with several recent exhibitions at the Frye Art Museum and last year’s SAM exhibition of three contemporary Native artists...alongside historical photographs of indigenous people by Edward Curtis.” There were also two other recent, smaller exhibitions featuring Native artist at the SAM, showcasing Haida artist Robert Davidson (2013) and Apsáalooke (Crow) artist Wendy Red Star (2017).

Gibson’s art is an exciting fusion of Native aesthetics, queer cultural references, poetry, music, and Afrofuturist influences, all framed by a contemporary art practice. Being of Choctaw and Cherokee descent, Gibson challenges typical representations of indigeneity within the museums by incorporating native materials, aspects of powwow regalia, and queer club culture into a legacy of abstract art. Although Gibson’s art is spectacular and the inclusion of his exhibition historically significant, it is not long ago that a queer indigenous artist and their art would not have had this kind of platform in the museum space, even in Seattle where social rhetoric makes queer and indigenous aesthetics hyper visible (even if appropriative at times). The *Seattle Times* review of *Like a Hammer* divulges such truths by calling it (somewhat patronizingly so), “timely” (Clemans). As the title “Like a Hammer” reveals, Gibson creates art

that aims to “deconstruct and rebuild,” which can simultaneously configure a presence within the contemporary art world that unsettles the historically colonial spaces of museums and Western art, and can envisage a future for America that radically departs from existing systems of oppressive control (Lukavic 34). By attempting to dismantle and then reconstruct notions of indigeneity within the museum, Gibson avoids what Nancy Marie Mithlo points out, “is illustrative of the twin tensions that seem inseparable in a platform that seeks inclusion: a perceived assimilation to standard art canons, countered by the claim to cultural specificity” (87). Through his art practice and within *Like a Hammer*, Gibson refuses assimilation by innovating his modern art practice through transformative uses of indigenous materials and indigenous futurism, which subverts Mithlo’s idea of the “tension of inclusion.”

Two of Gibson’s artworks in which he deconstructs museum art norms through the use of Native materials are *Freedom* and *Head on*. Both of these works break free of Western art’s modes of representation through the use of indigenous materials in the artwork, more specifically the use of rawhide. The first of these, *Freedom*, is a twenty-one foot long by nine feet tall giant parfleche, which is a rawhide container made from repurposed tipi poles, rawhide lacing, artificial sinew, buffalo hide, acrylic paint, and glass and plastic beads. The object is an oversized version of the carrying containers which Native women of the plains would use to transport meat, firewood, and family belongings (Lukavic 136). The bright dayglo color acrylic paint and abstracted geometric design is reminiscent both of minimalist paintings by the likes of Sol Lewitt or Frank Stella, and of Osage ribbon work and traditional parfleche decoration of plains indigenous women artists during the 19th century and into the early 20th century.³

The two most noteworthy characteristics of *Freedom* are the object’s large size and the use of modernist painting on buffalo rawhide. By making the parfleche so oversized, *Freedom* intrudes into the museum, encroaching into the personal space of the spectator. Within the SAM, *Freedom* controlled museum visitors’ movement through the show, forcing viewers to avoid and move around it to either observe the work or to go see another piece. By intervening into the space of the gallery and disrupting viewers’ movement, Gibson forces museumgoers to address the artwork in one way or another, even if just to circumvent it. In turn, he asks viewers to engage with the next most important element of the work: the contested and contrasted realm between Native and Modernist abstraction. Encountering *Freedom*, a museum visitor might first notice the creamy off-white color and pillied, soft-to-the-touch texture of the buffalo hide, or maybe take note of the small, left-over clumps of buffalo hair and traces of blood at the edges of the hide. They might then glance up and see acrylic-paint designs that look more reminiscent of the art of SAM’s *Big Picture: art after 1945* exhibition than anything within the Native American art galleries, both which sit on the third floor of the museum. In this moment, Gibson presents an onlooker with two separate historical narratives of art history. The first credits Modern artists like the Cubist, the Abstract Expressionist, and the

Minimalist by cementing the practice of abstraction within fine art discourse. The other version of history recognizes 19th century plains women as the artistic heritage of the geometric, colorful abstraction painted upon the raw buffalo hide of Gibson's *Freedom*. By presenting both histories, crediting both the colonial and indigenous legacies of abstraction, Gibson complicates accepted art historical discourse and common beliefs about Native art and culture. He brings the debate of craft versus art, the critical role of women in art making, and Native women's legacy of creating abstract markers of identity into a space that has historically privileged white male artists.

Head On's use of indigenous materials functions in a very similar manner. The artwork is comprised of a twenty-inch-tall antique shaving mirror from the 19th century, which Gibson has covered in deer hide, artificial sinew, and acrylic paint. The pattern on the deer hide reflects the dayglo geometric pattern on the buffalo hide of *Freedom*, but instead of using a Native object to contest museum goers' perception of Native art, Gibson confronts viewers with an indigenized Western object to further complicate the identity of the viewers themselves. The act of looking into an antique shaving mirror requires an onlooker to direct their gaze into a masculine, colonial object, but instead of a reflection of the self, as one might otherwise expect, something indigenous and feminine looks back. The masculine, colonial gaze in art often functions as a reaffirmation of the colonial identity by giving the settler both the right to look and the ability to be seen within fine art objects. By wrapping the mirror in deer hide, Gibson contains the colonial object through indigeneity. He therefore not only denies the gaze and reflection of the colonizer, but also questions the act of looking for a verification of their identities in the first place. On top of this, Gibson not only subverts the colonial gaze through indigenous materials, but utilizes the indigenous origin of his abstract design again. Therefore, he replaces the masculine nature of a shaving mirror with an art practice whose heritage is traced to indigenous women, a powerful acknowledgement to Native women's role in decolonial resistance against a patriarchal-colonial system of oppression.

Both *Head On* and *Freedom* disrupt expected representations of indigeneity and destabilize the Western art discourse of the museum space through the incorporation of indigenous materials and art practices, which effectively resists easy "assimilation to standard art canons" (Mithlo 87). Resisting assimilation repositions "the conversation away from the perception of inclusion or exclusion in mainstream dialogues towards recognition of alternative knowledge systems at play," which, according to Mithlo, "demands that convergences and chasms among various art systems be directly addressed" (89). This 'repositioning' of Native art and the corresponding 'demand to directly address' the meeting points and distance between Native and Western art are both important steps toward rebuilding indigenous representation after dismantling colonial stereotypes, which is an essential aspect of indigenous futurism. Therefore, Gibson's ability and willingness to

incorporate indigenous materials and aesthetics into his art practice undermines hegemonic art hierarchies following in the footsteps of Afrofuturists like funk musician George Clinton and early Native futurist Harry Fonseca (Nisenan Maidu). Like Clinton, Gibson acknowledges the reality of life's circumstances, but refuses to accept the certainty of such futures, allowing him the freedom to imagine a reality beyond historical trauma and the constraints of the colonial mentality (Lukavic 31). Likewise, he often cites the influence of Harry Fonseca, best known for his Coyote series in the late-seventies and eighties, who, according to Gibson, "scratched the surface of Native futurism," but failed to push the sentiment farther than equality within white culture (Lukavic 32). In light of this critique, Gibson's art diverges from Fonseca's as he attempts to manifest a future that denounces traditional hierarchal relationships to power and instead forges new alternatives.



Figure 1 *Birds of a Feather*, Courtesy of the artist and Roberts Projects, Los Angeles, California; Photo. Peter Mauney

Within *Like A Hammer*, Gibson explores indigenous futurism through two main sources: dance and language. The first of these is best embodied by Gibson's "club kid" sculptures. Much of Gibson's art practice is devoid of figurative representation, and outside of videos of his performance works, the only noticeable figures within the exhibition were the club kids. These sculptures are intensely adorned with metal studs, glass beads, crystals, rawhide,

jingles, fringe, wool, and other materials which are reminiscent of Native, punk, and queer aesthetics. Figures such as *Watching Forever* or *BIRDS OF A FEATHER* (Fig. 1) recall both powwow regalia (jingles, fringe, beading, etc.) and queer club culture (studs, chokers, bright colors, gloves, etc.), which are equally important to Gibson's employment of dance within his futurism. For Gibson, both the powwow and queer dance clubs are places of freedom; freedom to express individual identities, build community, and practice culture, all through dance. By embracing the energy and freedom of dance, Gibson's sculptures, according to Roy Boney Jr. and America Meredith, "metaphorically dance on the grave of the cliché 'walking in two worlds.' Instead they span multiverses" (38). By combining queer and Native dance aesthetics with the use of twenty-first century technology—laptop generated dance music, "pixilated" bead work, the use of the RGB spectrum model in several works, etc.—Gibson undermines binaries between Native/queer and Western/straight, technology and culture, dreamt futurisms and historical authenticity, and invites the audience into co-creating and imagining an open-ended and non-hierarchical future with him.

In addition to Gibson's incorporation of the club dance music of his youth into his art, Gibson manifests his dreams of an indigenous movement towards the future with language. The titles of his artworks are inspired by and based off song lyrics, poems, and bold statements, and are integrated into his pieces of art with some titles being beaded into the objects themselves. For example, in *BIRDS OF A FEATHER* (Fig. 1), the viewer finds Tim Curry's 1978 song title embroidered across the figures' chest. *Head On* was named after the 1989 hit by British post-punk band The Jesus and Mary Chain, which Gibson would have heard in the clubs of London when he was earning his MFA at the Royal College of Art. Gibson's use of language moves beyond creating a feeling or mood, however. As curator Sara Raza notes, Gibson's art "demonstrates through text and title with the analogy of variable art registers as binary oppositions" (70) where language and visual art are separate from each other. Again, Gibson dismantles such binaries by focusing his art practice on indigenous futurisms, while his use of text and language compels the piece to be more effective. Nowhere is this clearer than in *OUR FREEDOM IS WORTH MORE THAN OUR PAIN*.

This piece is a nine-and-a-half-foot tall pair of punching bags that are hanging on a giant Scale of Justice. The repurposed punching bags are fully covered with glass beads, forming a geometric patterned background to the phrase "our freedom is worth more than our pain," which wraps around each bag five times. The beading and brass studs are reminiscent of the pixilated, geometric designs found on Gibson's "club kids," and recalls Native and queer visuals. The act of covering Everlast punching bags with beading becomes an evocative strategy to decentralize the violence of the object through indigeneity. This act is a powerful diffusion of violence through art and is 'enough' in itself to make the piece engaging, but with the addition of the embroidered statement around the bags a new question is raised: how does

someone weigh human experiences like freedom or pain? As it is presented, one bag is heavier than the other, and the scales of justice tip to the left—assumedly towards freedom and away from pain. Through the intersectional combination of dance culture, Native aesthetics, music, and language in both the club kids and *OUR FREEDOM IS WORTH MORE THAN OUR PAIN*, Gibson moves towards indigenous futurism by deconstructing binaries and decentralizing violence and pain in the pursuit of freedom and expression.

While walking through *Like a Hammer* at the SAM, the viewer cannot avoid recognizing the key role that museums play in the historical legacy of the colonial projects of the Americas. In *Decolonizing Museums*, Amy Lonetree points out that “museums can be a very painful site for Native people as they are intimately tied to the Colonial process” (19) since most museums were often founded from the collections of wealthy individuals who had fetishized and accumulated—sometimes through outright theft—indigenous cultural objects, artifacts, art pieces, and bodies of indigenous peoples themselves. Even with Gibson’s exhibition on view, the conversations critical of museums ethics of collection and representation are not without cause. In comparison to the two special exhibitions that featured contemporary indigenous artists at the SAM (Gibson included), The Diker collection (the same exhibition critiqued by the AAIA while on view at the Met) has visited the SAM twice in the past 15 years alone and as recently as 2015. Within the institution of the museum, settler colonialism is not solely about collection, but also re-arrangement, re-presentation, and re-distribution (Smith 122-123). For this reason, the history of ethnography and anthropologic art representations of indigenous people, such as the photographs taken by Edward Curtis, can never be fully separated from museum spaces. Museums will always carry this colonial inheritance; however, indigenous exhibitions engaging with topics of survivance, such as Gibson’s artwork within *Like A Hammer*, create possibilities to reorient the museum visitor towards the future without erasing the reality of colonization. This reorientation exemplifies what French feminist philosopher Hélène Cixous says about Gibson’s art and its ability to engage in “Displacement without rejection, without denial” (112). This assertion closely reflects Gerald Vizenor’s statement that “Native survivance [is] renunciations of dominance, tragedy and victimry,” which is a radical step towards creating indigenous space within the museum.

Native Geographies

Jeffrey Gibson engages with multiple elements of survivance within his artworks, the result of which, I contend, has allowed his exhibition to take part in creating what Native scholar Natchee Blu Barnd calls an “indigenous geography” (1). Within his book, *Native Space: Geographic Strategies to Unsettle Settler Colonialism*, Barnd states that by manifesting Native space, “Indigenous geographies proclaim we are still here in the most grounded way” since

indigeneity is “deeply embedded within and defined by colonial contestations over land in geography” (1). In this way, invoking indigeneity becomes a powerful way of reclaiming disputed lands through the declaration of *presence*. Barnd’s insights on Native geography parallels feminist philosopher Judith Butler’s theory on the “right to appear,” which she posits as:

When bodies gather as they do to express their indignation and to enact their plural existence in public space... they are demanding to be recognized, to be valued, they are exercising their right to appear, to exercise freedom, and they are demanding a livable life. (24-65)

If the right to appear is a demand for freedom, recognition, value, and a livable life, then Native geographies can become a powerful “tactic” of spatial reclamation and decolonial resistance. Therefore, efforts to expose and interrupt the colonial spatiality of the museum must be rooted in indigenizing geographies in the museum space. How then, is a Native geography created? Does it happen whenever an indigenous person exercises their right to appear, or does it require substantive changes in the constitution of the museum’s spatiality?

In the wider context of colonialism, which attempted and failed to systematically erase all indigenous people within the Americas, declaring a presence and claiming a right to appear is a mode of resistance against ongoing conditions of colonialism. As Dunbar-Ortiz states, “surviving genocide... is resistance” (3). Therefore, it can be assumed that physically taking up space in colonial spaces and demanding rights to existence, freedom, and a quality life are acts of decolonial resistance. However, I argue that simply exercising a right to appear is not a decolonial tactic as De Certeau would define it, or at least not an indigenous one. De Certeau theorized that, “the place of a tactic belongs to the other” (xix), while Barnd expresses that, “Settlers...interpreted indigeneity as lacking proper spatiality...The result was conscription of the land into the settler spatial systems that erased ‘other ways to relate geography and identity’” (14). Since colonial spatiality is organized to deny indigenous spatiality, exercising a “right to appear” as an indigenous person or artist continues to function within a Western paradigm of spatial practice; although it can temporarily unsettle the space and the people in it, the “right to appear” cannot, alone, result in land reclamation, repatriation, or indigenization. Therefore, asserting a presence is only half the battle. The other half involves actively re-envisioning indigenous conceptions of space. Herein lies the significance of these artists’ utilization of survivance, as the concept becomes central to cultivating an indigenous geography within the colonial space of the museum.

As Gerald Vizenor describes it, survivance is already “an active sense of presence over absence, deracination, and oblivion” (85). Therefore, survivance is always already asserting a

right to appear in its multiple configurations. Additionally, Vizenor describes survivance as the “creation of identity” produced through the resistance to simulations and cultural dominance, continuance of stories, and strategic visions of the future (85). In providing a physical sense of presence and the creation of indigenous identity, survivance moves beyond declaring a right to appear towards forging Native geographies. Gibson engages with all aspects of the creation of identity in his attempts to (re)present indigeneity to his viewers. He actively resists simulations of “Indian-ness” in the mind of the colonizer through centering object and design within his artistic production, while demonstrating a clear line of continuity between tradition and modernity by presenting aesthetic sovereignty and refuting notions of authenticity. Gibson could also aptly be called a “strategic visionary” in his efforts to reorient his viewers towards an indigenous future by utilizing indigenous materials to dismantle binaries in the pursuit of freedom and expression. Altogether, his exhibition created a Native geography within the museum through engaging with survivance by both asserting an active sense of presence and claiming an indigenous identity, which is inherently an act of reclamation and decolonial resistance.

What is most effective about contemporary indigenous art is that it is *affective*. Gibson’s works are a claim to creating a brighter, more indigenous, queer, and dance-worthy future that cannot help but provide his audience with a sense of hope. The tactics and decolonial outcomes enabled by Gibson and his exhibition extend out to a larger Native art community, who embody an active quality of survivance, presence, and identity. In this way, art that maintains survivance becomes an evocative claim to self-determined representation and an assertion of aesthetic sovereignty, which, within the context of ongoing colonization, subverts the colonial legacy of any museum such art is displayed within.

Works Cited

Angeleti, Gabriella. “Native American Group Denounces Met’s Exhibition of Indigenous Objects.” *The Art Newspaper*, 2018, <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/native-american-group-denounces-met-s-exhibition-of-indigenous-objects>.

Arnold, Grant. *Dana Claxton: Fringing the Cube*. Figure 1 Publishing and Vancouver Art Gallery, 2018.

Barnd, Natchee. *Native Space: Geographic Strategies to Unsettle Settler Colonialism*. Oregon State University Press, 2017.

Bashira, Hakim. "PAIN Sackler Storms Guggenheim and Metropolitan Museums for Financial Ties to Opioid Manufacturers." *Hyperallergic*, 2019, <https://hyperallergic.com/484109/pain-sackler-storms-guggenheim-and-metropolitan-museums-for-financial-ties-to-opioid-manufacturers/>.

Bernstein, Bruce. "Context for Growth and Development of the Indian Art World in the 1960s and 1970s," *Native American art of the 20th century*. Routledge, 1999.

Boney Jr., Roy and Meredith, America. *Jeffrey Gibson Like a Hammer*. Denver Art Museum, 2018.

Butler, Judith. "Gender Politics and the Right to Appear," *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*. Harvard University Press, 2015.

Cascone, Sarah. "Demonstrators Fill the Whitney Museum—and Burn Sage—to Protest Its Vice Chairman's Ties to Tear Gas Manufacturer." *ArtNet News*, 2018, <https://news.artnet.com/art-world/decolonize-place-protests-whitney-museums-ties-tear-gas-manufacturer-1415443>.

Cixous, Hélène. "Inheriting/Inventing with Jeffrey Gibson," *Poetry in Painting: Writings on Contemporary Arts and Aesthetics*. Edinburgh University Press, 2012.

Clemans, Gayle. "Jeffrey Gibson's Art, on View at SAM, Knocks Down Boundaries with Gentle Taps and Potent Blows." *Seattle Times*, 2019. <https://www.seattletimes.com/entertainment/visual-arts/jeffrey-gibsons-art-on-view-at-sam-knocks-down-boundaries-with-gentle-taps-and-potent-blows/>.

de Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. University of California Press, 1984.

Dillon, Grace L. "Indigenous Futurisms." Lecture, Seattle Art Museum, 2019.

Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxane. *An Indigenous Peoples History of The United States*. Beacon Press, 2014.

Durham, Jimmie and Jean Fisher. "The Ground Has Been Covered." *Artforum*, vol. 26, no. 10, 1988. <https://www.artforum.com/print/198806/the-ground-has-beencovered-34697>.

Hill, Richard William. "8 Texts on Indigenous Art That Put Things in Perspective." *CanadianArt*, 2017, <https://canadianart.ca/essays/8-texts-on-indigenous-art/>.

Krauss, Rosalind and Foster, Hal. *Art Since 1900*. Thames and Hudson, 2004.

Lonetree, Amy. *Decolonizing Museums: Representing Native America in National and Tribal Museums*. University of North Carolina Press, 2012.

Lukavic, John P. *Jeffrey Gibson Like a Hammer*. Denver Art Museum, 2018.

Mithlo, Nancy Marie. "Give, Give, Giving": *Cultural Translations*. Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, 2006.

---. "Give, Give, Giving," *Reinventing the Wheel: Advancing the Dialogue on Contemporary American Indian Art*. Denver Art Museum, 2008.

Phillips, Ruth B. "Art History and the Native Made Object: New Discourse, Old Differences?" *Native American Art of the 20th Century*. Routledge, 1999.

Polonski, Naomi. "Hundreds Attend Guerrilla, Activist-Led Tour of Looted Artifacts at the British Museum." *Hyperallergic*, 2018, <https://hyperallergic.com/475256/hundreds-attend-guerrilla-activist-led-tour-of-looted-artifacts-at-the-british-museum/>.

Raza, Sara. *Jeffrey Gibson Like a Hammer*. Denver Art Museum, 2018.

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Zed Books, 2012.

Vizenor, Gerald. *Manifest Manners: Narratives on Postindian Survivance*. 1999.

---. *Native Liberty: Natural Reason and Cultural Survivance*. University of Nebraska Press, 2009.

Westernman, Gwen Nell. "Theory Doesn't Live Here." *New Poets of Native Nations*. Graywolf Press, 2018.

Yaszek, Lisa. "Afrofuturism, Science Fiction, and the History of the Future." *Socialism and Democracy*. vol. 20, no. 3, 2006, doi: 10.1080/08854300600950236.

Notes

¹ Indigenous populations existing in North America prior to settler-colonization had their own names for their home. Many indigenous communities use the term "turtle island" to reclaim their name for North America and upset the Anglicization of their place names. See: Amanda Robinson. "Turtle Island," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*.

² It should be noted that Jimmie Durham's claim to Cherokee heritage is highly contested by people within the Cherokee Tribe and Native art community, and fiercely defended by others. For my purposes here, I am understanding that Durham was/is a notable figure within the American Indian Movement (AIM), and a seminal figure for the Native art community, especially during the 70s, 80s, and 90s, and his impact on contemporary Native art rhetoric cannot (and should not) be easily erased.

³ Example of a 20th century, Eastern Dakota parfleche from the Brooklyn Museum. <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/130418>. For comparison, Frank Stella's *Hagmatana III*, 1967 <https://www.artsy.net/artwork/frank-stella-hagmatana-iii>.

Learning from the Failures and Institutionalized Ideology of Colonial Feminist Education Programs in Afghanistan

Elena Selthun, English Literature and Humanities

Faculty Mentor: Nova Robinson, PhD

Faculty Content Editor: Onur Bakiner, PhD

Student Editor: Ryan Thelin

Abstract

From the interwar period (1918-1939) to the present, the United States has been involved in the Middle East not only in a military capacity, but as a creator and funder of educational programs in the region, especially for women, most frequently in Afghanistan. Although there is existing literature which examines the numerous and complex political effects of US intervention via such educational programs, this paper analyzes how previous US educational programs in the wider Middle East create a historical basis for colonial feminism which drove these programs and still persists today. This ideology is one that ultimately harms the women targeted, in this case Afghan women, in that it constructs these women as requiring Western salvation from their native cultures while simultaneously disregarding their voices and agency. Due to its self-interested nature, colonial feminism in these education programs has allowed for and excused ideologies that undermine Afghan women's rights, such as the mujahedeen and the Taliban. Additionally, colonial feminist educational programs distort or ignore sociopolitical and cultural factors that affect women. In Afghanistan, these include internal colonization, gender politics as they relate to political legitimacy, and the problematization of "the veil" by the US, particularly in the aftermath of 9/11. The paper critiques past and present US educational programs using this lens to advocate a move away from the historical, socio-politically destructive colonial feminist approach by putting Afghan women's voices and agency first in future programs.

Keywords: Afghanistan, education, gender politics, Westernization, colonial feminism

Introduction

Although there is much debate and research surrounding the US military involvement in Afghanistan and the Middle East, far less attention is given to US historical and current involvement in educational programs in the region. This is surprising, as US educational programs have played significant roles in the attempted Westernization and in some cases, the subsequent sociopolitical destabilization of these countries. This phenomenon is particularly prevalent in Afghanistan, where US educational programs have fostered the rise of fundamentalist Islamist movements and paved the way for US military intervention.

This intervention was in large part justified with the argument that Afghan women need to be “saved” from fundamentalist Islam¹ and “given” rights and freedom by the West, usually via educational programs. Indeed, women’s rights have always been thoroughly entangled with US educational programs in the region, whether those programs seek to educate women or to advance US policy goals, both of which undermine women’s rights as they have in Afghanistan.

In order to understand the influence and importance of modern-day US educational programs in Afghanistan and for Afghan women, an analysis of the United States’ historical involvement in education in the Middle East is needed, both during the interwar period (1920 -1939) and from the Cold War period (1947-1996) to present day. This historical analysis will include a feminist anthropologist lens which argues that many of these educational programs utilize or otherwise benefit from “colonial feminism.” This philosophy, coined by Islam scholar Leila Ahmed in 1992, seeks to construct the generalized “Muslim woman” as a damsel in distress. Under colonial feminism, she must be transformed via Westernization in order to be “saved” from the sociopolitical and cultural factors that colonial feminists perceive as oppressive to Muslim women, regardless of Muslim women’s actual perspectives (Abu-Lughod 784-785).

The colonial feminism aspect of the analysis will thus focus on relevant sociopolitical and cultural factors historically and presently affecting Afghan women, with each factor presented in the historical context it most closely relates to. The interwar period focuses on the internal colonization in the formation of the Afghan state, followed by instances of early colonial feminist educational programs in the Middle East (Iran and Egypt) that preface future US educational programs in Afghanistan. The Cold War period focuses on Afghanistan’s gender politics as they relate to political legitimacy, highlighting how US educational programs shifted from previous Middle Eastern programs to using Islam as a social force rather than erasing it. Initially this was to work towards a mutually beneficial modernization but shifted to support radicalized fundamentalist Islam to combat communism, at the expense of Afghan women. The Talibantopresent period will focus on the problematization of “the

veil” as a fundamentally and harmfully misunderstood custom that was a major symbol in the US government’s response to 9/11, framing military intervention as a way to “liberate” women and tying this liberation to a Western education. In this paper, “the veil” refers to the general practice of veiling by many Muslim women. This term encompasses the many different types of veils, like the hijab, shayla, or niqab, and should not be confused with the more specific burqa, which is a term used when relevant instead of the general “veil.”

The overarching goal of this historical analysis is to examine how US educational programs 1) ultimately failed in being effective and beneficial to the Afghan people, 2) led to the rise of Islamist movements, specifically the fundamentalist mujahedeen and the later Taliban, and 3) negatively affected Afghan women directly and indirectly as a result of colonial feminist ideology.

This historical analysis is followed by a present-day case study of the recent USAID education program Promoting Gender Equity in National Priority Programs Project (Promote). In the past, Promote has been presented as a progressive educational program that supports and furthers the interests of Afghan women and Afghan people as a whole. However, this case study will explore how the United States’ continuing, albeit more subtle, colonial feminist approach and related failure to address sociopolitical instability influenced by the US government in Afghanistan shapes educational program goals and execution, ultimately negatively affecting their efficacy.

Through reviewing the US government’s mistakes in educational programs in Afghanistan as well as laying out the policy recommendations issued by Afghan women and women’s groups, this analysis seeks to form a more successful educational program that rejects the historically colonial feminist approach, and in doing so puts the best interests of the Afghan people, particularly women, first. Not only will this involve an analysis of past programs and inclusion of Afghan voices, but also an analysis of the underlying turmoil in Afghanistan that has hindered past programs, and how the US has played a part in it.

Historical Analysis

Interwar Period

Afghanistan gained independence from Britain in 1919; however, despite Afghan efforts to establish diplomatic relations with the US, they refused to grant Afghanistan diplomatic recognition until 1934 when American diplomats and businessmen persuaded President Roosevelt that to do so was in the United States’ best interests (Poullada 179, 180). In large part, this long avoidance was due to biased misperceptions about the country based in orientalism and Western superiority. These misperceptions are exemplified in a memo from the US State Department’s Middle East “expert,” Wallace

Murray, in 1930:

Afghanistan is doubtless the most fanatic, hostile country in the world today. There are no capitulatory or extra-territorial rights to protect foreigners. There is no pretense of according to Christians equal rights with Moslems. There are no banks and treasure caravans are plundered. The British have for years absolutely forbidden any white British subject from entering Afghanistan and though Nadir Shah is sound, he cannot control the tribes and will soon fall. (179)

Murray was at least correct that Nadir Shah would be unable to maintain political authority as he was assassinated in 1933 and succeeded by his son Zahir Shah, the first Afghan ruler to gain US recognition and the last Afghan king (Britannica). Despite this, Murray's perception of Afghanistan as lawless, hyper-Islamic, and politically unstable is lacking the context of Afghanistan's role in the colonial system that continued in various ways even after independence in a phenomenon referred to here as "internal colonization."

The historical background of Afghanistan's internal colonization is vital to an understanding of US involvement in Afghan women's education, because colonization provides insight into the reasons why the US viewed post-independence interwar Afghanistan as so hostile to such educational programs. This historical analysis will also include US educational programs in Iran and Egypt to encompass the larger context of colonial feminist policies during the interwar period.

First, Afghanistan is similar to Iran in that the population is over 99% Muslim (Diamant) which, to the US government, suggested a homogeneity via this shared Muslim identity – however, this could not be further from the reality. Murray hints at the "tribes" which Nadir Shah could not "control," likely referring to the Pashtun tribes, who formed a confederation now called the Durrani which then served as the basis for the modern Afghan state (Kandiyoti 172). However, there are many other ethnic groups in Afghanistan's population: approximately 42% are Pashtun, 27% Tajik, 9% Hazara, 9% Uzbek, 4% Aimak, 3% Turkmen, 2% Baloch, and 4% "other" ("Afghanistan Population 2020"). The fact that the Pashtun represent a plurality of Afghanistan's population has resulted in an attempted "Pashtunization" of the country that resembles internal colonization as the ruling tribes who have become an "urban-based state elite" enact the policies most beneficial to them (Kandiyoti 172). Ironically, this Pashtunization and creation of an Afghan "state" was aided by the British, who supplied Pashtun tribes with financial subsidies and arms from 1880 until Afghan independence in order to shape Afghanistan into a "buffer state" that could defend any Russian advance into British India (172).

Afghanistan's role as a buffer state and continued internal colonization made moves towards centralization and modernization risky, including any reforms in education or women's statuses (Kandiyoti 172). Yet, reforms were still attempted, notably by Amanullah Khan, who ruled from 1919-1929 and passed progressive legislation including a 1921 family law banning child marriage, a mandate limiting polygamy, and allowing widows to leave the control of their husbands' families (173-174). Queen Consort Soraya Tarzi continued her husband's policies when he appointed her Minister of Education. In this position, she worked specifically to "educate and liberate the women of Afghanistan," often drawing upon Western ideas, yet also emphasizing the importance of Islamic values and women's importance within Islam (Syed 109-110).

This environment might have seemed ideal for US involvement via women's educational programs in Afghanistan. However, Amanullah Khan's modernizing reforms were seen by many in Afghanistan as undermining tribal and religious authority and he was subsequently overthrown in 1928 via tribal uprising (Kandiyoti 174). This uprising was also likely motivated by Amanullah Khan's high taxation and the apparent Western influences on his policies, both aspects of internal colonization in Afghanistan (174). This push and pull between reforms and internal colonization would continue in the Cold War era.

However, though the US government viewed Afghanistan as unstable and hostile to foreign intervention, particularly in a religious context, this US wariness during the interwar period did not extend to its neighbor, Iran. Indeed, many American missionaries saw it as their duty to get involved in Iran, especially in promoting the education of Iranian women through a Christian lens, perceived as more unwelcome in Afghanistan.

In comparison, Iran underwent a "transition from the fanaticism of 1898, which opposed education for girls as a menace to society" to "the liberalism of 1936" when women's education became more popular (Woodsmall 144). Two Iranian women, Sadigeh Khanum Daulutabadee and Khanum Azamodeh, led this push for promoting women's education (145). However, over half of the women's schools in Iran were private, affiliated with or wholly run by American missionaries. This privatization of women's education limited the chance to be educated only to the Iranian elite (Zirinsky 190), which would lead to a deepening of class divisions not uncommon in these educational programs, and which is still evident in modern US educational programs for women in Afghanistan, such as Promote.

Not only did these educational programs deepen class divisions, they also prioritized Westernizing education over more traditional educations with an Islamic foundation. Ruth Frances Woodsmall, an American teacher and women's rights advocate in the region, compared these American missionary schools to "the dull, damp room connected with some mosque" of the preexisting "Koran schools," or madrasas,³ which contrasted the "well-ordered schoolroom, its maps and blackboard, its orderly atmosphere, and young teachers"

(Woodsmall 149). This prioritization of Western education and disparaging tone towards Islamic education perpetuated a sense of Western superiority that was reflected in the staffing choices at these institutions. American missionary schools in Iran employed both American and “national” teachers, but American teachers were paid higher salaries even when the Iranian teachers were equally qualified for the positions (Zirinsky 190). Many Iranian teachers graduated from mission schools themselves, creating a self-perpetuating cycle of the mission schools’ Americanizing teachings designed to last (191).

These schools for Iranian girls emphasized a move away from the madrasas and a move not simply towards but directly into Americanization. In these schools, girls were instructed in everything from writing and arithmetic to sewing and cooking to dressing like American women. Most significantly, this included doing away with “the veil,” regardless of the actual students’ thoughts on the matter and in direct opposition to Islamic traditions (Zirinsky 190-192). Westerners like Woodsmall praised unveiling as a step towards equality between men and women, and in doing so widened the gap of misunderstanding. This caused continuous tension and even led to violence in the interwar period between American missionaries and the people they claimed to be helping.

One of these cases is the “Port Said Orphan Scandal of 1933,” in which a Muslim girl named Turkiyya Hasan was caned as punishment for refusing to pray, or simply obey, at the Swedish Salaam Mission. It resulted in national outrage and fueled the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood, among other Islamist movements. Though the Muslim Brotherhood’s officially stated reason for existing was “to rejuvenate Islamic practice in a modern context” (Baron 123), it was a direct response to the increasing encroachment upon Islam and Islamic culture by the British occupation, missionaries, and general Westernization guided in part by colonial feminism.

In the wake of the Turkiyya Hasan scandal, missionaries, Americans among them, failed to recognize the gravity and complexity of the situation (Baron 135). They came up with conspiracies to explain the conflict, when in fact they were the cause of what many Muslims saw as “evangelical brutality” through education (136). This brutality was a cause of great concern, perceived as a threat to the most vulnerable of the population, children – in this case, girls. Islamist organizations like the Muslim Brotherhood continued to spread into an Islamist movement in Egypt, one which ultimately proved to uproot Swedish and American missionaries alike by 1933 (138). No matter how good their intentions might have been to “empower” Muslim girls, the missionaries’ lack of understanding and dialogue with the Egyptian people proved to be terminal, foreshadowing future US educational failures in Afghanistan.

Cold War Period

Colonial feminism is inherently self-interested. Among other reasons, this is why colonial feminism does not lead to effective educational programs, which logically should have the students' best interests in mind, not the teachers'. Student interests are further harmed when teachers' interests change as they did in the Cold War era, when Afghanistan stood once more as a "buffer state," this time between the Soviet Union and American interests of containing communism (Shirazi 218). This shift in the intent of US educational programs in Afghanistan corresponded to a shift from subtler colonial feminism to overt colonialism, in favor of policies that were blatantly not in the best interests of the students – in this case, Afghan women.

However, before US involvement during the Cold War period, Afghanistan saw a period of increased modernization and subsequent educational reform, with laws passed under Prime Minister Daoud between 1953 to 1963 supporting voluntary removal of the veil, an end to enforced purdah, and granting women voting and election rights (Kandiyoti 174). This modernization became radicalized in the 1978 Saur Revolution, when the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) seized power via a military coup and, in a more extreme mirroring of Amanullah's previous internally colonial policies, began passing land reform laws, overhauling family legislation, and focusing on improving women's literacy and participation in the public sphere (174). The marked difference was that the PDPA was "transparently beholden to the Soviet Union," which undermined the party's claims to political legitimacy by marking them to many Afghans as aligned with a foreign, potentially colonial power (174).

Political legitimacy in Afghanistan is closely related to gender politics, and to the events of the Cold War period in Afghanistan, making it another vital aspect of understanding US involvement in Afghan women's education. Traditional Afghan concepts of rule and authority are rooted in honor, which is rooted in tribal gender relations. These relations, at least when strictly interpreted, are framed as a form of "complementarity" in which men and women have "mutually recognized rights and obligations," including women's obligation to be virtuous and men's obligation to command them. It is from these obligations that honor is derived (Kandiyoti 180). Therefore, it is not difficult to see that conflict could arise when the PDPA, which may have respected some Islamic laws but was tied to a foreign, secular power, passed reforms that would undermine the conservative concept of honor by equalizing gender relations and, more pertinently, undermining men's obligation and ability to control their female kin (174).

The US government may not have fully understood the beliefs behind this Afghan resistance to the PDPA or general communism, but they recognized it as a potential tool to further anti-communist Cold War policies. Unlike the interwar missionary work in other

Middle Eastern countries, the US in the Cold War period took a different approach to Islamic education. Initially, rather than eliminate Islamic education in favor of secularization or Christianity, American education initiatives like The Teachers College at Columbia University (TCCU) in 1954 saw the power of Islam as a social force in Afghanistan, capable of working in tandem with Western ideology to “modernize” or Westernize the country (Shirazi 213). Although the TCCU was originally working to utilize the “flexibility of Islamic faith” as a positive tool to reform education in Afghanistan and a potential step away from colonial ideology, this policy would change after the aforementioned Saur Revolution and the following Soviet invasion in 1979 (215).

The invasion and answering Afghan uprising prompted the US to provide a huge influx of weaponry and funding for humanitarian aid and education to the Afghan rebels (Yaqub 21). This US aid enabled the proliferation of radicalized, militaristic madrasas in refugee camps along the Afghan border, which allowed for increasing indoctrination of students into “jihadist warriors,” or mujahedeen, to combat Soviet communism (Shirazi 221).

Far from halting this radical Islamist fervor, the US government actively encouraged it. From 1986-1992, even after the Soviets left Afghanistan, organizations including USAID, UNO, and the Education Center for Afghanistan, which was supported by seven ISI and CIA aided mujahedeen groups, oversaw the printing of violent, anti-Soviet, pro-radical Islam textbooks for children in elementary school (Shirazi 222). These included calls to anti-Soviet action as early as learning the alphabet: “alef is for Allah, jim is for jihad, and shin is for Shakir, who conducts jihad with his sword. God becomes happy with the defeat of the Russians” (222). These textbooks and their content may have not espoused particularly American ideals, but they were anti-Soviet, anti-communist, and pro-military, all of which helped to advance US policy goals.

These ideologies opposed and harmed the women’s rights movement in Afghanistan. However, because of the PDPA’s radical reform the women’s rights movement in Afghanistan, despite their opposition, were associated with the PDPA and as a result with socialist and Marxist ideology (Moghadam 50). Unsurprisingly, the US government did not align itself with this movement, but rather with militarized Islamic fundamentalism, an ideology that gave rise to mujahedeen leaders. One such leader is Gulbeddin Hekmatyar, a staunch anti-communist, “favorite of the Reagan administration,” and future prime minister of the authoritarian government that led to the 1996 Taliban takeover in response to the mujahedeen, or “warlord,” regime (Rubin 287). In 1970, Hekmatyar participated with other mujahedeen in splashing acid on and shooting at the legs of women in “Western” dress. The violent acts he and his followers committed against women were not addressed by the US government, despite a protest of 5,000 Afghan women and girls in the aftermath (Moghadam 51). These protests were not small or unorganized events, nor was the larger women’s rights movement. Yet the US government

chose to overlook this to pursue total defeat of the Soviets, and thus institutionalized ideology that actively harmed women's rights in Afghanistan. In doing so the US revealed both the inherent self-interest of colonial feminism and the beginning of the US government's problematic and inconsistent usage of Islam as an educational and rhetorical tool to either undermine or "support" Afghan women's rights.

Taliban-to-Present Period

After Taliban forces captured Kabul in September of 1996, Afghan women's role became primarily "to function as symbols of legitimization for political groups led by men," at the expense of their human rights, and though some women resisted, they had little international support (Barnett 291-292). It was not until after 9/11 in 2001 that the US officially acted against the Taliban, and they did so not to help Afghan women, but to fight the War on Terror.

When delving into this period of US involvement in Afghan women's education, it is first vital to interrogate the rhetoric used by major US figures regarding women's rights in Afghanistan, which constructs Afghan women in what anthropologist Lila Abu-Lughod calls a "new colonial feminism" (Barnett 787). In November 2001, shortly after the US-led invasion of Afghanistan, First Lady Laura Bush told the American people, "the fight against terrorism is also a fight for the rights and dignity of women." But this was not the United States' primary goal.

If the US had truly sought to fight for the rights and dignity of Afghan women, then it makes little sense that the US did not intervene sooner. Afghan women lived under oppressive Taliban rule for five years after the 1996 takeover, without any US intervention, despite the United States' indirect involvement in the Taliban's creation (Rubin 288). This rhetoric justifies military intervention for the War on Terror on moral grounds disguised as feminism. However, this is a form of feminism that resembles the oppressive rhetoric of Woodsmall's missionaries, who claimed to be empowering women by the mere application of Western ideals, not by actually addressing systemic issues like sociopolitical instability.

This new colonial feminism is tied to the image of the full-body burqa, which the US has used as a symbol of "the ultimate sign of the oppression of Afghan women under the Taliban" (Abu-Lughod 785). However, as Palestinian-American anthropologist Lila Abu-Lughod points out, the burqa was not a creation of the Taliban formed to oppress women, but rather originally the traditional garb of some Pashtun women. To these women, the burqa is "symbolizing modesty or respectability," and can be seen as a form of "portable seclusion," which actually allows women greater mobility while still keeping purdah (785). None of the veils, of which there are many styles with many different social signifiers, are meant to signify oppression or Arab "backwardness," as many Western cultures including the US have often wrongly interpreted them (Pratt).

When garb like the burqa are used in a way that appears to restrict women, as with the Taliban, the burqa itself is not at fault, nor is the culture that created it, nor the women wearing it. The fault here is of the fundamentalist Islamic ideology of the Taliban, which is based on ethnic lines and the need to assert power, masculinity, and national identity in a nation-state wracked by war. This violent instability was in part sparked through violent radical Islamic ideology, which the US government actively encouraged, a responsibility the US government is now detached from, placing itself instead in the role of the Afghan women's savior.

This new colonial feminism is not confined solely to the rhetoric used by the Bush administration; the US government garnering public support using the plight of Afghan women is pervasive. In October 2001, the US launched "Operation Enduring Freedom – Afghanistan." The "liberation of Afghans, particularly women," was the stated goal for this US intervention against the Taliban regime; however the War on Terror remained the US government's highest priority, "whatever the costs to Afghans and stability in the region" (Niland 4).

Eighteen years later, this new colonial feminism has served to fuel a war that has cost the US nearly \$2 trillion, and has cost the Afghan people their rights, dignity, and stability. In Afghanistan, the cost of war falls especially heavily on women, because "as in all war-torn societies, women suffer disproportionately" (Bohn). The Taliban controls 60% of the country, as much territory as in 2001, and approximately 3,000 civilians were killed and 5,000 injured in 2018 alone. About two-thirds of Afghan women do not attend school, and the literacy rate is roughly 13% for women. US and international aid have so far failed to fix this statistic, despite huge investments into programs aimed at "advancing women's rights" like Promote, a "flop" which *TIME* calls "a waste of taxpayers' money" (Bohn).

Currently, the US is engaged in peace talks with the Taliban, and the Afghan government has not yet been included. Nor had any Afghan women, until 3,500 of them organized their own jirga (tribal council) to outline and emphasize what they want from the peace process in February. Their biggest concerns included education, justice, economic opportunity, and the protection of their constitutional rights. So far, the US government has not included Afghan women on an official level (Gharib), continuing this historical cycle of alternately ignoring or supporting the rights and voices of Afghan women for the sake of achieving US goals in the region, even when those goals are supposedly to help Afghan women.

Case Study

The historical background may seem like a grim precedent for current and future US educational programs in Afghanistan; however it can also be seen as a guide for what not to

do, serving as a warning against colonial feminist ideology and self-interested policies that undermine sociopolitical stability. “Promote” can also be seen as an educational program with plenty of room for improvement, because although it does not seem to be inciting uprisings or indoctrinating soldiers, it is not an effective program, and the steps to making it one are currently well-within the United States’ reach.

The Promoting Gender Equity in National Priority Programs Project, colloquially referred to as “Promote,” is a \$216 million USAID program billed as “the world’s biggest program ever designed purely for female empowerment” (United States, Congress, *SIGAR 18-69 Audit Report 2*). It is also a program that has, according to an audit report and quarterly report by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), spectacularly failed in executing its goal of empowering 75,000 Afghan women (United States, Congress, *SIGAR 18-69 Audit Report 2*).

Due to Promote’s lack of a baseline study, general disorganization, poor communication, possible internal corruption, and changing of stated goals when it failed to meet those goals, it is difficult to tell if *any* women were concretely helped through Promote’s four component programs: Women’s Leadership Development (WLD), Women in Government (WIG), Women in the Economy (WIE), and Musharikat, which focuses on women in civil society (United States, Congress, *SIGAR 18-69 Audit Report 2*). As of September 30, 2017, out of these four programs only one, Musharikat, was meeting most (half) of its performance indicator targets – this was *after* these targets had been changed to more “realistic” goals (12). USAID/Afghanistan did not set targets for Musharikat’s other eight performance indicators, leading SIGAR to conclude they could not fully assess whether Musharikat, or any of the other programs, had been effective at all (20).

What went wrong in Promote goes beyond disorganization and a lack of cohesive goals. In 2016, a year before releasing the audit outlining Promote’s failures, SIGAR asked 40 Afghan women in various public sectors about the program, about what they thought could be improved, and about what Afghan women truly need in educational programs. Notably, SIGAR interviewed Afghan First Lady Rula Ghani, who critiqued Promote for 1) being launched too early, 2) having too few female staff (and too few staff in general), 3) putting most of the money towards administrative costs and American contractors rather than to Afghan women, 4) training women to seek jobs in Afghanistan’s relatively weak economy rather than building their own businesses, and 5) targeting a disproportionate number of urban women with a high-school education rather than the rural provinces where there is a greater need for education (United States, Congress, *Quarterly Report 6*). These critiques echo many of the past issues with American-led educational programs in the region – their focus on ‘modernizing’ and ‘empowering’ Afghan women is orchestrated in a Western context and ideology.

Ghani also made a vital point regarding Promote's apparent intentions to "build a cadre of activists and civil-society organizations" focused on "women's equality and empowerment" which she believes will have unanticipated negative consequences, not just because of the participants' young age and political inexperience, but because the US, like many other Western powers, is taking a Western approach to gender programs (United States, Congress, *Quarterly Report* 6). Rather than consulting with Afghan women on their thoughts and goals regarding their own liberation, US programs like Promote use language "singling out 'women's rights' instead of calling for 'mutual respect between men and women,'" which is what Ghani and other Afghan women claim is more culturally resonant (9). While this approach may seem too moderate, it has historically proven unhelpful and even counterproductive for the US government to project Western feminist ideology onto Afghan women. As Helena Malikiyar, an Afghan-American scholar and journalist contacted by SIGAR, notes, "USAID doesn't consult Afghan women until it is too late to make any changes," even though programs like Initiative to Promote Afghan Civil Society in which Afghan women have been consulted and Afghan people as a whole have been involved have proven to be more effective (United States, Congress, *Quarterly Report* 11).

Ultimately, SIGAR found that the Afghan women they interviewed believe security and corruption remain the two most important issues hindering and endangering Afghan women today. Lack of security prevents women from attending school and working, and in doing so enforces attitudes that women are too vulnerable to leave the home. Corruption is prevalent in politics, the justice system, and the workforce, preventing women from climbing social ladders, and leads to misspending in women's programs like Promote (United States, Congress, *Quarterly Report* 4). Both need to be addressed and improved upon before real change can be made.

Most women interviewed expressed gratitude towards the US and the international community for their support – at least, the women SIGAR chose to include in this survey did – but wished the US government sought far more input from local Afghan women while the programs were being designed to make them more sustainable (United States, Congress, *Quarterly Report* 5), rather than meeting short-term quotas and goals like Promote (4). The educational programs these Afghan women argued would be most valuable are programs for rural women (4), sponsoring women to study Islamic law in order to improve women's legal protections, entrepreneurial courses and resources, and giving more attention and funding to programs beyond primary school (16, 19, 23). Literacy rates in Afghanistan remain low, especially for women, but it is clear that not only are Afghan women hopeful about their futures, they are advocating for themselves and devising solutions to best solve the sociopolitical issues they face, and the issues with US programs like Promote.

Conclusion

Based on this joint historical analysis of US educational programs as based in colonial feminism and a case study of a current program that is ineffective because it clings to similar ideological echoes, it is clear that a sustainable educational program for Afghan women should not only include but *prioritize* the plans and goals of Afghan women. Additionally, this new program must contextualize its efforts to improve Afghan women's rights within the larger historical and cultural context of Afghanistan-US relations with women, education, and their intersection.

Before this program is implemented, or in conjunction with its development and launch, the US government must work to restore stability and security in Afghanistan, with the ultimate goal of achieving peace and withdrawing troops. This can begin with diplomatically addressing the issues of corruption and security identified by the women SIGAR interviewed, which contributed to Promote's failure. In particular, the US government should reform the Afghanistan Local Police (ALP) and the Afghan National Police (ANP), which are programs the US government created and which now pose threats to women and rural communities via widespread violence, sexual assault, and drug trafficking (Niland 9). This can be enacted via the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs in partnership with the Afghan government. This partnership with the Afghan government should also extend to US and Taliban peace talks to avoid giving sole political legitimacy to the Taliban. Inclusion of the Afghan government includes Afghan women, whose voices the US government must listen to and engage with in every step of the peacemaking process.

As a more stable foundation is established, USAID should be required to work more closely with SIGAR and USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS) while developing this new education program in order to establish an accurate baseline, analyze sustainability, maintain financial transparency, and overall avoid Promote's mistakes. USAID should also design the program in partnership with NGOs founded by Afghan women, such as the Afghan Women's Network (AWN) and the New Afghanistan Women Association (NAWA). Coalition with the Afghan government, particularly the women in it, would ensure the program has state support and in turn supports the long-term stability of the state. This new education program should also strive for a majority-female, majority-Afghan staff. The number of Afghan women on staff should increase over the program's lifetime.

Like Promote, this program should have component programs; unlike Promote, these component programs will be created based on the recommendations of Afghan women. Based on SIGAR interviews, they might resemble this:

1. *Women in Law (WIL)*: Sponsoring women to study Islamic law under internationally recognized scholars to improve women's legal protections, aiding the formal court system to

reduce corruption and increase women's options for legal recourse.

2. *Women in Business (WIB)*: Focus on entrepreneurial courses, marketing products, and creating formal organizations for women to pool resources and create business models.

3. *Wuleswali*⁴: Focus on rural women, with the idea that this is a foundational program based in improving literacy, health/reproduction education, and primary schooling, and will expand to include higher levels of schooling past the sixth-grade level as need demands.

4. *Musharikat*: Shift away from Western feminist activist ideals of "empowerment" and Americanization and towards language of inclusion and respect between genders, work in partnership and support with local Afghan women's activists groups, both Islamic, like Women for Afghan Women (WAW), and secular, like the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA).

Promote used only \$181 million from the \$216 million of its allocated funds. This program should aim for a \$200 million budget, with a total ceiling on the contract of \$400 million to allow up to \$200 million from international contributions. Promote was designed for 5 years, but this program should be designed for at least 10 years. This design will include the condition that if both Afghan and American constituents agree on the program's success after 5 years, the program will be placed under Afghan control, likely with US funds, with the ultimate goal of self-sufficiency.

Promote did not fail Afghan women to the degree that missionary schools and militarized madrasas did, but the program's aforementioned shortcomings and critiques stem from the same underlying reasons – instability created by the US government's actions based on US goals surrounding both Westernization and eradicating "the enemy," whether communist or terrorist. These actions were taken purely for US benefit while claiming to help the Afghan people and to save Afghan women. However, after eighteen years, the failure of this claim is evident. Past strategies, those that place US goals over Afghan goals, that aim to Christianize, Westernize, or even radicalize, have not succeeded to Afghan benefit.

Compared to these past programs, Promote is an improvement because it makes an apparent attempt to put Afghan women's best interests first and the US government has finally begun to involve Afghan women in the process of critiquing and reviewing the program. Ultimately, Promote was ineffective because the US government refused to shed the paternalistic vestiges of its previous colonial feminist involvement in the Middle East and Afghanistan. In order to shed them once and for all, Afghan women need to be at the forefront of this educational program – not to justify US involvement on moral grounds, but to put an end to an eighteen year long war and ultimately leave Afghanistan and its people in a position to move forward, and to repair trust in the US as an ally in the years to come.

Works Cited

- Abu-Lughod, Lila. "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others." *American Anthropologist*, vol. 104, no. 3, 2002, pp. 783–790. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/3567256. Accessed 1 Feb. 2020.
- "Afghanistan Population 2020." *World Population Review*, 12 June 2019, worldpopulationreview.com/countries/afghanistan-population/.
- Baron, Beth. "The Port Said Orphan Scandal of 1933: Colonialism, Islamism, and the Egyptian Welfare State." *Cultural Conversions: Unexpected Consequences of Christian Missionary Encounters in the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia*, edited by Heather Sharkey, Syracuse UP, 2013, pp. 121-138.
- Bohn, Lauren. "Why Afghanistan Is Still the Worst Place to Be a Woman." *Time*, 8 Dec. 2018, www.time.com/5472411/afghanistan-women-justice-war/.
- Bush, Laura. "Laura Bush on Taliban Oppression of Women." *Weekly Radio Address of the President of the United States*, 17 Nov. 2001. Transcript, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wpsrv/nation/specials/attacked/transcripts/laurabushtext_111701.html. Accessed 1 June 2019.
- Diamant, Jeff. "The Countries with the 10 Largest Christian Populations and the 10 Largest Muslim Populations." *Pew Research Center*, 1 Apr. 2019, www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/04/01/the-countries-with-the-10-largest-christian-populations-and-the-10-largest-muslim-populations/.
- Gharib, Malaka. "'This Is Not The Way': Afghan Women Push Back On U.S.-Taliban Peace Talks." *NPR*, 5 Mar. 2019, www.npr.org/2019/03/05/700173721/this-is-not-the-way-afghan-women-push-back-on-u-s-taliban-peace-talks.
- Kandiyoti, Deniz. "Old Dilemmas or New Challenges? The Politics of Gender and Reconstruction in Afghanistan." *Development & Change*, vol. 38, no. 2, Mar. 2007, pp. 169–199. *EBSCOhost*, doi:10.1111/j.1467-7660.2007.00408.x.
- Moghadam, Val. "Revolution, the State, Islam, and Women: Gender Politics in Iran and Afghanistan." *Social Text*, no. 22, 1989, pp. 40-61. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/466519.

Niland, Norah. "Democratic Aspirations and Destabilizing Outcomes in Afghanistan." *Costs of War: Watson Institute, Brown University*, 15 Oct. 2014, pp. 1-13, doi:10.2139/ssrn.2522200.

Poullada, Leon B. "Afghanistan and the United States: The Crucial Years." *Middle East Journal*, vol. 35, no. 2, 1981, pp. 178–190. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/4326198. Accessed 1 Mar. 2020.

Pratt, Nicola. "How the West Undermined Women's Rights in the Arab World." *Jadaliyya*, Jan. 2016, <https://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/32910>.

Rubin, Barnett R. "Women and Pipelines: Afghanistan's Proxy Wars." *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)*, vol. 73, no. 2, 1997, pp. 287. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/2623829.

Shirazi, Roozbeh. "Islamic Education in Afghanistan: Revisiting the United States' Role." *CR: The New Centennial Review*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2008, pp. 211-233. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/41949587.

---. "Islamic Education in Afghanistan: Revisiting the United States' Role." *CR: The New Centennial Review*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2008, pp. 211-233. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/41949587.

Syed, Madeeha. "Leading Ladies – Soraya Tarzi: The Afghan Queen." *Pakistan Historical Society. Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society*, vol. 60, no. 3, 2012, pp. 109-111. *ProQuest*, <http://login.proxy.seattleu.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.proxy.seattleu.edu/docview/1033572143?accountid=28598>.

The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. "Mohammad Zahir Shah." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 11 Oct. 2019, www.britannica.com/biography/Mohammad-Zahir-Shah.

United States, Congress. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction. *SIGAR 18-69 Audit Report: Promoting Gender Equity in National Priority Programs (Promote): USAID Needs to Assess This \$216 Million Program's Achievements and the Afghan Government's Ability to Sustain Them*. SIGAR Electronic Library, 2018, pp. 2-44, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/audits/SIGAR-18-69-AR.pdf>.

United States, Congress. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction. *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress; Section 1: Afghan Women on Their Progress and the Challenges That Remain*. SIGAR Electronic Library, 2016, pp. 1-25, <https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2016-10-30qr.pdf>.

Woodsmall, Ruth Frances. "The Beginning of Girls' Education in Iran." *Moslem Women Enter a New World*, Roundtable Press, 1936, pp. 144-159.

Yaqub, Salim. "The Cold War and the Middle East." *The Cold War in the Third World*, edited by Robert McMahon, Oxford UP, 2013, pp. 11-26.

Zirinsky, Michael P. "A Panacea for the Ills of the Country: American Presbyterian Education in Interwar Iran." *American Presbyterians*, vol. 72, no. 3, 1994, pp. 190. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/23333633.

Notes

¹It is important to note that the fundamentalist and radical forms of Islam practiced by groups like the mujahedeen and Taliban are very different from the religion of Islam as it is widely practiced around the world, and just as the KKK or Westboro Baptist Church is not accurately representative of Christianity, neither of these groups can be viewed as accurate representations of Islam.

²I acknowledge that the US government is not a uniform entity and over the course of the years this paper covers, many different administrations were involved, often with conflicting or multiple positions on the topics covered in this paper, such as women's rights, education programs, and foreign policy. However, for the sake of word limits and because there is a great deal of existing literature on US administrations in these eras, this paper focuses more closely on Afghan politics and the United States' intersection with them, and simply draws comparisons between various US administrations which have all used or condoned what I argue are colonial feminist policies.

³"Madrasa" is a transliteration for the Arabic word *مدرسة*, used here to mean traditional Afghan educational institutions that involve a heavy emphasis on study of Islam; however the word itself can be used to refer to any type of educational institution, secular or not.

⁴"Wuleswali" is a transliteration of the Pashtun word *ولسوالی*, which refers to the administrative districts or provinces of Afghanistan.

Diversity and Disability: Why Disability Services Syllabi Statements Hurt Inclusivity

Tracy Spencer, Communication and Media

Faculty Mentor: Julie Homchick Crowe, PhD

Faculty Content Editor: Christopher A. Paul, PhD

Student Editor: Elena Selthun

Abstract

This project explores the language of disability services syllabi statements. Using Van Dijk's concept of Critical Discourse Analysis, I analyze the semiotic choices made within the statements of west coast public universities and Jesuit universities. I ask: How do disability services syllabi statements represent the people they are meant to serve? Through a critical discourse analysis of the use of language and semiotic choices, I argue that disability services syllabi statements can function to suppress the power of disabled students, minimizing their agency while promoting ableist ideologies.

Keywords: Critical discourse analysis, semiotic choices, disability services syllabi statements

Introduction

To help promote ideals of diversity and inclusion, higher education institutions – particularly Jesuit institutions, whose mission includes a commitment to “educating the whole person” – have increasingly developed offices and services committed to students with disabilities. Many universities require that faculty members include statements about disability services and often, reading a syllabi statement is a student’s first interaction with disability services, particularly when the student becomes disabled during their postsecondary career. When students receive their syllabi, they will often find a statement similar to the following:

Special Needs: If you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an ‘invisible disability’ such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or mental health condition) that interferes with your performance as a student in this class, you are encouraged to arrange support services and/or accommodations through Disability Services staff in the Learning Center, Loyola 100, (206) 296-5740. (Seattle University, 2018)

Although disability services syllabi statements appear to be creating an inclusive environment by including students with disabilities in a movement towards diversity, these statements actually create a sense of Otherness through the language that is used. This language typically reflects corporate language and stems from the ideology that students with disabilities need to be brought up to normalized standards by “leveling the playing field.”

In order to better understand this, I ask: How do disability services syllabi statements represent the people they are meant to serve? A critical discourse analysis of the use of language and semiotic choices reveals how disability services syllabi statements suppress the power of disabled students, minimizing their agency while promoting ableism.

Background

19th Century

Though many of the most substantial advancements made in disability rights have occurred recently, the foundation for disability rights in the United States actually began in 1846 with the establishment of the Massachusetts School for Idiotic Children and Youth (Greenberg & Carlos, 2015, para. 2). Lincoln made a similar advancement by signing a bill to allow the Columbia Institution for the Deaf and Dumb to provide education at the college level (Greenberg & Carlos, 2015). Greenberg and Carlos (2015) note that though the names of these institutions reflect stigma against persons with disabilities, they were the first steps taken towards higher education accessibility (para. 2).

20th Century

During the twentieth century, the United States had the most rapid progression of disability rights, particularly in relation to military members and minority groups. After World War I, Congress enacted the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1918, which was meant to “provide educational and work assistance for some veterans with disabilities” (Greenberg & Carlos, 2015). Disability rights for veterans also progressed after World War II with the Serviceman’s Readjustment Act of 1944, also referred to as the GI Bill of Rights, which provided tuition and subsistence reimbursement for veterans with disabilities (Greenberg & Carlos, 2015). Greenberg and Carlos (2015) note that this legislation had another benefit in that non-veteran students with disabilities “were provided services that could assist their pursuit of a higher education.”

The first law that directly supported those with disabilities was the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968, which pushed for better building accessibility (Greenberg & Carlos, 2015). The law was furthered by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which “prohibited discrimination of individuals with disabilities by federal employers” (Greenberg & Carlos, 2015). The act also “mandated postsecondary institutions to open their doors to students with disabilities and to provide them equal access to an education including support services” (Pena, 2014, p. 30). Greenberg and Carlos (2015) add that the Bill of Rights Act of 1975 in conjunction with Developmental Disabilities Assistance “created state-sponsored councils for planning and advocacy regarding developmental disabilities.” Additionally, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 was passed, later known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in 1990, which was the first step towards accommodations for disabled children, and specified that accommodations should be “reasonable” (Greenberg & Carlos, 2015).

Finally, the Americans with Disabilities Act was passed in 1990. This law specifically outlawed discrimination against those with disabilities, however Greenberg and Carlos (2015) explain that the ADA was limited by its lack of clarity to the definition of disabled which led to courts defining “disabled” in various ways: “For example, wide-ranging physical and psychological conditions including epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, diabetes, cancer and schizophrenia were determined by various courts to not qualify as a true disability.”

21st Century

The definition of a disability would not be made more clear until 2008 with the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) (Greenberg & Carlos, 2015, para. 10). The act seeks to broaden the definition of disabilities so that many individuals are covered to the greatest extent possible. The ADAAA defines a disability as:

- A. A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual;
- B. A record of such an impairment; or
- C. Being regarded as having such an impairment. (Information About the ADAAA)

Although many strides for disability rights were made in the 20th century, more issues related to disability rights have come to light. Today, unlike in secondary education, higher education institutions are not required to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in which “a school district must identify an individual’s educational needs and provide any regular or special education and related aids and services necessary to meet those needs as well as it is meeting the needs of students without disabilities” (Students with Disabilities). Public higher education institutions are only required to “to provide appropriate academic adjustments as necessary to ensure that it does not discriminate on the basis of disability,” even though they are partially funded by the state (Students with Disabilities).

In a report issued in 2018 by the National Council on Disability, researchers found that sexual assault resources, websites, and printed information on college campuses are not accessible, given that many websites and online forms are unable to be read by screen readers and that online training courses are often not captioned (Not on the Radar, 2019). Additionally, when in-person training courses are held, they are often held in buildings that are not accessible and members of the college staff lack training and awareness to be inclusive of students with disabilities. College campuses also lack diligence in informing students about accommodations and often do not provide enough contact information for requesting accommodations (Not on the Radar, 2018, p. 66).

The authors also found that students with disabilities were excluded as a demographic from the data collection of federal-level research studies on sexual assault, which were funded by the Department of Justice’s Office of Violence Against Women and the National Institute of Justice, simply because these organizations did not think to include them (Not on the Radar, 2018, p. 65). In 2016, Justice Department’s 2016 Campus Climate Survey Validation Study conducted by the Bureau of Statistics also did not include students with disabilities (Not on the Radar, 2018, p. 65). The lack of representation of students with disabilities in these studies is unfortunate, given that the rates of sexual violence towards undergraduate females with disabilities are almost twice as high as the rates for undergraduate females without a disability (Not on the Radar, 2018, p. 17).

Although college campuses may provide some accommodations and disability services, there are still many areas of the higher education system in which disabled students are marginalized and excluded from both important research and campus life. In order to address this lack of research, my analysis of disability services syllabi statements highlights areas to improve the language that higher education institutions utilize when referring to disabilities.

Research into Academic Policies, Accommodations, Accessibility, and Identity

Introduction

As the following scholars show, it is clear that the language around higher education institutions is based largely on ableist assumptions, usually resulting in an “Othering” of people with disabilities. Through research done on disability studies and the use of Universal Design in education, researchers have identified how the rhetoric around disabilities contributes to inequities, in addition to academic policies, accommodations, accessibility, equality, and identity. Although research does not always describe exactly how the rhetoric is functioning, it describes the effects of such language on those with disabilities – therefore providing a need for analysis of the language of disability services syllabi statements.

Academic policies

Studies of academic policies have primarily focused on the language around admissions policies, sexual misconduct, and Title IX in relation to fair disciplinary process, free speech and the racialization of educational policies. Patel (2016) explains that when analyses have been conducted on educational policies, they tend to focus on “the impact of the policies on student achievement and/or the furthering of progressive ideals, regularly theorized through concepts of democracy” (p. 114). Patel (2016) goes on to say that “because all policies are fundamentally texts, they include some things and leave others out and encapsulate specific knowledge traditions” (p. 116). In other words, when looking at the research surrounding academic policies, disability-related issues have been largely ignored, since we have not made disability rights a policy conversation.

In her analysis of sexual misconduct and Title IX, Howarth (2017) focused on concerns with:

- (a) an overly broad definition of sexual assault; (b) failure to deal appropriately with vast variations in attitudes and experiences of sexuality of campus women; and (c) resolution processes that ignore the complex web of relationships involved in many allegations of Title IX violations. (p. 720)

These tenets of Howarth’s research provide context to the ways in which students with disabilities are excluded from university policies. In her study of free speech on college campuses, Ross (2017) notes that many college students have pushed for policy change to

cancel racist, sexist and homophobic speech; however, there is no mention of censoring hate speech towards disabilities (p. 747). This is also supported by Pena's (2014) findings that even though students with disabilities represent a significant portion of the student population in higher education, in a ten year span, students with disabilities only represented 1% of academic articles published. What is glaringly clear from this existing research is not only the absence of those with disabilities when it comes to academic policymaking, but also the complete lack of students with disabilities' voices within literature. These absences are a direct reflection of the need for inclusion in academic conversation.

Accommodations

When it comes to the discourse around accommodations, scholars primarily focus on the process of obtaining accommodations and the effects that this has on those requesting accommodations. Dolmage (2017) describes the ways in which requiring proof of need for an accommodation essentially forces those with disabilities to pass a "gatekeeper," and creates barriers to inclusion. Dolmage (2017) goes on to explain that not validating disabilities until they are legally proven shows "indifference to the individual," and emphasizes that since "reasonable" accommodations are given, students are still required to "accommodate him or herself to the dominant logic of classroom pedagogy" (p. 80). The rhetoric around accommodations and disabilities is also diminished when those with disabilities are presented as being successful by overcoming their disabilities, leading to society viewing those who need accommodations as making unnecessary demands and being weak in character (Wilson, p. 196).

This perspective reinforces the notion that students with disabilities simply need to work harder, and in many professors' opinions, take advantage of the system of services. A study in 2015 of faculty perceptions around accommodations found that students "yearned to be accepted as contributing members of the class or in team projects but, more often than not, they felt singled out by their own teachers and by peers once they revealed they have a disability," due to the fact that teachers often bring up performance and attendance in response to receiving an accommodation letter (Hong, 2015, p. 223).

The buried issue when it comes to accommodation is our very understanding of the term itself and its implications. Brueggemann (2001) notes in relation to learning disabilities that in order to have reasonable accommodations, we must be "questioning our definitions of intelligence and questioning how integral certain teaching and testing methods truly are to higher education" (p. 372). In their push for a better alternative to accommodations in their writing center, researchers Kimber Barber-Fendley and Chris Hamel (2004) explain that the flaws of the current accommodations system are not flaws of the accommodations being used, but rather that there is a "metaphoric assumption that that accommodations create a

'level playing field'" (p. 505). Accommodations are a means of making some academic spaces accessible to students with disabilities, but accommodations are only a steppingstone in achieving disability justice – especially considering that as many students with disabilities move through the various levels of the education system, they actually lose accommodations due to a shift in focus towards professional standards. Additionally, the rigor of academic programs can make students feel as though they are risking their academic standing by coming out as having a disability. In a study focused on accommodation denial done by Nichelle C. Carpenter and Ramona L. Paetzold (2013), they discovered that the reasons for denying accommodations were not legally based and the discrimination was influenced by a number of factors including perception of the disability, cause of the disability, and appropriateness or fairness of a request. In other words, the students are not concerned about whether or not they are legally protected – rather, they are concerned about the perceptions of their disability and the judgements by faculty and staff of whether their accommodations requests are necessary.

Accessibility and Equality

Many advances in accessibility have evolved from thinking of those with disabilities first, to designing accessible technology for all that benefits those with disabilities. Dolmage (2017) refers to this as a “digital curb cut.” He explains that dips in the sidewalks were originally created with wheelchair users in mind but are now recognized as beneficial by everyone because of their use of strollers, carts and even skateboards (Dolmage, 2017). So, technologies like these become marketed as beneficial to all, and the smaller market of those with disabilities is marginalized and “advances in mainstream design are expected to find their way into specialist products for people with disabilities” (Pullin, 2009). Knight (2018) furthers this argument by explaining that access is typically associated with equitable opportunity when it comes to accessing things like Internet and health care, but when it comes to disabilities, “access is often seen as the bare minimum to cross physical or mental barriers” (p. 23).

Inaccessibility often occurs even when persons with disabilities have not been excluded, but there is “an unexamined assumption that they will not participate” (Schur, Kruse, & Blanck, 2013, p. 87). For example, many polling locations or adaptive devices at polling places are not accessible and are not made accessible due to the feeling that making such accommodations risks the integrity of the voting system. Colker (2009) highlights the ideology that accessibility and integrity are separate when she argues that absentee voting is not a solution to the inaccessibility of polling places. She explains that polling places should be accessible, and that there should not be added steps to the participation of those with disabilities in “the name of promoting integrity. Integrity need not be sacrificed for

accessibility; those are false dichotomies” (Knight, 2009, p. 220). This is where the broadness of the language of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as explained by Price (2011), negatively impacts disabilities rights as it “has made way for ongoing discrimination in judicial decisions,” because its protections can be debated when it is perceived that integrity is at stake (p. 120).

Identity: Passing and Negotiative Roles

In order to change the language around disabilities, people with disabilities must be the negotiators of their disabilities – not the institution they are facing. When the institutions are the negotiators, people with disabilities are forced to ask themselves, “What am I willing to give up and what am I willing to fight for?” Dolmage (2017) explains that when it comes to the conversations around disabilities, “disability must be seen as socially negotiated; people with disabilities must be seen as the moderators, the agents of this negotiation” (p. 85). Deborah Metzler and Pamela Walker (2001) also emphasize the need for negotiative roles, as they believe negotiation would expand “social-spatial lives of people with disabilities and promote increased control and spatial choice.” They also note that studies have shown “children are not merely the passive recipients of definitions from others; they negotiate their environments to maintain their self-esteem [...] and engage in self-preservation” (Darling, 2013, p. 124). However, though being a negotiator can be an effective way to obtain accommodations, Mitchell (2013) explains that tools like negotiation and mediation can cause crises within one’s identity, and that scholars and researchers often “assume that the development of a person’s identities also illustrates her identification with them” (p. 7).

Rather than take on a negotiative role, some choose to utilize passing in order to avoid conflicts with institutions in regards to accommodating their disability: “Disability passing, crossing the boundaries between able-bodied/disabled, normal/abnormal, and visible/invisible disabilities is a complex act that challenges rigid dichotomies that attempt to fix an otherwise fluid identity” (Kerschbaum, Eisenman, & Jones, 2017, p. 31). In the academic world, this is a common approach students take to their disabilities because they fear the reaction they will receive to accommodations that they need. In one anecdote, Shahd Alshammari explains, “Though many academics might protest and deny [passing], academia relies heavily on presenting an intellectual, coherent, and productive identity that emerges as distinctive and distinguished” (Kerschbaum, Eisenman, & Jones, 2017, p. 31). Jeffrey A. Brune and Daniel J. Wilson (2013) explain how those with disabilities often have to make the choice to conceal (pass) or acknowledge their disabilities:

Going to the root of disability identity, their decisions weigh issues of stigma, pride, prejudice, discrimination, and privilege but rarely put the matter to rest. Even those who choose not to pass still must decide what to do when others fail to recognize or intentionally overlook their disability. (p. 1)

Wilson (2003) argues that passing prevents those with disabilities from joining conversation due to the fact that passing often results from “being pushed towards the argument, ‘we just want to be treated like everyone else,’ thereby diluting the transformative potential of their participation in the public forum” (p. 159). Whether students choose to utilize passing or their disabilities are overlooked, they are being marginalized in academic institutions because they are not being treated as the moderators or negotiators of the conversations surrounding their disabilities.

Summary

Research completed on the topics of academic policies, accommodations, accessibility, and equality, along with identities created through passing and negotiative roles, has focused on the effects of the rhetoric and ideologies at play. Scholars are identifying false dichotomies when it comes to disability rights, analyzing how accessibility has become a market for the mainstream, and observing the roles that passing and negotiation or mediation have on the identity of disabled persons. What is lacking, however, is an explanation of how the rhetoric is shaping these policies. Therefore, a critical discourse analysis of syllabi statements exposes the hidden powers and ideologies at play in higher education institutions when it comes to interacting with and supporting those with disabilities.

Methods of Analysis

For my analysis, I decided to focus on the disability services syllabi statements of five west coast Jesuit universities: Seattle University, Santa Clara University, Gonzaga University, University of San Francisco, and Loyola Marymount University, and five leading public west coast universities: Western Washington University, Central Washington University, California State University Monterey Bay, Cal Poly, and San Jose State University. I chose to analyze Jesuit schools, given that Jesuit universities have a mission to promote inclusivity and diversity on campus in order to advance towards social justice. Additionally, I chose to compare these west coast Jesuit schools to some of the leading public schools on the west coast, as defined by U.S. News & World Report (Best Regional Universities, 2019). I collected my data by going to the faculty section of the various disability services websites of the universities and finding

the options faculty had for syllabi statements. I then analyzed these statements and centered my analysis around the depiction of identities and agency through semiotic choices such as word connotations and overlexicalization, as well as impersonalization or collectivization, and nominalization.

The first area of analysis that I decided to focus on is word connotations, given that “language is an available set of options, certain choices have been made by the author for their own motivated reasons” (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 32). I also found that most word connotations tend to stem from corporate rhetoric as capitalism has deeply influenced society, since education institutions operate much like corporations (Chiapello & Fairclough, 2002). Similarly, I also looked at overlexicalization, which is an overuse of synonymous terms. Teo (2002) describes this as repetitious weaving to give a sense of “over-completeness” (p. 20). Overlexicalization helps institutions further their ideologies and reinforces the idea that they are committed to diversity and inclusivity, even if their words do not line up with their practices.

When it came to analyzing impersonalization and collectivization, I looked for words or phrases that give weight to certain statements more than others, conceal certain issues, remove empathy, and dehumanize or humanize certain entities (Machin & Mayr, 2012, pp. 79-80). Finally, I analyzed uses of nominalization to find areas in which responsibility for certain actions has been removed in order to eliminate agency or shift agency onto another entity (Machin & Mayr, 2013, p. 140). This is done through utilizing nouns instead of verbs to make the action appear as its own entity, rather than placing the responsibility on the institution (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 143).

A Critical Discourse Analysis of Disability Services Syllabi Statements

Identities of Students with Disabilities

Each of the Jesuit west coast universities I studied includes a statement about “educating the whole person” or the “integral development of each and all persons,” in addition to a statement about their commitment to diversity. Given their stated commitment to these values, one would assume said values would be reflected in syllabi statements about disability services. The language choices of these institutions, however, reflect associated identities of those with disabilities as being hindered or inferior in comparison to their peers.

In the case of Seattle University, the institution offers five different syllabi statements to choose from, some of which reflect attempts at inclusivity, while others take a more clinical or straightforward approach. Furthermore, Seattle University uses the following descriptors of disabilities throughout just two of its statements:

- “Invisible disability”
- Learning disability
- Chronic health problem
- Mental health condition
- Temporary health condition
- Permanent disability
- Attention-related
- Vision & hearing
- Physical
- Health impacts
- Medical impairment
- Physical impairment

This overlexicalization persuades readers in a repetitive way that Seattle University is inclusive and values a diverse student body. What this specification does, however, is associate the university with being accepting of disabilities that fall under the umbrella listed, while excluding others such as cognitive disabilities like Down Syndrome.

In one statement, Seattle University (2018) refers to those with disabilities as “learners,” which has a problematic connotation in that it implies that a disability has a direct correlation to learning style, and therefore students with disabilities are different from their peers. Additionally, Seattle University utilizes the term “interferes” to describe a disability when referring to student performance. The utilization of this term evokes the institution’s belief that disabilities are a hindrance to students and that it is integral that those with disabilities be brought up to the classroom standards – rather than re-evaluating the standards themselves.

Santa Clara University, University of San Francisco, and Seattle University also reinforce their ideologies of inclusion and diversity by the utilizing the term “equal” when referring to accessibility; however, this is directly contrasted by designating disabilities as having to be “verif[ied],” “eligible,” “identified,” and “documented” (Santa Clara University; University of San Francisco Student Disability Services; Seattle University, 2018). These designations underline the institutions’ beliefs that a disabled person’s identity must be confirmed by proving it to the institution in order to get ‘equal’ treatment in the classroom.

When it comes to actually accommodating students, Seattle University, Loyola Marymount, and Gonzaga all clarify that accommodations must be “reasonable,” but give no clarification as to what reasonable means, which can make students with disabilities feel like the accommodations they may need could be too much to ask for. This is also furthered

by these institutions referring to accommodations as being “special” (Seattle University, 2018; Disability Support Services, 2019; Gonzaga University Center for Student Academic Success). Although this term is often used in secondary education, it reflects ableist arguments that those with disabilities are receiving “special” treatment, and not simply accessibility. These kinds of terms were found throughout my analysis of both west coast Jesuit schools and west coast public schools, in which I noticed similar trends in the use of terms like “equal” and “special,” which reflect ableist notions that accommodations are utilized to bring students with disability up to normalized standards.

In my analysis of public universities, I found that Western Washington references “equal opportunity” in its statement, while Cal Poly states a commitment to provide accommodations on a “flexible and individualized basis” (Western Washington University, 2019; Disability Resource Center). San Jose State University referred to its accommodations as “special arrangements” and Western Washington referred to its accommodations as having to be “reasonable” (Office of Undergraduate Information, 2019; Western Washington University, 2019). Additionally, the criterion that disabilities must be verified was reinforced through Western Washington’s use of the term “documented” (Western Washington University, 2019). Cal Poly emphasized this notion through the overlexicalization of documentation. Not only does the statement say a disability must be documented; it also states that accommodations require “prior authorization” and “compliance with approved procedures” (Disability Resource Center). The use of this language does not serve to represent inclusivity, but rather is more like an employee handbook in that it demands compliance and enforces a bureaucratic procedure to the process of being accommodated. Finally, California State University Monterey Bay refers to disabilities as having an “impact on your performance,” and Cal Poly cites a student’s “ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements” (Student Disability Resources; Disability Resource Center). Again, unlike the ideas behind Universal Design, these language choices reinforce the idea that students must be adapted to the dominant abilities of the rest of the students in a classroom.

In contrast to the above data, unlike the other universities I looked at, Western Washington reinforced its ideologies of inclusion and diversity by noting its commitment to “non-discrimination” (Western Washington University, 2019). I find this particularly interesting, given that no other syllabi statement referred to the fact that students with disabilities often experience discrimination.

Even more interesting are the language choices made by Central Washington University. Rather than referring to students as having disabilities, the university states that it is “committed to creating a learning environment that meets the needs of its diverse student body” (Disability Services, 2019). Additionally, it doesn’t list any types of disabilities and refers to disabilities as “any barriers to learning” (Disability Services, 2019). Since the use of the

term “disability” itself has been contested, Central Washington uses an alternative approach through utilizing suppression, in which terms we would expect to find in a text are absent. Instead, Central Washington does not simply refer to accommodations, but states it has a “range of options to removing barriers, including accommodations,” and does not qualify the accommodations as having to be “reasonable” (Disability Services, 2019). Essentially, Central Washington University has enforced their ideologies of diversity and inclusion, without conforming to the bureaucratic language utilized by other universities.

Though many of these terms are commonly used in the discourse around disabilities, it is important that we take note of the ways in which this language can reinforce ideologies while also Othering those with disabilities through forced or associated identities. Furthermore, we must distinguish where such language choices are stemming from – often corporate business language – and we must note that there are ways it can be avoided, as proven by the statement of Central Washington University, which is a public university. Finally, it is important to note that though Jesuit schools promote a commitment to inclusivity as being key to the Jesuit ideal of educating the “whole person,” the language of disability services syllabi statements does not heavily differ from that of public schools.

Agency of Students with Disabilities

In my study of agency through Jesuit schools’ disability services syllabi statements, I found most of the statements to be quite impersonal and to collectivize students with disabilities. For example, each of the institutions utilized “students” in their statements, rather than using “you” (Disability Support Services, 2019; Gonzaga University Center for Student Academic Success; Santa Clara University; Seattle University, 2018; University of San Francisco Student Disability Services). In phrases such as “students with disabilities should” or “students who have needs” the language gives off a tone that someone is being read their rights. By collectivizing and impersonalizing students instead of referring to them directly, it reveals that a group is being dehumanized and treated as an Other – rather than evoking empathy by talking to “you,” the reader.

We can also return to Seattle University’s use of the word “learners” as an example of this (Seattle University, 2018). Although it may be common in an academic setting to refer to students as a group of learners, in this case, Seattle University is utilizing the term in reference to students with disabilities. Though in the same statement Seattle University claims “each student is afforded an equal opportunity,” the use of “learners” earlier in the statement serves to distance Seattle University from this group of students and remove empathy from the statement, even though the statement itself was meant to promote inclusivity (Seattle University, 2018). Furthermore, we can find this distancing from the subject in the statements of University of San Francisco and Seattle University, which both utilize statements like “The University of San Francisco is committed” and “Seattle University values” (University of San

Francisco Student Disability Services; Seattle University, 2018). By utilizing “the university” instead of faculty, students, etc., the statement is given extra weight by attempting to reflect the values of the university as a whole, which again helps an institution’s façade of being committed inclusivity and diversity, but actually serves as a way for the institution to avoid giving agency to those responsible for accommodating students with disabilities.

In two other statements, however, Seattle University chooses to refer to the student as “you” and “your,” and even offers a different statement written from the faculty perspective that emphasizes cooperation between the student and faculty through language such as “communicate with me” and “I am committed” (Seattle University, 2018). These language choices individualize the student and give the student agency, while also reflecting upon the agency of the faculty member to work with the student. University of San Francisco and Santa Clara University also utilized similar language when referring to students with disabilities in their statements, with Santa Clara even going as far to say the faculty member would be “happy to assist you” and the Disabilities Resources center would be “grateful for advance notice” (University of San Francisco Student Disability Services; Santa Clara University). Again, these phrases serve to create empathy and humanize the process of acquiring accommodations by making both the faculty and Disability Resources seem approachable. Additionally, the statements place agency on Disability Resources and the faculty member to be involved in the process of accommodating the student.

The outlier of the disability services syllabi statements when it came to individualization and agency was Gonzaga. Although the other schools seemed to promote inclusiveness, Gonzaga keeps their statement matter of fact and rights-focused. The statement cites the Americans with Disabilities Act and even utilizes phrases such as “anti-discrimination statute” and “comprehensive civil rights protection” (Gonzaga University Center for Student Academic Success). Although this phrase is informative of a students’ rights, the language is not very accessible given that what falls under “comprehensive” is unspecified and forces a student to research the act itself. It also seems to shift agency onto the Americans with Disabilities Act while deflecting that the university itself and the Disability Access office are responsible for helping the student be accommodated.

Finally, it is important to note that each of the schools’ statements utilizes the term “accommodations” and/or “adjustments” (Disability Support Services, 2019; Gonzaga University Center for Student Academic Success; Santa Clara University; Seattle University, 2018; University of San Francisco Student Disability Services). Though the term is normalized, and students do receive accommodations, the term is being nominalized in order to remove action from the statement. It leaves out the responsibility of who is supposed to accommodate the student: is it the university, the faculty, or disability services? Additionally, by using accommodations in a noun form, the term falls into common usage and is referred to as its

own entity. In other words, it is not clarified as to what exactly it means to be accommodating and makes it appear as if accommodations simply occur and are not handled by someone. Nominalization can also be found in Loyola Marymount's statement: "All discussions will remain confidential" (Disability Support Services, 2019). The statement simply refers to discussions. It does not allude as to who is participating in the discussions, and therefore does not allude to any agency.

In my analysis of the public-school statements, I found similar uses of language. Four out of the five public schools that I looked at used language such as "you" and "me" in order to evoke empathy and give agency to certain parties within the statement (Disability Resource Center; Disability Services, 2019; Office of Undergraduate Information, 2019; Student Disability Resources). Cal Poly's statement, however, tells the students to "contact the instructor" (Disability Resource Center). Given that this statement is within said instructor's syllabus, the instructor could have chosen to say contact "me." By utilizing the term "the instructor," the statement is further distancing the student from their instructor and removing any empathy. It dehumanizes the instructor and makes them appear as some sort of barrier that a student with disabilities has to pass, rather than someone who is there to support the student's learning.

Western Washington University also dehumanizes its students through avoiding referring to the students as students, but rather calling them "persons with disabilities" (Western Washington University, 2019). As these statements are appearing in student syllabi, referring to the reader as a "person" rather than recognizing that a person with a disability is a student furthers a sense of Otherness when interacting with students with disabilities, and impersonalizes the statement. One could interpret this as the university saying that persons with disabilities are not students.

Additionally, San Jose State University has a similar issue to Gonzaga in that it makes a reference to Presidential Directive 97-03, which "requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations...must establish a record of their disability" (Office of Undergraduate Information, 2019). Given that the Americans with Disabilities Act requires disability documentation in order to receive accommodations at higher education institutions, it is unclear as to why Presidential Directive 97-03 is being referenced, why it is needed, and what exactly it entails. The statement also includes a link to Academic Senate Policy F06-2 and refers to the school's Accessible Education Center solely by its acronym AEC. By directing agency to two different policies and an unexplained acronym, there is no agency or responsibility placed on the institution itself, instructors, or the disabilities service office; therefore, the very text that is supposed to promote accessibility becomes inaccessible.

Although there were many similarities between the texts of Jesuit and public institutions, there were some stark differences when it came to personalization and agency.

More often than not, these texts served to remove agency from all parties that should be involved and to dehumanize individuals with disabilities.

Conclusion

Through this analysis, I was able to establish the language choices that reflect associated identities of those with disabilities along with the ways higher education institutions remove agency or place the agency on a different entity. Although existing scholarship has contributed much in the means of accommodations and accessibility, this analysis shows the problems that disability services syllabi statements still pose. When the language of a statement serves to remove responsibility from the institution and place the responsibility on the student, students are discouraged in pursuing accommodations. Additionally, the emphasis on the types of disabilities supported can make students interpret that they will not be supported by disability services, or the student may still be struggling to identify as having a disability. When a syllabi statement is often the first interaction a student may have with disability services, it is crucial that the language of these statements is accessible to those who need it.

When creating a syllabus statement, the agency and responsibility are clear. Empathy should be shown for the student and their needs, and it should be clear who will be accommodating the student. It is also crucial that the language be accessible and that any words that connote a sense of exclusivity or Otherness should be eliminated. I would also suggest implementing the use of Central Washington's phrasing of "barriers to learning," as words such as impairment or disability are highly contested, and often students with disabilities do not necessarily see themselves as impaired or disabled. Avoiding those terms also helps to avoid presenting students with disabilities as lesser than their peers or needing to be brought up to a standard, instead placing the focus on accessing learning. Ultimately, the statements should appeal to students seeking out help, rather than making them feel pushed aside by the corporate language being used and the heavy emphasis on the timeliness of documentation. If higher education institutions are to truly include students with disabilities as a demographic of inclusivity and diversity, we must change how we talk about disabilities.

With this in mind, I push institutions that truly wish to work on their inclusion practices to utilize the following practices:

- Use person-first language (student with disabilities; not disabled student)
- Rename Disabilities Services to Student Access Services
- Refer to barriers to learning, rather than "disability"
- Show empathy and responsibility by using active language (accommodate vs. accommodations)
- Remember that when we speak about inclusion, accessibility should be part of that conversation.

References

- Barber-Fendley, K., & Hamel, C. (2004). A new visibility: an argument for alternative assistance writing programs for students with learning disabilities. *College Composition and Communication*, 55(3), 504-535.
- Best Regional Universities West Rankings. (2019). Retrieved from <https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/rankings/regional-universities-west>.
- Blockmans, I. G. E. (2015). "Not wishing to be the white rhino in the crowd": Disability-disclosure at university. *Journal of Language & Social Psychology*, 34(2), 158–180. <https://doi-org.proxy.seattleu.edu/10.1177/0261927X14548071>
- Brueggemann, B. J., White, L. F., Dunn, P. A., Heifferon, B. A., & Cheu, J. (2001). Becoming visible: Lessons in disability. *College Composition & Communication*, 52(3), 368–398. <https://doi-org.proxy.seattleu.edu/10.2307/358624>
- Brune, J. A., & Wilson, D. J. (Eds.). (2013). *Disability and passing: Blurring the lines of identity*. Retrieved from <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com>
- Carpenter, N., & Paetzold, R. (2013). An examination of factors influencing responses to requests for disability accommodations. *Rehabilitation Psychology*, 58(1), 18-27.
- Chiapello, E., & Fairclough, N. (2002). Understanding the new management ideology: A transdisciplinary contribution from critical discourse analysis and new sociology of capitalism. *Discourse & Society*, 13(2), 185-208. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926502013002406208>.
- Colker, R. (2009). *When is separate unequal?: A disability perspective* (Cambridge disability, law and policy series). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Darling, R. (2013). *Disability and identity: Negotiating self in a changing society* (Disability in society). Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.
- Disability Resource Center. *Syllabus statements and design*. Retrieved from <https://drc.calpoly.edu/content/syllabus-statements-and-design>

Disability Services. (2019). *Faculty resources*. Retrieved from <http://www.cwu.edu/disability-support/faculty-resources>

Disability Support Services. (2019). *DSS verbiage for syllabi*. Retrieved from <https://academics.lmu.edu/dss/forfaculty/dssverbiageforsyllabi/>

Dolmage, J.T. (2017). *Academic ableism: Disability and higher education*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press. <http://muse.jhu.edu/book/57058>.

Gonzaga University Center for Student Academic Success. *Syllabi statements*. Retrieved from <https://www.gonzaga.edu/academics/academic-calendar-resources/center-for-student-academic-success/disability-access/faculty/classroom-management-tips/syllabi-statements>

Greenberg, B., & Carlos, M. (2015). The Americans with disabilities act (ADA) at 25 years. Retrieved from <https://www.apa.org/pi/disability/resources/publications/newsletter/2015/07/disabilities-act>

Hong, B. (2015). Qualitative analysis of the barriers college students with disabilities experience in higher education. *Journal of College Student Development*, 56(3), 209-226.

Howarth, J.W. (2017). Shame agent. *Journal of Legal Education*, 66(4), 717-738.

Information about the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA). (2019). Retrieved from https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/statutes/adaaa_info.cfm

Kerschbaum, S., Eisenman, L., & Jones, J. (2017). *Negotiating disability*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan.

Knight, M. (2018). Accessibility and disability: Absent keywords in business and professional communication. *Business and Professional Communication Quarterly*, 81(1), 20-33.

Lewiecki-Wilson, C. (2003). Rethinking rhetoric through mental disabilities. *Rhetoric Review*, 22(2), 156. Retrieved from <http://search.ebscohost.com.proxy.seattleu.edu/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ufh&AN=9865559&site=ehost-live&scope=site>

Machin, D., & Mayr, A. (2012). *How to do critical discourse analysis*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Metzel, D.S., & Walker, P.M. (2001). The illusion of inclusion: Geographies of the lives of people with developmental disabilities in the United States. *Disability Studies Quarterly*, 21(4), 114–28.

Mitchell, D. (2013). Crises of identifying negotiating and mediating race, gender, and disability within family and schools (Educational leadership for social justice). Charlotte, N.C.: Information Age Pub.

Not on the radar: Sexual assault of college students with disabilities. (2019). Retrieved from <https://www.ncd.gov/publications/2018/not-radar-sexual-assault-college-students-disabilities>

Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education. (2019). *Students with disabilities preparing for postsecondary education*. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>

Office of Undergraduate Information. (2019). *Syllabus information*. Retrieved from <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/#ADACompliance>

Patel, L. (2016). Reaching beyond democracy in educational policy analysis. *Educational Policy*, 30(1), 114-127.

Peña, E. V. (2014). Marginalization of published scholarship on students with disabilities in higher education journals. *Journal of College Student Development*, 55(1), 30-40. Johns Hopkins University Press. Retrieved May 26, 2019, from Project MUSE database.

Pfeiffer, D. (1993). Overview of the disability movement: History, legislative record, and political implications. *Policy Studies Journal*, 21(4), 724–734. <https://doi-org.proxy.seattleu.edu/10.1111/j.1541-0072.1993.tb02169.x>

Price, M. (2011). Mad at school rhetorics of mental disability and academic life (Corporealities: Discourses of disability). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Pullin, G. (2009). *Design meets disability*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Ross, C. J. (2017). Assaultive words and constitutional norms. *Journal of Legal Education*, 66(4), 739-776.

Santa Clara University. *Digital resources for teaching*. Retrieved March 11, 2020, from <https://www.scu.edu/provost/teaching-and-learning/digital-resources-for-teaching-drt/planning/>.

Schur, L., Kruse, D., & Blanck, P.D. (2013). *People with disabilities: Sidelined or mainstreamed?* (Cambridge disability, law and policy series). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Seattle University. (2018). *Sample syllabus statements*. Retrieved from <https://www.seattleu.edu/media/disability-services/Sylstatementfinal-copy.pdf>

Student Disability Resources. *Syllabus statement*. Retrieved from <https://csumb.edu/sdr/syllabus-statement>

Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education. (2019). Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>

Teo, P. (2000). Racism in the news: A critical discourse analysis of news reporting in two Australian newspapers. *Discourse & Society*, 11(1), 7–49. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926500011001002>

University of San Francisco Student Disability Services. *Syllabi statement*. Retrieved from <https://myusf.usfca.edu/sds/faculty/syllabi>

Western Washington University Teaching Handbook. (2019). *Syllabus guidelines*. Retrieved from https://www.wwu.edu/teachinghandbook/course_materials/syllabus_guidelines.shtml

Wilson, J., & Lewiecki-Wilson, C. (2001). *Embodied rhetorics: Disability in language and culture*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.



Contributor Biographies

Chief Faculty Editors

Tara Roth, MA, is a Senior Instructor in English. Her background is in rhetoric and composition, and she has taught a number of academic writing and creative writing courses in the Core. Outside of academia, she has written and published a variety of musical projects and is a former Jack Straw writer. She served as a faculty content editor for *SUURJ* Volume 3 and is excited to co-edit Volume 4 with this amazing team.

Hannah Tracy, PhD, is a Senior Instructor in English and served as Co-Chief Faculty Editor for *SUURJ* this year. She teaches literature and composition courses, specializing in nineteenth and twentieth century British and American literatures, as well as political rhetoric and news media analysis. She feels grateful for the opportunity to work this year with her friend and co-editor Tara Roth, outstanding faculty colleagues from across the university, and a brilliant and hardworking team of student editors to produce an exciting new volume of *SUURJ*.

Molly Clark Hillard, PhD (Founding Chief Faculty Editor), is an Associate Professor in the English department, where she specializes in Victorian literature. She is the founding Chief Faculty Editor for *SUURJ*, and she is very grateful for the excellent work that the Volume 4 team has accomplished during her sabbatical. She is the author of *Spellbound: The Fairy Tale and the Victorians* (Ohio State University Press, 2014), and has contributed essays to journals and volumes such as *Victorian Literature and Culture*, *Studies in English Literature*, *Narrative*, *b2O*, *Journal of Narrative Theory*, and the *Oxford Handbook on Dickens*. She is currently at work on a book-length project titled *Literary Subjects: Victorian and Contemporary Readers* on readerly bodies and the persistence of Victorian narratives in contemporary novels. When she is not busy with her life at Seattle U, she can be found on long-distance runs, decorating cakes, and raising two small kids and two large cats.

Journal Design

Caleb Hou graduated from Seattle University's Digital Design program in 2014. He designed the logo, brand, and visual aesthetics of *SUURJ* after joining the team in Fall Quarter of 2017. He currently works as a Senior Product Designer at Disney Parks, Experiences and Products and enjoys socializing and bringing his dog, Audrey, to the park in his free time. He is passionate about design and hopes to continue to find more opportunities to exercise his visual and creative skills in projects such as *SUURJ* in the future.

Student Editors

Ella Campbell is a second-year student at Seattle University double majoring in English Creative Writing and Spanish with a Writing Studies minor. She had the privilege of editing Isabeau J. Belisle Dempsey's paper "Framing the Center: Belize and Panamá within the Central American Imagined Community." In addition to doing copyediting and design with *SUURJ*, Ella has also had her paper "Moor Than You Think; An Analysis of *Othello's* Contribution to the Negative Conception of Muslims in Modern-day," accepted to the 2020 Northwest Undergraduate Conference of Literature. Ella's painting "Midnight" will also be published in the 2020 issue of Seattle University's Literary Magazine, *Fragments*. Ella plans on studying Spanish in 2021 at Comillas Pontifical University in Madrid, Spain. She anticipates graduating in 2022 to travel and teach abroad.

Hatcher Chapman is graduating in June with a major in sociology and a minor in LGBT studies. He hopes to continue working with research journals after graduation and thoroughly enjoyed his time with *SUURJ*. Apart from researching, Hatcher spent his time at SU on the debate team and playing Brad in Rocky Horror Picture Show. In his free time he enjoys playing music and reading books about sociology.

Helen Hills is a second-year marketing student and plans to acquire a Writing Studies minor. She served as a student editor for Erin Alberts' and Natasha Rohrsetzer's paper "Identity and Social Support: LGBTQIA+ Individuals and Help Seeking Behaviors" during the winter quarter.

Erin Kiuttu is a second-year Psychology major with a minor in Writing Studies. This year, she served as the copy editor for Leticia Santillana-Fernandez's piece, "The Threat of Climate Change on Alpine Birds and Their Habitats." She is very thankful for the friendships, skills, and professional experience gained while working with the *SUURJ* Vol. 4 team. Erin anticipates graduating in 2022 and continuing her studies in a graduate program specializing in cognitive neuroscience.

Annika Le is a third-year student at Seattle University, majoring in Creative Writing and minoring in Writing Studies. During the Winter of 2020, Annika worked with Helen Hills to edit "Identity and Social Support: LGBTQIA+ Individuals and Help Seeking Behaviors," a psychology paper written by Erin Alberts and Natasha Rohrsetzer. Annika has served as a staff member on Seattle University's *Fragments* Literary and Arts Magazine for three years, and her own work has been published in the magazine as well. Annika is grateful for the new skills

that she has gained through *SUURJ* and is excited to apply them to her personal endeavors in writing.

Ciara Murphy is a senior at Seattle University, graduating in 2020 with a BA in English for Creative Writing. Ciara has edited Diana DiMarco and Koryna Boudinot's short communication, "Anthropogenic Debris in the Puget Sound: Review, Methods, and Analysis." Ciara has found that her experience at *SUURJ* has provided her with invaluable lessons and a supportive community of writers and editors that have improved her personal writing development. Ciara is currently interning at the literary magazine *Big Fiction*, and hopes to utilize what she's learned at both *SUURJ* and *Big Fiction* and apply it to her career as a writer.

Michael Pazen is a third-year student majoring in English Literature and minoring in Writing Studies. He had the absolute pleasure of working alongside Mariah Ribeiro to edit her essay, "Interrogating Colonial Legacies: Jeffrey Gibson's Indigenous Futurism" which was a process he found as delightful as it was fulfilling. Michael's experience with the *SUURJ* team has been invaluable, and he is immensely grateful to his fellow peers and faculty editors for all of their guidance and support. It is his hope that this year's readers are as blown away by the journal as he was, and that they enjoy the diverse collection of writing we've worked hard to bring together!

Delaney Ryburn is graduating in June of 2020 with a BS in Sport and Exercise Science. She completed an internship in the Human Performance Lab, where she participated in research on strength training for soccer players. Delaney studied abroad in Melbourne, Australia during her third year at SU. She enjoys being in nature and playing Water Polo. Delaney was on the editorial team for *SUURJ*, working on Elizabeth Ayers' essay "Do You Feel Better Now?".

Allie Schiele is a fourth-year Political Science and Criminal Justice major graduating in Spring 2020. She was inspired to become an editor after publishing her work in *SUURJ* Vol. 2 in 2018. This year, Allie had the privilege of editing Austin Nelson's essay titled "The Rise of Neo-Nationalism and the Front National in France." After graduation, she will be attending law school at The George Washington University in Washington, D.C. Although Allie is sad to leave her life on the West Coast, she is excited to take the next steps to pursue a career in government or public interest law.

Elena Selthun is a junior at Seattle University double majoring in English Literature and Humanities. Elena edited Tracy Spencer's paper "Diversity and Disability: Why Disability

Services Syllabi Statements Hurt Inclusivity.” In addition to doing copyediting and recruiting with *SUURJ*, Elena has also been involved with marketing for the Student Research Program, event planning for the Northwest Undergraduate Conference on Literature, and works for Seattle University’s Writing Center as a writing consultant. Elena authored “Learning from the Failures and Institutionalized Ideology of Colonial Feminist Education Programs in Afghanistan.” Elena plans on graduating in 2021 to pursue freelance writing adventures, travel and teach abroad, and eventually earn an MA in Library and Information Science.

Ryan Thelin is a fourth-year student graduating in 2020 with a bachelor’s degree in Creative Writing with Departmental Honors and a minor in Business Administration. He edited Elena Selthun’s article, titled “Learning from the Failures and Institutionalized Ideology of Colonial Feminist Education Programs in Afghanistan.” Ryan thoroughly enjoyed the process of working on the *SUURJ* editor team, both forming a community with fellow editors and applying professional skills gathered throughout his journey at Seattle U.

Student Authors

Erin Alberts graduated in the Spring of 2019 with a BA in Psychology and a Minor in Theology and Religious Studies. While attaining their BA in psychology Erin realized their passion for working with LGBTQIA+ population and youth in regards to mental health. Their research for “Identity and Social Support: LGBTQIA+ Individuals and Help-Seeking Behaviors” was conducted in The Statistics and Research Methods course at Seattle University and investigated the relationship between help-seeking behaviors and the LGBTQIA+ population. Erin is very interested in continuing to research the needs of LGBTQIA+ people and more specifically LGBTQIA+ youth. Erin currently works as a care coordinator and counselor for youth with mental health needs.

Elizabeth Ayers, originally from Boise, Idaho, is a recent graduate of Seattle University where she studied English, writing studies, and briefly, biology. She currently lives and works in Seattle, Washington, and enjoys visits to bodies of water, investigating Pacific Northwest folklore, and taking her poodle, Susan, on new adventures. Her own conversion to Judaism and memories of her early Holocaust education influenced how she read *MAUS* and the conclusions she came to in “Do You Feel Better Now?”.

Isabeau J. Belisle Dempsey graduated from Seattle University in 2019 with a degree in International Studies and Spanish and a minor in Latin American Studies. During both their undergraduate and postgraduate tenure, Isabeau has worked closely with Dr. Serena Cosgrove. Together, they co-authored “Imagining Central America: A Short History” and Isabeau is currently acting as a research assistant and editor for Dr. Cosgrove’s new book, “Surviving the Americas: Garifuna Persistence from Nicaragua to New York City.” Isabeau authored the essay, “Framing the Center: Belize and Panamá within the Central American Imagined Community.” Being half-Belizean herself, Isabeau’s regional focus was Central America and how Central America fits within a global context. Their research was inspired by a desire to understand the intra-regional relationships between Central America’s seven countries, unraveling internal issues as well as identifying what external forces help shape a region’s identity. Isabeau hopes to continue working toward broadening the current academia surrounding the topic of Central America, as well as eventually going into youth-focused non-profit work.

Koryna Boudinot recently graduated from Seattle University with a degree in Biology. She became involved with the microplastic research project in April 2017 which eventually led to writing “Anthropogenic Debris in the Puget Sound: Review, Methods, and Analysis.” During this time Koryna spent many hours collecting water samples and analyzing them in the lab through a process of trial and error. In addition to this work, Koryna is also passionate about avian conservation and studied abroad in New Zealand where she conducted fieldwork and contributed to a variety of conservation projects. When returning to Seattle, she collected data as part of a long-term bird monitoring project on campus from 2019-2020. She was involved with several community science projects for Seattle Audubon, including the Puget Sound Seabird Survey, Neighborhood Bird Project, and Habitat Corridor Project. After earning her degree, she was hired as an intern for the National Parks Service at Alcatraz; however, this was postponed due to COVID-19. Despite these unforeseen circumstances, Koryna is committed to contributing to science in the field of environmental and wildlife conservation.

Diana DiMarco is a fourth-year student graduating in 2020 with a BS in Marine and Conservation Biology. At Seattle University, she participated in several research opportunities. This includes a study abroad program with the University of San Francisco that began in Quito and ended on the Galapagos Islands, a marine ecology field course on Blakely Island, WA, and three different ecology research projects with Seattle University and The University of San Francisco advisors. A Seattle University research project on microplastics in Puget Sound, WA, culminating in “Anthropogenic Debris in the Puget Sound: Review, Methods, and Analysis,”

shows Diana's passion for understanding and mitigating the potentially detrimental human impacts on our ecosystems. She hopes to continue contributing to the understanding and conservation of the changing ecosystems the world contains through future collaboration, education, and research positions.

Austin Nelson recently earned her degree in French and Honors International Studies from Seattle University in 2019, focusing on the global uprising of neo-nationalism in the 21st century and inspiring her paper, "The Rise of Neo-Nationalism and the Front National in France." She is currently a research assistant at Ladysmith and over the past year she has been in France perfecting her French language skills while teaching English to high school and middle school students. She is a passionate intersectional feminist interested in women's empowerment, human rights and development work.

Cara Nguyen is a fourth-year student pursuing a BA in Economics, and minors in Sociology and Philosophy. Their research paper pulls together elements of economic history, political theory, and critical race philosophy to understand white supremacist social relations and market processes. "The Relationship Between White Supremacy and Capitalism: A Socioeconomic Study on Embeddedness in the Market and Society" is a part of their ongoing project of understanding how nonwhite, marginalized, and disenfranchised communities are exploited, with their long-term goal being the movement towards a liberated new world. In this new world, they see no prisons, no capitalism, and an abundance of joy. Beyond academia, they work towards a new world by building community with their favorite artists and restaurants in the Chinatown-International District, taking photos and recording stories of their elders as to not forget their ancestral histories, and weaving Vietnamese into their poems to make sure their language lives on. After graduation, they hope to continue on this project of liberation as an artist, educator, student, and friend.

Mariah Ribeiro graduated from Seattle University in June of 2019 with her B.A. in Art History. Her essay, "Interrogating Colonial Legacies: Jeffrey Gibson's Indigenous Futurism," is a section of her departmental honors thesis, which explored the ways contemporary Native American art can unsettle the colonial space of the museum, while simultaneously (re) presenting indigeneity to settlers' viewing their art. This project was born out of an interest in social art history and art as a site of social change and movement. Since graduating from SU, Mariah has interned in the education department at the National Museum of Women and the Arts. Mariah will be pursuing her Master's in art history at Syracuse University in the fall of 2020 and wants her graduate research to continue engaging with the topics of post-

colonial and feminist art as well as cross-cultural exchanges and globalization in modern and contemporary art production.

Natasha Rohrsetzer graduated with a BA in Psychology in June of 2019. She had maintained an interest in psychology since her sophomore year of high school, and this was further explored through her studies at Seattle University and her research assistant position at the University of Washington. In the latter position, Natasha studied cognitive development within infants and low-income women in Seattle, and she intends on pursuing that further in the future. This experience working with at-risk groups had made a positive impact on her decision to further explore LGBTQIA+ youth in regards to mental health and help-seeking behaviors in her paper, "Identity and Social Support: LGBTQIA+ Individuals and Help-Seeking Behaviors."

Leticia Santillana Fernandez graduated in May 2019 from Seattle University with a Bachelor of Science in Marine and Conservation Biology. After being accepted to be a part of the UCSC Doris Duke Conservation Scholars Program, Leticia became interested in wildlife conservation and research. As a part of this fellowship, under the UCSC Zavaleta Laboratory, she conducted exploratory research on the effect of climate change on the alpine gray-crowned rosy finch. This inspired "The Threat of Climate Change on Alpine Birds and Their Habitats," her review of research literature from all over the world on the possible threats alpine birds and their habitats face due to the changing climate. Currently, Leticia is finishing up her AmeriCorps term with the California Condor Recovery Program where she aids in the monitoring of this endangered species. She hopes to follow her passion of working in wildlife research and plans to pursue a Master's in conservation medicine within the next few years.

Elena Selthun: Bio included above.

Tracy Spencer is a graduate student at Seattle University in the Master's in Teaching program, graduating in 2020 with a MA in teaching with a specialization in Elementary Education. Tracy is a Seattle University alum as well, graduating in 2019 with a BA in Communications and Media with a specialization in Journalism, along with an additional major in French. Her research project investigates the language choices in disability services syllabi statements of both Jesuit and public universities on the west coast.

Faculty Content Editors

Ken Allan, PhD, is Associate Professor of Art History at Seattle University. He teaches Western art from the Renaissance to the present in his courses for the Core, Art History, Art and related majors, as well as for the University Honors program. His research focus is post-WWII American art and questions of urbanism and spectatorship in Los Angeles during the 1960s. His work has been published in journals such as *The Art Bulletin*, *Art Journal*, *X-Tra Contemporary Art Quarterly* and the book *Pacific Standard Time: Los Angeles Art, 1945-1980* (Getty Publications, 2011). Dr. Allan has also written essays for exhibition catalogs such as *Jonas Wood* (Dallas Museum of Art/Yale, 2019), *American Aleph: Wallace Berman* (Kohn Gallery/D.A.P., 2016), *Pop Departures* (Yale, 2014) and *The City Lost and Found: Capturing New York, Chicago and Los Angeles, 1960-1980* (Yale, 2014). He served as the faculty content editor for Mariah Ribeiro's paper "Interrogating Colonial Legacies: Jeffrey Gibson's Indigenous Futurism."

Onur Bakiner, PhD, is Assistant Professor of Political Science at Seattle University. His research and teaching interests include transitional justice, human rights and judicial politics, particularly in Latin America and the Middle East. His book *Truth Commissions: Memory, Power, and Legitimacy* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015) has been awarded the Best Book Award by the Human Rights Section of the American Political Science Association. Currently he has been working on a research project examining judicial actors during prolonged internal conflict in Colombia and Turkey. His past research investigates the role truth commissions play in contemporary societies. For this research he conducted interviews with political decision-makers, NGO activists, intellectuals, victims of political violence and their relatives in Chile and Peru. His articles have been published in *Comparative Politics*, *Negotiation Journal*, *Civil Wars*, *the Journal of Law and Courts*, *the International Journal of Transitional Justice*, *Memory Studies*, *Turkish Studies*, and *Nationalities Papers*. He served as faculty content editor for Elena Selthun's paper, "Learning from the Failures and Institutionalized Ideology of Colonial Feminist Education Programs in Afghanistan."

Serena Cosgrove, PhD, is an Assistant Professor in International Studies. She is an anthropologist and sociologist. Her current research interests focus on women's leadership in post-conflict settings in Central America and the Democratic Republic of Congo as well as indigenous rights and constructions of indigeneity in Nicaragua. Dr. Cosgrove is the co-author of the book *Understanding Global Poverty: Causes, Capabilities, and Human Development* (Routledge 2017) and co-author of the forthcoming book *Surviving the Americas: Garifuna Persistence from Nicaragua to New York City* (University of Cincinnati Press 2021). Dr. Cosgrove serves on the SUURJ faculty advisory board and was the content editor for Isabeau J. Belisle

Dempsey's essay, "Framing the Center: Belize and Panamá within the Central American Imagined Community."

Kristin Hultgren, PhD, is Assistant Professor of Biology. She graduated with a B.A. in biology from Brown University, and received her PhD from University of California-Davis. She completed a postdoctoral fellowship with the Smithsonian Institution in Panama and Washington DC, and taught at Vassar College and Bard College in New York, before starting at Seattle University in 2012. Her research interests include evolutionary biology and diversity of marine crustaceans. She served as faculty content editor for Leticia Santillana Fernandez's paper, "The Threat of Climate Change on Alpine Birds and Their Habitats."

June Johnson Bube, PhD, is an Associate Professor in the English Department and Director of Writing Studies. She holds a B.A. in English and an M.A. in education from Stanford University and an M.A. in English from Mills College, and a PhD in mid-nineteenth century American women's writing from the University of Washington. In her Americanist field, she has published articles on women's alternative fictions about the West. In Writing Studies, she has authored *Global Issues, Local Arguments*, an argument reader and rhetoric focused on civic literacy and a cross-curricular introduction to global problems. She has co-authored two other writing textbooks: *The Allyn and Bacon Guide to Writing*, a writing-across-the-curriculum rhetoric, and *Writing Arguments*, a leading argument text. Her recent scholarship published in *College English* and the *Journal of Teaching Writing*, focuses on her current interest in global studies, argumentation, collaborative rhetoric, and civic engagement. She serves on the *SUURJ* Faculty Advisory Board and was also a faculty content editor for Elizabeth Ayers' essay, "'Do You Feel Better Now?' Reclaiming Holocaust Narratives and Delegating Responsibility in Spiegelman's Maus."

Mark Jordan, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Biology with specializations in wildlife conservation and urban ecology. His research focuses on carnivores, using camera trapping and genetic methods to describe animal populations and movement patterns. He served as faculty editor for Koryna Boudinot and Diana DiMarco's paper, "Anthropogenic Debris in the Puget Sound: Review, Methods, and Analysis."

Erik Olsen, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Political Science. He mainly teaches classes on political theory and constitutional law. Dr. Olsen is the co-author of *Sentencing Reform in the United States: History, Content, and Effect* (National Institute of Justice, 1985) and the author of *Civic Republicanism and the Properties of Democracy: A Case Study of Post-Socialist Political Theory* (Lexington Books, 2006). Most recently, Dr. Olsen published "The Early Modern 'Creation' of

Property and its Enduring Influence” in the *European Journal of Political Theory* (OnLine First: November 10, 2019). Dr. Olsen is also a composer with special interests in jazz and musical theatre. He composed the music for three musicals that were produced by the Underscore Theatre Company in Chicago (2014, 2015, and 2020). He served as the faculty content editor for Cara Nguyen’s paper “The Relationship Between White Supremacy and Capitalism: A Socioeconomic Study on Embeddedness in the Market and Society.”

Christopher A. Paul, PhD, is a Professor of Communication and Media at Seattle University. His research applies tools of rhetorical analysis to video games. His fourth book, *Free-to-Play: Mobile Video Games, Bias, and Norms*, is forthcoming from MIT Press in Spring 2021. He served as faculty content editor for Tracy Spencer’s work on disability service syllabi, “Diversity and Disability: Why Disability Services Syllabi Statements Hurt Inclusivity.”

Nova Robinson, PhD, is an Assistant Professor in the History and International Studies departments. She is a historian whose work bridges the fields of Middle Eastern history, women’s history, and the history of international governance. She just finished her book manuscript, *Truly Sisters: Syrian and Lebanese Women’s Activism*, which she expects to come out in 2021. She served as faculty content editor for Austin Nelson’s work in *SUURJ*, “The Rise of Neo-Nationalism and the Front National in France.”

Michael J. Spinetta, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Psychology. He served as the faculty content editor for Erin Alberts and Natasha Rohrsetzer’s essay “Identity and Social Support: LGBTQIA+ Individuals and Help Seeking Behaviors.” Dr. Spinetta has a PhD in Behavioral Neuroscience. He is particularly interested in learning and memory and psychopharmacology, with an emphasis on the consolidation and reconsolidation of emotionally salient events and the effects that drugs of abuse and therapeutic drugs have on the learning process, including the formation, storage and retrieval of memories.

Faculty Advisory Board

Marc A. Cohen, PhD, is an Associate Professor with a shared appointment in the Department of Management and the Department of Philosophy. He earned a doctorate in philosophy from the University of Pennsylvania and, prior to joining Seattle University, worked in the banking and management consulting industries. His research concerns trust, moral psychology, management theory, and questions in social/political philosophy about what makes society more than an accidental crowd.

Serena Cosgrove, PhD: Bio included above.

June Johnson Bube, PhD: Bio included above.

Steven Klee, PhD, is an Associate Professor in the Mathematics Department. He earned a BS in Mathematics from Valparaiso University and a PhD in Mathematics from the University of Washington. Before coming to Seattle U, he spent two years as a visiting postdoc at the University of California, Davis. He is passionate about the value of undergraduate research, working with over 40 students on a range of research projects in discrete mathematics and sports analytics during his time at SU.

Rochelle Lundy, JD, MLIS, is the Scholarly Communication Officer at Seattle University's Lemieux Library and McGoldrick Learning Commons. As a member of the library faculty, she provides guidance on copyright, publishing, and digital scholarship in addition to managing ScholarWorks, the university's institutional repository. She holds a Juris Doctor degree from Columbia University and a Master of Library and Information Science degree from the University of Washington. Prior to her career in libraries, she worked as an attorney specializing in copyright and media litigation.

