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The Howl - Spring 2020

Gwendolyn DeRosa

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The Howl



Otterbein's ESL Publication
Spring 2020

ABOUT THE EDITOR



My name is Gwendolyn DeRosa. I have been teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) for seven years. My favorite aspect of teaching ESL is getting to know the students and hearing their stories. I've known students who have lived through war. I've taught students who had to overcome daunting challenges to study in the U.S. I've spoken to students whose lifelong dream was to learn English.

I'm so proud of our students and their journeys. As the editor of *The Howl*, I'm excited to share their stories with you. Stories are what connect us to each other.

ABOUT THE HOWL

The *Howl* is a magazine that is planned, researched, written, photographed and designed by Otterbein University's ESL and international students. The first *Intro to Journalism* class named the magazine "The Howl" to signify the struggle to have a voice in their writing (in English). The magazine serves to give students a safe space to share their cultures, experiences and lives.

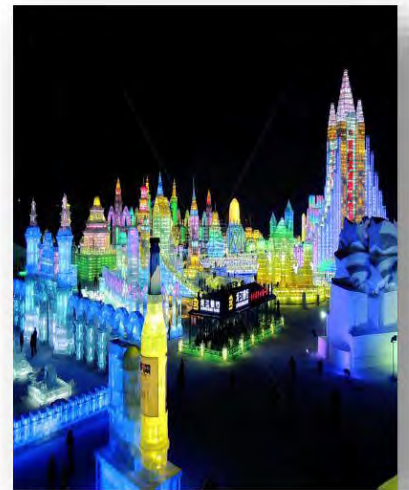
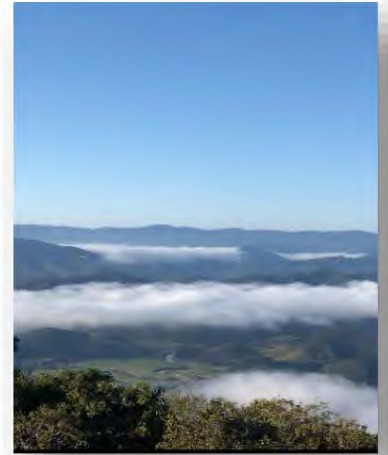
This semester, we are creating "The Howl" remotely and we will distribute this edition online. Enjoy Otterbein ESL's contribution to the Otterbein community's literary scene.

Meet the Writers



Jerusa Cadorin Rovai

Hi! I am Brazilian! I love my family, my friends, the people I live with, and those who teach me every day to think about my attitudes towards my personal transformation. Let's have gratitude!



I love two wheel rides and I'm from Japan. My hometown is Utsunomiya, which is near Tokyo. I love bikes and motorcycles. My major is product design. I am studying English now. I want to work as a product designer that is active in the world and I do my best.





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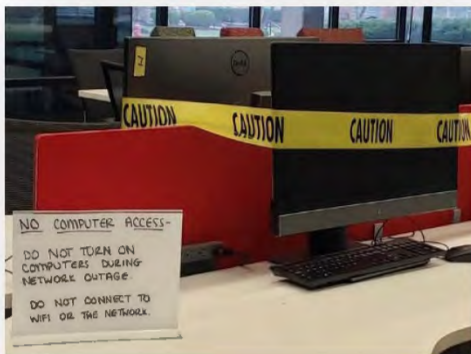


Reflections on the COVID-19 Crisis

By Gwendolyn G. DeRosa

Today is April 22, 2020. It's Wednesday. My name is Gwen. I find myself intentionally saying these facts in order to orient myself. Otherwise, it's challenging to hold on to reality. What is time? Who am I?

It's easy for days to bleed together. It was Wednesday, March 11th, when discussions began about switching our courses to remote learning. This happened while Otterbein was under an extreme cyber attack and I couldn't access any of my lesson plans or course materials.



But we thought remote learning would just be for a few weeks and then we would return to campus.

Thursday, March 12th, at 6:30 pm, King Avenue United Methodist Church (UMC) had an emergency staff meeting and we decided to put our worship services online until the end of March. We were hoping to return to normal for Easter.



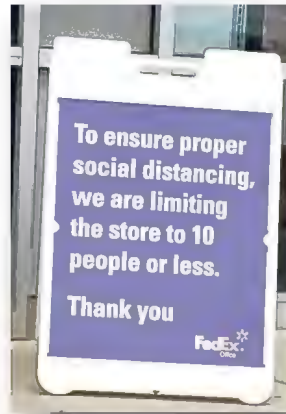
I have three employers this school year. I'm the Director of Children and Youth Education at King Avenue UMC in Victorian Village. I'm the Writing Coordinator of the ESL Program at Otterbein. And I've been teaching a class at the Columbus College of Art and Design (CCAD).

Within just a few days, I went from having everything under control and being excited about so many plans to quickly switching all of my classes to online. Currently, I'm teaching 5 online courses and recording videos for my church. I sit at my Surface Pro for 8 to 10 hours a day.



Daily life has changed drastically. Many of us are being very deliberate about how and when and where to shop.

We are bringing Lysol wipes to the grocery store and learning how to wear masks to protect those around us. And we give a lot. To our friends and neighbors, our community. I ordered toilet paper when this crisis began and it came one month later. Now, when I chat with anyone I ask, "Do you need any toilet paper? I can leave it on your porch."



How am I dealing with all of the stress and non-stop work? I'm lucky. I live with my wife, Felicia, and we enjoy each other's company. We have an adorable sugar glider to snuggle. Our rental in Victorian Village is small, but lovely. We can take leisurely walks and admire the beautiful houses and gardens.

Routines can help. My morning routine begins with some meditation and Yoga with Adrienne on YouTube. I try to ignore social media and any form of the news when I first wake up. But by the time I am having my first coffee, I have usually succumbed to my curiosity. Since the fall of 2016, I can't watch cable news. I get most of my news from my trusted late night hosts: Stephen Colbert and Seth Meyers. I watch The Daily Show with Trevor Noah religiously and, since the "shelter in place" order, I am now falling in love with Jimmy Fallon's family.

I'm either teaching or in a virtual meeting by 10 am every day. I love seeing the faces of my students, but online teaching is more challenging and time consuming, as you all know. I spend more time preparing for class, but we accomplish a lot less. I think it's more mentally exhausting for students too.

One of my students, Kai, went back home to Japan to be safe with his family and he still logs

into Blackboard Collaborate at 10 pm (10 am for us) in Japan. We can hear his mom washing dishes in the background as his younger brother plays online games.

Another student, Jerusa, is a wife and mother from Brazil. She's teaching her daughter 1st grade material while she herself is developing her English language proficiency. Her daughter pops in and we all say "hi." Sometimes it takes Jerusa longer to log into Collaborate because she has to set up her daughter's classwork first.

Another student, Tong, got very, very sick and I was so worried. What do you do when you get sick in a different country and you don't know what the protocol is in this country? Tong lives with his mom and they both communicated with a doctor back in China.



One student, Tris, had to move off campus during this pandemic. Luckily, she has a friend who has an apartment near OSU. She struggles with wifi issues and feeling disconnected from Otterbein's community.

Tris is trying to figure out if she can go home for the summer. The airline tickets are \$4,000+ and she may not be allowed to leave anyway.



I am so proud of my students. They are struggling, but engaged. They are tired, but hope-filled. They are isolated, but not alone. My students keep me going. So I ask my wife to color my hair in our tiny living room. I wear bright eyeshadow and colorful clothes. I project the positivity and energy that I desperately want and need. And I wonder what kind of future we can create together. I want a future where we recognize our connectedness and we take responsibility for how our actions impact others. I want a future where we listen, learn from each other, and create something beautiful together.

This morning, I am setting my intention. I will have hope.

Another student is a visiting scholar. Andrea is teaching her own courses at Otterbein and she's auditing my literature class because it sounded interesting. She is wondering if she'll be able to return home to Argentina when she planned to.

Have you wondered what it would be like to live here and not know about "Wine with DeWine" at 2 pm? Can you imagine not fully understanding the evolving messages, complex information, and which news source to trust? My students listen to their home governments and then discuss the differences of information together. My Chinese students told us to wear masks long before the U.S. government decided to recommend mask wearing.



My Academic Adventure

By Tong

At the age of 18, like my peers, I was planning to go to a college for my academic study. But the difference is I was going to attend a foreign country's college. "That's really fantastic," said my high school classmates.

I also felt excited and nervous because I had never been so far away from my home and my parents. I filled out the application and my teachers and parents also gave me some suggestions. It was a really a long time for me to wait for a response from the foreign colleges. Fortunately, I got accepted at them.

"You will need to learn how to cook by yourself and how to communicate effectively with others," my parents said to me. I learned some skills to help me live alone. At that time, I did not realize how I will meet in the future. My experience of moving to a new school taught me how to face the challenge, and it changed my attitude toward the new life.

When the days past, I took an airplane to a new country for my college study. A student from the college drove me to the college. "Welcome to the United States," said student. He recognized that I was an international student. He explained some information about the college. A few minutes later, we arrived at my dormitory and he left. "Ok, new school and new home," I said to myself.

Immediately, the first problem came out. I could not find out entrance of this dormitory. The door in front of me was locked and it looked like I needed a student ID card to open it. But I did not have a ID card yet. Feeling nervous, embarrassed, and exhausted from carrying my heavy bags.



When I was looking for the entrance, a man came to me. "You can't go in the building? You don't have ID card?" he said.

"Yes, I am a new student and I am looking for an entrance," I said.

"Come with me, I will show you," he said.

Then he guided me to an entrance. "Thank you," I said. Finally, I checked in and got my student ID card and my dorm key. When I moved in my dorm, there was nobody in there. I put my things away and looked around my dorm. "It's awesome!" I said. There was a four single rooms in this dorm.

Hours later, one of my roommates came in. We introduced ourselves. "The classes will begin soon," he said, "What are you planning to study? I am going to study computer sciences"

"I plan to study math," I replied.

When the day of the first class came, I realized something difficult. I cannot find a way to the assigned room. And it was hard for me to communicate to others in English. I was too shy to ask for directions.

“What should I do now? I cannot speak to them. But how can I get to the room?” I said. It was really hard for me to communicate.

“ I need to talk to someone. I cannot stay here forever,” I said.

Finally, I encouraged by myself, “You can do it.”

I asked a student where was the room and he told me.

“That’s perfect, I did it!” I was so excited because I challenged myself and I succeed.

After that, I felt confident when I talked to others with English. Although It is hard at the beginning, I will feel excited after I finish it.

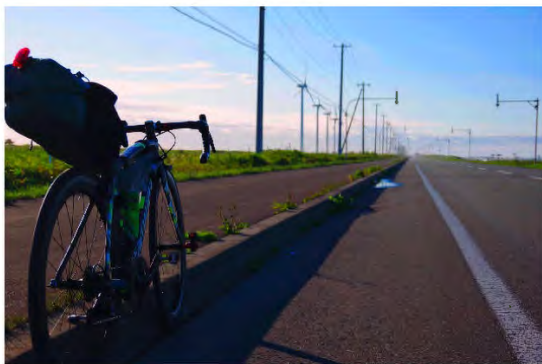
I will challenge myself again in the future and never give up. That is really a good lesson I learned.



Life Changing Experiences

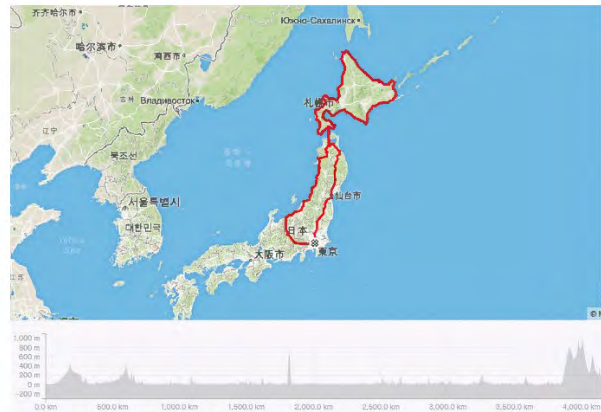
by Kai

Two years ago, in the summer, I traveled around half of Japan for a month. I rode on my bicycle for 2600 miles (4200 km). Sometimes, I go on long distance trips. I have ridden more than 600 miles (1000km) three times in my life. I like to go feel the lives of people in that place and the atmosphere of the town.



It is one of the three challenges I want to do in my life. Another is to cross the Eurasian continent on the Siberian Railway, go to Europe and see the Tour de France, and another is to cross the United States using Route 66 by a Harley-Davidson motorcycle.

On this trip, many people helped me. I was saved by the kindness of strangers. A woman gave money for me. She told me to please eat something delicious with this money.



This is the path of my journey. I kept tracking my position on GPS. If you want to see my detailed travel GPS data, you can see it on app Strava. ▽It is my data! (https://www.strava.com/activities/1926052422?utm_content=35992935&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=#strava)

Some people gave a cup of coffee. This trip was very difficult because 12 of the 20 days in Hokkaido (the second largest island in Japan) were rainy. It took about seven days longer than originally planned, as it took time to wash and dry wet clothes and storm.

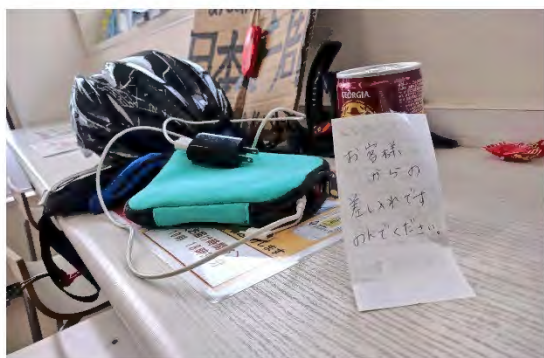


While I rode my bike, I was very tired. I thought that I wanted to quit many times in the middle of it. When I was resting in a public bath, two men talked to me. They told me that I could stay at their home which was a ranch. I stayed for two days

because the storm was coming. I helped because I wanted to experience living on a ranch. It was a very valuable experience. It is fun to know what you do not know at all.



Many other people reached out to me. My motto is to help people in difficult situations after the trip. It is a refund for what I did. Those who are given to should give. One good turn deserves another.



This photo is While I was taking a nap at a convenience store, somebody gave me a coffee with a message. The coffee was already cold, but it warmed my heart.

Besides, I rode while thinking about various things on a long journey. Grateful nature gave me a lot of thinking time.



I decided to study abroad in America on this trip. It was a courageous decision for me, because If I do that, I would end up in a different graduation year than my classmates at my university in Japan. It has the same meaning as a repeat grade if I can't get any results, and different language in the new environment. It made me a little afraid.

The first trigger to study abroad was because I met a foreigner teacher who likes bicycles and motorcycles. He is from Canada. My hobby and his hobby perfectly matches. Hobby conversations are easy to talk because they have common words, but I wanted to share my thoughts. And I heard my good friend went to study abroad in Australia. I was influenced by his energy. He said that he was influenced by my energy to take some adventure. I was surprised and felt happy that my trip had an impact on people life.

I want to be a person who can give the world a little happiness by kindness and my actions.

LIVING IN A CHALLENGING TIME

By Jerusa Cadorin Rovai

What would you think if someone told you that humanity would have to stay at home with minimal contact with each other? And what schools, churches, and establishments would be closed, and meetings, lectures and shows would be canceled? It would seem impossible if it were not for our current reality.

Is it 10:30 at night again? This is one of the questions I ask myself in silence almost every day. Time flies by. We are home all the time and doing everything at the same time. Since the second week of March we have been locked at home for fear of something invisible, but extremely dangerous and scary. This unseen enemy, who emerged and hit China strongly, spread throughout the world, devastating Italy, New York, France and now spreading to Latin American countries like my Brazil. COVID19, as the coronavirus is called, arrived to bring sadness, pain, anxiety, and future insecurities, but, on the other hand, this situation brings many lessons and teachings to humanity as the exercise of patience, wisdom, love, and solidarity with each other.

I am a student of English as a second language. At the beginning of the pandemic here in the USA, I remember well the appearance of our



coordinator and our teacher, both apprehensive, talking about what would be the first guidelines for social isolation. First, our classes were suspended, and we should start to take more care of ourselves and listen to the news to see what the next steps would be. The turmoil started. We run to the supermarket to buy groceries, sanitize everything, and keep everything organized so we do not have to leave the house too soon. The following week, my daughter's first grade classes were suspended, the school closed and sent all the material and instructions to continue teaching at home.

“But who would teach her? Me? But I also study. How to manage everything?” I would start my

classes online the following week and my daughter would also need my attention, help with studies and explanations about this crisis unknown to all of us. I talked to myself in thought. "Take a deep breath, anxiety and panic at that moment do not help us at all. One thing at a time, and the most important first."

During this period, my husband had traveled to Brazil on business and would return after 10 days if there was no flight cancellation due to the closing of the borders. We were apprehensive about the return trip because the probability of catching the coronavirus in a 10-hour trip was very high. But what we could do to mitigate the risk would be the use of N95 mask, alcohol gel, and when arriving here, stay in a hotel for 14 days which would be the time that the virus would manifest itself. He arrived in the USA and on the trip from Washington to Columbus something unusual happened. He was the only passenger on that flight. Another warning of the seriousness of what was happening in the world. He arrived, stayed at the hotel for 14 days and everything went well.

Now we are all three at home. My husband in the home office, me studying and we are giving classes to our daughter. Keeping your balance during all this swirl of negative information about events and the media, household chores, study, work, and family, is really challenging. I listen to my husband work, talk to the boss,



clients, and coworkers, I am immersed in his work unintentionally. I study with my daughter and we also need to play with her because she is the only daughter, and this part is the coolest and most fun of all, but it requires attention and time. I have my online classes that I have to connect to as if I were at Otterbein and I leave them with homework to do in free time. But what period is free time? I look at the clock and talk to myself "It's 11 pm again." I go to bed tired, I wake up tired, and we are psychologically tired. The difficulties we feel when being at home all the time are more psychological than physical because we are under constant pressure of ideas and uncertainties for our life. With that we get depressed and we think that our problem is bigger than that of others.

We need to help each other! Respect, conversation, thinking about the other, establishing limits so that each one can carry out their activities responsibly, all of this helps us to live in peace and to balance ourselves. In

addition, exercising our will to improve, listening to positive messages, doing yoga in the morning, walking on the street, even if quickly to take a sun and use up the energy contained, listen to music, dancing and singing. These activities have been my foundation to move forward.

I think we needed to stop somehow, and this is the moment. It is time to get to know each other better, to look inside, time to recollect, to introspect.

But it is also time to live, to take advantage of this moment to raise our children, to leave the electronics and play, make carrot cupcakes with chocolate chips and cheese bread with the children and sit down for breakfast with our family.

This is the time to seize the present moment.



Cycling Life

by Kai

Recently, there was the Tour Down Under cycling race in Australia. One member of Mitchelton-Scot Team, Simon Yates, was injured on stage two. This injury caused him to lose by 11 seconds.

When I read this news in "Tour Down Under", I thought Simon can catch up and win. Now, the race is finished, I know the final result. He did not catch up. I am sad because Simon is my favorite cyclist and I support him. But, It can't be helped. He was involved in a crash in the stage two of the race. I was worried about him, but fortunately it didn't matter. He continue to run. It gave us relief.

In the cycling race and motorcycle race, crashes often occur in those competitions. The Rider often break the collarbone. Clavicle is the most fragile bone. If that happens, we can't run for a while. It sometimes upsets race results and the player's life greatly. It is very scary.

I am lucky. I have never crashed in my life. In the cycling race, we ride as a group. That way the air resistance may be reduced. Sometimes we ride together without any problems. Sometimes it is impossible to avoid. But, we go crazy because of the risks. We do not lose fear.



Photo Credit: <https://www.businessinsider.com/massive-crash-stops-tour-de-france-2015-7>

I like two wheels vehicle. There are many ways to enjoy a two wheels vehicle. You can go to eat delicious food, also go to camping. It customization and race watching will also be interesting. I like to go to places I don't know and feel the lives of the people in that place, the atmosphere of the town, but I also enjoy to run races. Find your way to enjoy!



Photo Credit: <https://www.bicycleretailer.com/industry-news/2018/10/03/rapha-and-mini-launch-joint-promotions#.XjxBiWj0nIU>

One Country, Two Systems: *Which one is more important?*

By Tong

Hong Kong: Will violence kill the pro-democracy movement? The DW journalist interviews Hong Kong (HK) student leader, Joey Siu. This conversation is mainly about why they protest, what they ask for, and how to stop the violence in the movement in Hong Kong. Joey Siu thinks that the movement needs to continue with demonstrations. And she does not want to condemn the violence.

The purpose of amending the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance was to plug the loopholes in Hong Kong's current laws. In fact, extradition of fugitives is very common all over the world. Extradition is not allowed in other parts of China provinces. Last year, some Hong Kong residents had committed murder when they traveled to Taiwan. They broke Taiwan's laws and fled back to Hong Kong. Judges convicted them of money laundering in accordance with Hong Kong law, but the detention was released in October 2019. Therefore, Hong Kong government needed to pass this Ordinance as soon as possible. In this context, the Hong Kong government's leader intended to amend the loopholes in this Ordinance. Unexpectedly, this very simple amendment caused great controversy. Later, protesters described the amendment as being able to send all Hong Kong people to the mainland for trial without any reason.

This is totally wrong. The distortion and exaggeration of things attracted many protesters. The Hong Kong government leader announced the suspension of the Ordinance, but some Hong Kong people still insisted that the Ordinance should be completely withdrawn.

Image Credit: Baidu.com



Why are the people all over the world fighting against the fugitives' regulations? There's nothing wrong with Hong Kong's revision of the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance! Those who have committed thirty seven kinds of crimes such as homicide, rape and hijacking in mainland China, Taiwan and Macao, and then fled to Hong Kong, can be extradited to the place where they committed the crime. What's wrong? The power to decide whether extradition is possible has been changed from a Legislative Council to a court, like other countries. What's wrong with returning the power to decide whether to extradite to a judge from a political figure? The judges in Hong Kong had power to make the final decisions, and the leader of Hong Kong only had the right to request. The power of decision is totally in the hands of judges in Hong Kong, just like other countries. People do not amend the law, so that Hong Kong people can go to Beijing, Shanghai and Taiwan to kill, set fire, and plunder without legal sanction? Thirty seven kinds of the crimes that are allowed for extradition did not include any crimes that related to speech, democracy, demonstration or publishing demonstration. Even computer crimes and insider trading are excluded from the amendment of this regulation.

The movement has gone beyond demonstration and has evolved into extreme violence. The rioters in Hong Kong are extremely vicious and more and more unbridled. In this interview with voice of Germany, the journalist asked Joey Siu that if Hong Kong police use violence is wrong, then why demonstrators use violence is

right? The Hong Kong student leader argued that the use of violence by the demonstrators was forced to "fight back" and "protect themselves". Even if these protesters smash public facilities, illegally deprive others of their personal freedom, or even beat the mainlanders in schools or on the streets, and cut the necks of the police, protesters' principle is "not to condemn" and "not to engage in internal division". And all of these led the violence escalates. Smashing and burning happened everywhere, and the mob spread the targets of violence from the patriots, Hong Kong Police, mainland tourists to ordinary citizens, pregnant women, children and even foreigners. An ordinary Hong Kong citizen was splashed with flammable liquid and ignited in public by a mob just because this citizen expressed different opinions on the destruction of the mob. How is this different from terrorists?



Image Credit: Baidu.com

Why does the movement last so long? Will the central government help Hong Kong government to handle it? First of all, the basic law is the major premise we need to follow. One country, two systems, and Hong Kong people govern Hong Kong. This is the key that the central government is not convenient to intervene. Although the situation will be controlled soon if the central government intervenes, most people in Hong Kong do not appreciate it and even question whether the "one country, two systems" will continue to be

strictly implemented in Hong Kong in the future. Secondly, as long as the PLA Hong Kong Garrison is there, there will be no chaos. And it is absolutely impossible for Hong Kong to split up. The scope of disturbance is still within Hong Kong's own scope, and the majority of Hong Kong people suffer more losses. Thirdly, in response to the current riots in Hong Kong, the government's policy cards have not been fully released. So far, at least, Hong Kong has not declared a state of emergency. Therefore, under the circumstances permitted by law, there are still many cards to play in Hong Kong. Fourthly, Hong Kong's economic expectation in 2019 has been very poor due to the continuous turbulence. Once the central government intervenes, it will be the only "reason" that led the decreasing economy. That is to say, only when there is a large-scale humanitarian crisis in Hong Kong, Hong Kong people have formed a unified consensus on anti violence, and the government's strategies are exhausted, and the public opinions support the government's request for the central government's help, it is the best time for the central government to intervene. At that time, we will not only be able to calm the situation quickly, but also solve the serious problems that need to be solved urgently, such as education in Hong Kong and justice in the courts, which are caused by the riot.



Image Credit: Baidu.com

Robots Are Taking Our Jobs!

By Jerusa Cadorin Rovai

In the article on Universal Basic Income, author Thomas Straubhaar of the University of Hamburg- Germany, analyzes the promises and practices of UBI. There are so many uncertainties regarding this topic and the future, that the public that is unaware of this economic tool reacts negatively to the idea. What is UBI and how does it operate? Why this great concern with paying a minimum income to society?



Photo: <https://www.thirdway.org/memo/five-problems-with-universal-basic-income>

Universal basic income is an unconditional monthly cash payment, financed by taxes, which is part of the state budget for all. It is transferred from public to private accounts for life and is guaranteed to each member of society. It must be paid regardless of employment, personal circumstances, relationships or attitudes. UBI is not a new idea. It originated in the 19th century and was defended by British economist and politician Juliet Rhys-Williams, as well as US

economists and Nobel winners Milton Friedman and James Tobin.

Concern for society has been increasing due to the development of robotics and AI (Artificial Intelligence). With them, much of the work now done by people can be taken over by robots, consequently jobs will be lost and concerns about the future of employment, the viability of social well-being and financial stability arise. In addition, tax systems that depend on income from work can come under pressure, because robots don't pay taxes.



hoto: <https://www.univates.br/noticia/24470-o-que-nos-diferencia-dos-robos>

Managers of leading companies in the field of digitalization are very supportive of an unconditional basic income. They experiment daily with unmanned drones that replace postmen, intelligent sorting machines that make human hands superfluous, and digitized logistical solutions increasingly eliminate skilled

jobs, making many jobs obsolete. For Timotheus Höttges, CEO of Deutsche Telekom, UBI "could be a solution, not today or tomorrow, but in a society that will undergo a fundamental technological change from digitalization".



Photo:<https://portal.comunique-se.com.br/voce-sera-substituido-por-um-robo/>

UBI is a way of adjusting the concept of a social market economy to the era of digitalization and globalization. This idea follows the principle that economic efficiency and social justice are not opposed, they complement each other. The unconditional basic income unites the social to the liberal, it is liberal because it is unconditional and social because it is for everyone. It is the same for everyone and at the same time it allows everyone to be different. It creates better conditions for people who want to work. If as many people as possible are working in well-paid jobs, there will also be more funds available to support the economically weak. It would enable people to take some risks of everyday life more quickly. If people are sure that failure will not lead to a bottomless case of misery and poverty, and that their minimum subsistence is guaranteed, they will assess future challenges as opportunities and not as threats. New ideas and

innovative solutions can emerge from the new thinking of outsiders.

As for being financially viable, determining the level of UBI is necessarily a political decision. Economists can only argue that a high UBI would require high tax rates to finance this. The population must decide through democratic procedures, whether they want, the level of subsistence to be high or low and whether they are willing to accept the consequences of that decision, including the high or low rates required for UBI financing.

In conclusion, the Universal Basic Income is indeed a radical change in the social system, but it is fair and treats everyone equally. The minimum level of subsistence is guaranteed to everyone. Although UBI is not perfect, neither easy nor cheap to present, sometimes the long-term risks of radical changes are lower than the risks associated with the continuation of the existing system.

The first time I heard about UBI I was totally against this idea. So, I read and heard more about this idea to understand why it is being considered a possible solution for the future. Thought more about the future. In my view, the technological developments appear bringing many benefits, but in return generating financial and social risks for individuals. Those risks can stop the market cycle. We need to work, earn money to spend it on the market and thus the trade will continue to sell and the industry will continue to lead. With that, I could to understand and positively change my opinion about UBI, which can be a future solution for the economy and for our life.

Ethnicity? I shall not put on that sweater

By Andrea Pac

I am Latin American and I am not proud of it. Being born in a country, learning such or such mother tongue, having such or such skin, hair or eye color... why would that be a matter of pride? I believe the only reason why your nationality or 'ethnicity' matter only if you feel threatened by whomever is different from you, either because you mean to justify an allegedly superiority or an imperialist attempt, or if you need to defend yourself from discrimination or oppression.

In class, we talked about race and ethnicity. We watched two videos, one named *I'm Latino but I'm not...* and another one called *I'm Black but I'm not...* In each video, young people expressed their pride of being who they were, namely, Latino or Black.

"I am Latino but I am not a drug dealer"; "I am Latina but I am not Mexican" (*I'm Latino...*); "I am Black but I am not violent"; "I am Black but I am not on welfare" (*I'm Black...*)—such were some of the expressions. The conclusion was "I am Latina and I don't want to be anything else"

(*I'm Latino...*); "I am Black and I am proud of it" (*I'm Black...*). To the viewer, it is clear that the aim of both short films is twofold: on the one hand, to reject stereotypes that American people may have about Latin American immigrants or people of African descent; on the other hand, they mean an affirmation of each one's identity.

But, why would one reject a stereotype or affirm the own identity so emphatically if one were not mistreated, underestimated, mistrusted or considered 'the odd one out' because of your... race?, accent?, habits?, appearance?

Does ethnicity matter? These tapes were part of a discussion about the relevance of ethnicity in 'minorities' voices in American Literature, which included a reflection on the difference between ethnicity and race. In my opinion, the difference is not clear-cut. I could expand on the history of Anthropology and Biopower to support this opinion. But a simple experience might suffice. Before I came to Otterbein, I was asked to fill a

form, which required to state my ethnicity. I was supposed to make a choice out of a brief menu. However, what would I tick? I come from a Latin American country, so I might be Latina. I speak Spanish, so I might be Hispanic. My DNA is originally European, so I might be Caucasian. After puzzling over the possibilities, I wondered, why is any of that so important, anyway?

After reading *Eleven* by Sandra Cisneros, I said I would not mind putting on the sweater the teacher forced Rachel to wear because I would rather choose my battles and that did not seem worth fighting. However, I may say now that if that ethnicity choice is my sweater, I shall not put it on.

I understand the motivation underlying that form is most likely affirmative action, that is, making sure that Otterbein gives equal opportunity to students and teachers no matter their ethnical origin -and proving it enforces a diverse community. To be diverse or not to be diverse. That is the question.

But when that is *the* question, one can assume something else is wrong. *Hymn*, the poem by Sherman Alexie we read, goes:

*To love somebody who resembles you.
If you want an ode then join the endless
queue*

*Of people who are good to their next of
kin-
Who somehow love people with the
same chin
And skin and religion and accent and
eyes.
So you love your sibling?
Big fucking surprise*

It is easy to preach diversity when your own community is not too diverse. It is easy to preach acceptance of diversity when you are not yourself part of the diverse. The latter appeals to me too, because I might as well be the girl in the video who says, "I am Latin American but I am often mistaken for a gringa" (*I'm Latino...*). Indeed, it happened to me once in the US that Latin Americans spoke Spanish around me assuming I was not one of them, and it has happened to me more than once that people believe I am European or Australian. On the other hand, a friend of mine from Salt Lake City told me that her family would not be consider me 'white'... To resume the idea, it is no surprise that you love your sibling, or that you preach diversity when you are not 'the diverse one', when you are not that threatened by discrimination yourself. Speaking up for others entails the danger of not allowing others their own voice. But if one is aware of this

danger, defending diversity may lead you to the kind of action Sherman describes,

I will sing for people who might not sing for me

...

I will visit a different church and pray in a different pew.

I will silently sit and carefully listen to new stories

About other people's tragedies and glories.

I will not assume my pain and joy are better.

I will not claim my people invented gravity or weather.

Gert Biesta states as part of his Philosophy of Education that "if something requires our attention as educators, it has to be (...) an interest for trying to feel at home and put up with strangers (...) because what is at stake is the possibility itself to a human existence in a common world" (Biesta 139). The key to living in a world together with those who are different from ourselves is plurality. That is, in Hannah Arendt's terms, relating with others in a way that makes room for their particularity to appear. All this is not just about being tolerant, that is, indifferent to whose whom you do not consider of 'your same kin' –indifferent until you feel the need to state your superiority or defend the 'purity' of your race, your culture, your values.

Mere tolerance may just not be enough. A 'no harming' policy means segregation in the long run. Let them live in my city, but not in my street. Let them go to school, but not with my children. Let them have the job they like, but not the same as mine. On the other hand, an affirmative action policy assumes discrimination down the line, since it is an intervention aimed to balance opportunities that would otherwise be uneven.

Ethnicity matters only in a discrimination context. It takes plurality, real plurality to admire the beauty of diversity: meals, clothes, dances, stories, myths, religions, languages, hair colors and hairdos, eyes, skins... The rest is racism. I am Latin American. What does it matter? A world in which it needs not matter. That is my 'wonderful world'.

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Responding to: The Danger of the Single Story

By Jerusa

How many stories have you heard or read in your life, and simply accepted them as true? A story, simple as it may be, has several faces. When we listen to a story about the same place, people or situation, we should research more about this information before giving our opinion. We need to be critical and curious to understand these stories, otherwise we will create stereotypes that limit interpersonal relationships and new life experiences.

In her TED Talk, Nigerian storyteller Chimamanda Adichie tells us in a clear, realistic, and honest way about some everyday situations in her life. Sometimes she suffered stereotyping and in other stories she herself stereotyped. She was ashamed for this behavior. When she was a little girl, she learned to read early. The stories she read were British and American, and this influenced the stories she wrote. It was



only after reading some books by two African writers that Adichie recognized that there were other characters similar to her in books. This made her understand that the single story creates stereotypes. She also talks about the ability to make a story definitive for a person. It is another important point that she emphasizes and that all stories are important, but we can use them for evil or for good.

For Adichie the stereotype is not a lie, but it shows only one side of the story and there are other truths to consider. A simple story can influence the thoughts of people, especially children. It is at this point that the stereotype is created. The children build their ideas in a way

that accepts it as the only truth. The speaker shares a story when she stereotyped the family of a young man who worked at her home, because her mother said they were poor.

Adichie considered that they were unable to be creative making crafts to sell. Perhaps her mother also did not know that their lives had more interesting aspects. This story also reminds us of the ability to become the true and important story.

Stories matter, for they have strength, but they serve not only for criticism, but also for humanizing and strengthening places, people or situations. When visiting Mexico, Adichie says she was ashamed, despite having gone through some personal situations regarding the stereotypes. The speaker realized that she arrived in Mexico with various prejudices because only heard American television talk about Mexico. Mexico has difficulties, but it also has positive points to be emphasized such as, interesting culture, people who work, study and develop. The immigrant stereotype is only one story.

Adichie's video reminded me of my shame when I started my ESL program because I am not so young to learn to speak a second language. In fact, I was worried about what judgment people would make about me. I felt that people thought... a Latina, a Brazilian woman who does not speak anything in English. Maybe she did not have a good quality of education because Brazil is an underdeveloped country. But this is not true. I am Brazilian and, I studied English in school as Americans often do with Spanish. I had knowledge about grammar, but we need more skills to talk another language. I studied hard and I had a good public school, which give me a chance to enroll in an amazing public college (public colleges are better than private in Brazil). During the day I was a bank employee, and in the evening, I studied in the college. In general, students who are in college are already working in the areas they study.

Then, when I got to Otterbein, I had 15 years of work experience in my area, and I was not just a Latina learning to speak English. I have

more stories to tell about my life, my career and my beautiful country. What people do not know about me and Brazilian people is that we study hard. We have great researchers, scientists and professionals who work tightly. We have vast creativity and adaptability in stressful situations due to the economic instability which we experienced.

Today, because I am perseverance, I can write and explain in English a small part of my story. We have problems in Brazil, but also, we have focused on our education, health and economy. We have a fighting and happy people with many stories to tell.

All these stories about stereotypes generates a limitation in our life experiences because we fail

to know many places, people and their culture. These are automatic judgments of our mind that use only the single stories to compound not the real one but our main idea.

In this modern age with access to the internet, where we can search for various types of information and knowledge, we must be surgeons in the construction of our thoughts.

The ideal world will be when stereotypes become extinct.

We are all human beings. We have life, family, dreams and we need to relate to our real happiness. And perhaps one of the ways that we can decrease stereotypes is to put ourselves in the other's place in every single story.

Spring is Here!



Right Photo: Andrea Pac, outside her window on campus

Left Photos: Gwendolyn DeRosa, walks through Victorian Village

