That's What [WE] Said

WORLD-BUILDING

VOL. 3 NO. 1(2021)

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We want to acknowledge that UBC Okanagan is situated on the unceded, ancestral territory of the Syilx Okanagan Nation. Indeed, there is a lot of work left to be done towards solidifying Indigenous rights, sovereignty and decolonization, especially on the part of non-Indigenous people who are on this land.

As a feminist journal operating out of an academic institution, we recognize our part in involuntarily reinforcing systems of power that are currently in place. We also acknowledge that much of feminist thought has been, and continues to be, rooted in colonial ethos. Going forward, we aim to do our part in decolonizing these discourses by centering the works and voices of our BIPOC students, authors, and artists.

We are grateful to the Syilx Peoples for their stewardship, teachings and decolonial efforts which make conversations and work around anti-racism and feminism possible.

SYILX OKANAGAN NATION

OKANAGAN NATION ALLIANCE'S 8 MEMBERS AND WEBSITES:

1. Okanagan Indian Band
2. Osoyoos Indian Band
3. Penticton Indian Band
4. Upper Nicola Band – Nicola Valley
5. Upper Similkameen Indian Band

   Doesn't have an official website, see resources below about:

   - Upper Similkameen
   - Snaza'ist Discovery Centre
6. Lower Similkameen Indian Band – Smelqmix
7. Westbank First Nation
8. Colville Confederated Tribes (In what is colonially known as Washington State, USA)

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INTRODUCTION

DEAR READER

If one thing can be said about 2020, it was a time of incredible upheaval. In the face of a worldwide pandemic, we saw ourselves viscerally confronted with the failures of how we have been imagining our relations to capital, to nature, and to one another. As the precarity of our global civilization, of our very lives, came to the fore, so, too, did the need to build communities that recognize our vital dependence on one another—and strengthen those that already do. The question of how to imagine the world otherwise, beyond the false confines of borders, money, and the nature-culture divide, press on us more heavily than ever, now, as we are forced to reckon with our system's inability to take care of our most urgent and fundamental needs. World-building means many things: the bringing together of a people, the raecovery of a history, the generation of a new knowledge, or a way to relate to one another. In the political uprising that has sprung up against anti-Black racism and police brutality this past year, we have been witness to the hopeful promise of what community-building and dreaming—of a world beyond anti-Black violence—can do.

With the work social movements and activist groups have done, like the Black Lives Matter movements have done and continue to do; the need for community-building and imagining a future that addresses and works to challenge oppressive structures has proven itself imperative to fashioning a better world. This visible social unrest is evocative of the need to collectively and cohesively promote justice, equity, and inclusion on issues affecting marginalized groups. Kimberlee Crenshaw's term intersectionality comes to mind as a theoretical approach that acknowledges how complex and imperative positionality is in reimagining inequitable structures, intersecting issues of race, sexuality, gender, and class. This issue of That's What [We] Said highlights, in part, the importance of anti-racism reform practices and pedagogy that influence how we think about and structure our social world. How can we all challenge these dominant, unquestioned ideologies embedded within society? How can we evoke change, resistance, and reform? What kind of world do you dream of?

How might you work toward it?

World-building, as a concept, guides and inspires the pieces you will encounter within this issue. The collective voices of the authors, poets, and artists evoke the communal and pedagogical work needed to produce knowledge that resists, reforms, and challenges social norms and institutions.

Herein, you will encounter pieces which pay homage to activist movements that made our world possible, record correspondences on unlearning gendered oppression in the family, and honour the ways we have coped with these impossible times, among so much else.

We sincerely hope you enjoy this issue and that it will inspire you toward your own dreams of building another world.

Happy reading!

Stephanie, Kenya,

& The Editorial Team

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'WORLD-BUILDING' READING LIST

An editorial-board compilation of the most influential works we have come across during our time at UBCO, and beyond. This is a small sampling of who has helped to make us who we are today. Read them, watch them, listen to them, dance to them. Allow these authors and creators to teach you, change you, heal you, and offer you a few tools to add to your ever-growing, 'world-building' repertoire.

READ

BOOKS/NOVELS:

- *21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act*
  Bob Joseph
- *Against Purity: Living Ethically in Compromised Times*
  Alexis Shotwell
- *Beasts of Burden: Animal and Disability Liberation*
  Sunaura Taylor
- *Born a Crime*
  Trevor Noah
- *Climate Justice: A Man-Made Problem with a Feminist Solution*
  Mary Robinson
- *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*
  Maya Angelou
- *Lean in For Graduates*
  Nell Scovell & Sheryl Sandberg
- *Little Fires Everywhere*
  Celeste Ng
- *Living a Feminist Life*
  Sara Ahmed
- *Love After The End*
  Joshua Whitehead
- *Parable of the Sower*
  Octavia Butler
- *Pleasure Activism*
  Adrienne Maree Brown
- *Sister Outsider*
  Audre Lorde
- *The Diary of Frida Kahlo: An Intimate Self-Portrait*
  Frida Kahlo
- *The Vagina Bible*
  Dr. Jennifer Gunter
- *The Dispossessed*
  Ursula K. Le Guin
- *The God of Small Things*
  Arundhiti Roy
- *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*
  Rebecca Skloot
- *The Mushroom at the End of the World*
  Anna Tsing
- *The Vanishing Half*
  Brit Bennett
- *Undoing Border Imperialism*
  Harsha Walia
- *Willie: The Game-Changing Story of the NHL's First Black Player*
  Michael McKinley & Willie O'Ree

JOURNALS/ARTICLES/ESSAYS:

» *How White Women Use Themselves as Instruments of Terror*
Charles M. Blow

» *'Intersectionality Went Viral': Toxic Platforms, Distinctive Black Cyberfeminism and Fighting Misogynoir*
WPCC Editorial Board
(University of Westminster)

» *About Purportedly Gendered Body Parts*
Dean Spade

» *Decolonization is Not a Metaphor*
Eve Tuck & **K. Wayne Yang**

» *The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle The Master's House*
Audre Lorde

» *Is Prison Necessary? Ruth Wilson Gilmore Might Change Your Mind*
Rachel Kushner

LISTEN

PODCASTS:

» *"Below the Radar"*
Series (**SFU's Vancity Office of Community Engagement**)

» *"Crackdown"*
Series (**Cited media**)

» *How elite do-gooders 'fixing' the world are part of the problem: Anand Giridharadas*
Episode (**CBC**)

» *"Throughline"*
Series (**NPR**)

ALBUMS:

» *Big Yellow Taxi*
Joni Mitchell

» *Fetch the Bolt Cutters*
Fiona Apple

» *Flamboyant*
Dorian Electra

» *Nation II Nation*
A Tribe Called Red

» *The Oil of Every Pearl's Un-insides*
SOPHIE

WATCH

- *Steven Universe* — Animated Television Series

HAIR REVOLUTION

STEPHANIE AWOTWI-PRATT

In the wake of the 2020 events with the Black Lives Matter Movement and the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, it was as if the world suddenly became aware of the injustices and violence enacted on Black people. Seas of blacked-out boxes on social media accounts surfaced as people took notice of the injustices and criminal actions of white police officers on young black lives.

So, in the middle of the summer during a pandemic, I felt lost. The violence enacted on Black people and people of colour were happening and I was shut out by the global pandemic. But, as my sister poignantly commented: "Now everyone has a glimpse into the pain we have felt our entire lives. To live as a Black woman is an act of protest in and of itself."

I thought about her remark and how racism systemically and institutionally works to denigrate Black lives. In my own life, my hair has been a marker of my race and a target of racism, by other people, the media, and culture. It has been this unwritten rule that Black women either hide, protect, or do not discuss their hair. 'Wearing it' out naturally is an act of protest and revolt.

I was inspired by the actions and demonstrations of African American, British Black, and African Canadian people to revolt against oppressive systems that affect my everyday life. Since my hair had been a sore spot for me growing up, I decided to tend to it like a garden. Strangely, I never saw my hair as my own, but rather an appendage of indignation and struggle.

So, on July 14th, 2020 I decided to search for "ways to grow black hair." I was bombarded by beauty blogs and advertisements on hair care products titled things such as "magical grow" and "miracle afro care". I felt overwhelmed by the targeted ads by people that did not look like me.

I almost gave up before I stumbled upon a YouTuber by the name of "Ebony's Curly TV". I was dumbfounded by how long and beautiful her natural hair was and how she discussed the process of growing her hair as intimately tied to loving your hair. Apart from that, she suggested rice water and ample Black-owned conditioning products geared to Black hair.

So, I had the recipe for hair growth. A combination of self-love, rice water, and Black owned hair products and conditioners. The aim to grow my hair was never for length, or to wear out in the winter, but to close the gap between myself and

my insecurity about my hair. Fast forward to September, when my hair had grown four inches and was past my shoulders. I had a Diana Ross-looking afro, and I loved it. I in my own way was taking back what was mine all along. I was no longer burdened by the need to imitate the dominant culture in order to feel accepted or understood.

Throughout my hair growth journey, I reflected on how my education, the Black Lives Matter movement, and my personal experiences shaped how I positioned myself within culture, society and the world.

I really thought about how racism and self-hate separate the Black body from their sense of self and worth. Colonialism and imperialism also worked to embed ideas about Black women in order to forget themselves; to make room for the dominant culture's ideals. To grow my hair and fulfil my birthright is a revolutionary act that opposes the status quo. Black hair also symbolizes a larger structural contention regarding the frequent fetishization of Black women and their "kinky" natural hair. It makes Black women feel that they must assimilate themselves within a normative culture to be taken seriously or considered beautiful. Beauty standards, especially for women of colour, are always in relationship with white hegemonic standards of beauty, which commodify white standards for black women to aspire to, purchase and adopt.

As I think about the events of the Black Lives Matter movement, I hate to see that Black lives become martyrs; alarm clocks for the dominant culture to wake up and understand that inequality and injustice affect the everyday.

I carry the words of Kimberle Crenshaw and Patricia Hill Collins, who discuss the importance of intersectionality and how this affects the individual. Crenshaw's intersectionality speaks to how multidimensional oppression can affect a single individual, which can be in dialogue with cultural Black features like hair (Crenshaw, 2016).

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A LETTER TO CHOTO THAMMA

ATMAZA CHATTOPADHYAY

Dear Choto Thamma[1],

It was so good to hear from you again. I am very glad that your back feels better after the successful surgery. I knew that you were nervous about it.

How is the weather in New York? I know Dadu[2] catches colds pretty easily, so I hope he is taking extra care of himself this winter.

[1] Choto Thamma is the Bengali phrase for grandmother which is often used to refer to elderly friends and relatives.T Using an elderly individual's first name to address them, in Bengali culture, is considered disrespectful and therefore I will refrain from doing so here.

[2] Dadu means grandfather and used in the same context as Choto Thamma

Thamma, I understand that you are having a hard time grappling with the fact that Reshmi just came out as a trans woman. I know that you love her very much but cannot quite comprehend the legitimacy of her transness. I am very grateful that you wrote to me about this. Unlearning the binary notions of sex and gender, that we have grown up with can be very hard, and I appreciate that you want to do so for Reshmi. The readings from my feminist philosophy class have helped me better understand why the common notions of sex and gender as natural entities that exist only within the binary of male and female can be very problematic. It has also opened my eyes to why many of us grow up with this very false understanding.

Living in a radical city like New York, I know you must have often come across the idea that gender is socially constructed. But I think what many people have a harder time comprehending, myself included—but crucial to understand if we want to start unpacking our transphobia—is that even biological sex is socially constructed. You are probably scoffing at this letter right now but allow me to explain using one of my favorite readings this semester, Anne Fausto-Sterling's "Should There Be Only Two Sexes?" (2000).

Fausto-Sterling bases her argument on the natural existence of intersex bodies which often have reproductive systems and/or genitals that do not fit into our binary understanding of sex. Medical practitioners usually carry out infant genital surgeries to "correct" intersex individuals' bodies when they are very young so that they conform to the common understanding of what a 'male' or 'female' body looks like (Fausto-Sterling, 2000, 80). These surgeries are painful, invasive, scarring, and can have sustained physical and psychological impacts. Due to genital scarring, these surgeries also can affect an individual's sexual functions (Fausto-Sterling, 2000, 85). Fausto-sterling also details the mental trauma, humiliation and pain caused by the procedure of "testing" genital function after the surgery (Fausto-Sterling, 2000, 86). This often involves public masturbation with the help of the doctor, which I can only imagine to be horrific. Additionally, these surgeries are carried out without the consent of the individual, and, sometimes, against the knowledge or desire of the parents (Fausto-Sterling, 2000, 92). There are no concrete medical reasons behind carrying out this surgery other than the intention of forcing these natural bodies into the sex binary. Intersex characteristics rarely pose life-threatening health risks to intersex individuals.

Therefore, Fausto-Sterling argues that the male and female sex categories do not accurately reflect natural reality, as they fail to account for these natural variations. In fact, the surgeries that force this binary onto natural intersex bodies reflect how sex categories are socially constructed to serve heteronormative and reproductive interests of the state (Fausto-Sterling, 2000, 107). She also focuses on the gender identity of transgender individuals to project how, along with sex variations, there also exists variation in gender identity—which is often closely associated with the sex binary (Fausto-Sterling, 2000, 101). Fausto-Sterling also mentions hijras in the reading (Fausto-Sterling, 2000, 109). Thamma, as you are well aware, hijras are intersex and transgender women who were celebrated because of their close connection to god before the British colonisation of India. The British criminalised their existence because they wanted Indians to fulfil heterosexual reproductive functions, so they could have more human capital.

This parallels Fausto-Sterling's argument about how gender and sex binaries are re-enforced and regulated by the state through legislation because it wants to protect heterosexual reproductive functions of family units. It is vital that we remember, while unpacking our own transphobia as cisgender Bengali women, that our culture once used to celebrate these natural variations in sex and gender.

Fausto-Sterling, in her previous work, had argued that to account for intersex individuals, we should have five sex categories instead of two. However, she rejects this claim in this reading, because she argues the focus needs to be shifted away from categorising genitalia, to thinking about why these categories exist in the first place, and what functions they serve in our society (Fausto-Sterling, 2000, 110). By projecting how unstable the sex categories are because they are not completely based on biological truths, she further proves that these binary categories are socially constructed.

If you have been following my explanation up to this point, then I think you would probably understand why people claim the gender binary is also socially constructed. After all, our traditional understanding of gender is closely related to sex—which becomes the foundation of our transphobia. We have grown up, as cisgender people, thinking that our gender identity reveals biological truths about our sex and hormones. However, now that we have established that sex categories are socially constructed and many bodies and sex traits do not fall neatly into the binary of male and female, our understanding of the gender binary falters. But why do these binaries feel so natural?

Judith Butler provides an interesting argument for this in another reading that I was assigned for this class called "Bodily Inscriptions, Performative Subversions" (2011). Butler argues that gender and sex binaries are unnatural because gender is an identity that is produced by the constant repetition of a specific set of actions (2011, 185). In other words, gender is performative. Since we are constantly repeating these actions, gender feels natural (Butler, 2011, 186). If we divert from this performativity and engage in something that is considered taboo, we face criticism from society. This is why we start regulating and policing ourselves and others (Butler, 2011, 185). These social prohibitions contribute to the false understanding that gender identity is stable. We also actively respond to and participate in gender and sex cues, which further project this as a natural stable category. For example, when someone says, "hello, miss," or "hey, girl", I immediately turn back and respond. At that moment, I am actively participating in my own gendering.

Butler also echoes Fausto-Sterling's argument that gender and sex are both state-regulated and geared towards heteronormativity, which helps propel reproductive interests (Butler, 2011, 185). Our gender identity and expression need to serve the purposes of the state and society. She begins her argument by focusing on how we tend to see nature and culture in binaries (Butler, 2011, 176). As I mentioned, even if most people think gender is culturally constructed, they think that the body that gender is laid upon is natural—and therefore our sex is natural, too. This again contributes to transphobic understandings of body and gender. Butler argues that we need to change this thought, because the moment our body is exposed in the society through birth, it is immediately framed by a cultural understanding of binary sex and gender categories. I would further argue that, even when our body has not fully developed in our mother's womb, social expectations of gender and sex are placed upon us.

She also explains how gender is only projected at the surface level of the body and does not reveal essential truths about who we are as human beings (Butler, 2011, 185). This is crucial to understand because, after all, gender is a set of acts that we have to constantly perform in a society that polices our behaviour in doing so (Butler, 2011, 190). Therefore, even though gender is performative, it is important to remember we cannot choose the set of acts we want to perform.

Thamma, I would highly encourage you to go to a drag show in New York. I think you would be able to understand Butler's complex argument better if you were to do so. As Butler mentions in her work, when people do drag, they reveal the performative nature of gender (Butler, 2011, 187). I remember watching my first drag show and thinking that if I did not know that the performer was a drag queen, I would have mistaken him for a cisgender woman who wears "too much" makeup.

My assumption of the drag queen performer's gender if he was in the drag get-up also reveals the problematic nature of how we, as cisgender women, actively gender people on a day-to-day basis. This assumption would have purely been based on the secondary sexual characteristics and outer appearance. In "Dismantling Cissexual Privilege" (2007), Julia Serano explains this further.
She says that, though there are heated debates about which biological characteristic is used to determine gender, on a more daily basis, our assumption is based on what we can see physically present (Serano, 2007, 163). We centre what we perceive an individual's gender is. This can be extremely harmful for transgender folks, who are often forced into the gender binary based on cissexual assumptions.

Serano also explains how cissexual people often reinforce this binary of gender expression by putting cisgender and transgender people under different levels of scrutiny (Serano, 2007, 172). If we assume that a person is cisgender, then we are not quick to look for flaws in how they express their gender identity. However, this is not the same when we believe or find out that a person is trans. We immediately start looking for "mistakes" in their gender expression, whether intentionally or subconsciously. By doing so, we reproduce the gender binary and our stereotypical assumptions.

Problematic terms such as "biologically male" or "female" reinforce both gender and sex binaries, as they assume the binary of gender is based on biological truths (Serano, 2007, 173). But, as we have seen, this is not the case at all. Serano also explains how, if reproductive capacity is tied to this idea, it can be harmful not only for transgender people but also infertile cisgender people (Serano, 2007, 173). Our obsession with gender reassignment surgery also helps in distancing and mystifying the reality of transgender experience (Serano, 2007, 187). This contributes to the delegitimization of trans individuals' lived gender identity. Serano explains the prevalence of this in media and how narratives of deception and shock are created around transgender characters (Serano, 2007, 187).

Serano might not point out problems with the binary of sex and gender itself but she points to the role of cissexual privilege and assumptions in reinforcing biologically-centered understandings of sex and gender binaries.

Thamma, I understand if this is a lot to take in all at once. The process of unlearning is slow and takes a lot of time and effort. But it is absolutely crucial, especially if we want to support Reshmi. She must be navigating a very difficult time right now and it's important that, as cisgender people, we do the work of unpacking our own transphobia and create a safe space for her.

I can't wait to talk to you more about this when I call you next weekend. Please take care of yourself.

With love,
Atmaza

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CAPITOL P FOR PRIVILEGE

ANIKA CHIMNI

I can remember when the world changed before my eyes. I was only four years old; however, the aftershock lasted a lifetime. I watched as the skin colour Brown went from human to terrorist with just one incident. Brown skin, beards, turbans, and hijabs no longer represented the culture they stood for; now, they provoked fear in strangers on the streets. I recall a story my brother once told me. My brother is 6'4", has a beard, and is Brown. He used to live in Berkeley, California, where he attended the University of California, Berkeley. Often, he would walk home alone at night, typically wearing hoodies with the hood up. He noticed that people walking toward him would move to the other side of the road when they started to approach. During COVID, we might see it as normal behaviour to maintain our distance; however, this was a few years ago. The fear of Brown skin, a beard, or even a hoodie was evident in people's reactions.

September 11, 2001 was a world-changing event. The Islamic extremist group al Qaeda hijacked four planes to carry out suicide attacks in the United States. Hijackers flew two of the aircraft into the World Trade Center's twin towers in New York City, a third plane hit the Pentagon just outside Washington, D.C., and the fourth crashed in a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. As a Brown child living in America at this time, I carry this day with me forever. There was international outrage that such an attack could happen against a strong country like the United States. Being raised in a Sikh household where my papa (father) and Nanu (grandfather) wear turbans, the aftermath of 9/11 was terrifying. Everything I knew turned into symbols of violence. The number of Brown people in the U.S. being attacked, harassed, even murdered was at an all-time high.

The attacks on Brown people after 9/11 are, in themselves, domestic terrorist attacks, yet the media would and still does see skin colour as a symbol of terrorism. My papa travelled a lot for work and, as a child, that is where my anxiety developed. Airports became the 'home' of terrorists after 9/11. Everyone looked at Brown people in airports differently, as if they were going to set off a bomb right then and there. I feared that, like many other Brown people in America, my papa would be a target. There are many intersecting factors in experiencing racism; however, luck is the biggest one.

One morning, there was a story on the news about a Sikh man who had been pushed in front of a train because a white man believed he was a Muslim terrorist. This story was ingrained in my brain, and I thought about it every time my papa would leave for work, go to the store, or even take us to the park. I was about eight years old at the time of this horrendous attack on an innocent man, four years after the attack on September 11th. The way Brown people were treated, even years after 9/11, changed how we lived forever. I wanted to ask my papa to stop wearing a turban because I could not imagine losing him to an angry white person who could not tell the difference between a Muslim and a Sikh if it hit them in the face. Though, of course, I only say that because of the ignorance in hate crimes, not because Muslims deserve hate over Sikhs. I only say that because of the ignorance involved in such hate crimes. If someone truly feared Muslims, they would educate themselves on what they are scared of; however, the fear of culture is secondary to that of skin colour.

I cannot help but compare the aftermath of 9/11 to the Capitol's domestic terrorist attack carried out by supporters of the former President of the United States, Donald Trump. The morning the riots took place, I was visiting my family in California. CNN was on in the family room when I came downstairs for my morning coffee. We usually spent one or two hours watching the news, but that day was no ordinary day. We watched as Trump encouraged his supporters to storm the Capitol building. We watched as many white Americans broke into Government buildings, stole government property, and chanted to hang the vice president. We watched 'patriots' drop the American flag to the ground to hang a 'Trump' flag in its place. That is not patriotism—growing up, Americans are all taught that you never let the flag touch the ground. A Trump supporter expressed at the Capitol riot that they are not democrats or republicans but 'Trumpers.'

Donald Trump's administration ran off the notion that there needs to be 'law and order,' yet his supporters attacked law enforcement to break into the Capitol building. So, where was the backup law enforcement? We know they exist—we saw them brutally attack many peaceful protesters this summer during the Black Lives Matter Movement. So where were they during a planned event to attack the Capitol building? They were not already in place because of the skin colour of those participating in them. This was white privilege in its most blatant form. They were not viewed as

'dangerous' or 'threatening'—white privilege. Only about a hundred people were actively arrested, and three hundred others identified who could 'possibly' face charges—white privilege. They will not experience being labelled as terrorists—white privilege. They will not lose the life of a loved one for walking down the street—white privilege. Their lives will not change in the same way Brown people did, owing to the systemic racism upon which America is built.

After 9/11, new laws and task forces were created to protect citizens from such attacks happening again. This included creating the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, which combats terrorism and other threats domestically, the passing of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, which saw significant changes around privacy, and the establishment of the Transportation Security Administration. While these measures were implemented to protect U.S. citizens from acts of terrorism, the laws did not protect Brown people from racist attacks—attacks those who stormed the Capitol, actively participating in domestic terrorism, will never experience. No drastic measures were taken after the Capitol riots because the Capitol is already one of America's most secure buildings—unless you are a white Trump supporter. One terrorist attack from al Qaeda changed how the world saw Brown skin. Meanwhile, a domestic terrorist attack on the Capitol changed nothing about how white skin is interpreted.

Traditionally, when you think of a successful man in the United States, you think of a white businessman, like Bill Gates or Elon Musk. After 9/11, Brown bodies, especially masculine ones, could never be viewed the same way. They were attached to the ideas of violence and distrust. Growing up, my family was not well-off. My dad worked a lot, while my mom took care of my brother and me. I think there was a time where I only saw my dad every few months because of work. I was scared it would be the last time I saw him every time he would leave the house. While that might sound extreme to people, watching Brown people be targeted for hate crimes was hard, as I am Brown, too. I did not grow up in a religious household, so I never understood the importance of the turban, what it symbolizes, or what it meant to him. So, I decided to ask. He explained to me that "Sikhs are very visible with a turban. Most Sikhs cut their hair to fit in, and others are from rural India, who hold onto their customs and religion. For the most part, Sikhs are recognized as taxi drivers or blue-collar workers in America. I wear my turban because I am a proud Sikh, and it demonstrates that turban-wearing Sikhs can be the idealized image of success in the U.S., even though you look different." In today's world, to be understood is to be recognized as human. So, I cannot help but wonder that if more (white) people took the time to ask both Sikhs and Muslims what their religion means to them, they could be more accurately understood. But in order for this to happen, white people must first acknowledge the privileged lives they hold in society. Rather than misunderstanding an
entire race based on one incident. Stereotyping is a driving force in perpetuating divisions between social groups. Thus, it is not until we all can see each other as humans that we will be able to come together as a unified community.

WOMEN

SHWETA [OSHEEN] DAYAL

Big leaves, small leaves,
round leaves, long leaves,
sharp leaves, leaf shaped leaves,
a wonderful world of us.

Flowers are appreciated for simply existing, but we
are the ones labouring.
They are, but a mere decoration,
while we are a revelation.

The fragility of flowers,
their male ego,
frivolous and frail,
but our brawniness remains.

When the summer moves slowly into autumn,
when you breathe the chill air in your throat,
we finally turn colour,
and the flowers disappear.

It is us hanging on, surviving storms,
adding finesse.
Until we finally fall,
retiring, the petals replace us.

Learning how to sustain the rain,
the drama around the flowers.
Learning how to protest the wind
and stand with power.

Even when we fall we are alluring, the streets look dazzling, the
creases tell our story.
The battle is still on
until we are cleared out and finally gone.

FREE

LADY DIA

Free
It looks like . . .
Freeing saggy titties from patriarchal shackles.
It looks like . . .
Rolls that roll from the front of your stomach to your back
And you wear a crop top with it.
It looks like . . .
Eye crust but you still close your eyes n let your crush stroke your face.
Free,
To choose what to lose and still live happily.
Knowing I make my own realities not centered on
Eurocentric normativities.
I.
Crush the herbs.
Talk,
To the leaves.
I'm,
Making dolls,
If you don't leave.
I
Trust the Earth.
I
Know her well
I
Know the power
Of a
Black girl's spell
Don't die of a broken heart my love.
Oh, you cry and you wanna stop his beating heart.
But he don't love you, just like how you don't love yourself
People going to space to defy gravity,
Your hair do it all the time
Don't chu know you're magical!

TRACING THE EVOLUTION OF THE WOMEN'S HEALTH MOVEMENT:

THE IMPORTANCE OF HISTORY WITHIN THE MODERN MOVEMENT

CLAIRE FEASBY

"These feminist health activists were committed to uncovering the ways women's bodies had been ignored, to examining knowledge that had been withheld from women and certain groups of men, to reclaiming knowledges that had been denied or suppressed, and to developing new knowledge freed from the confines of traditional frameworks."
- Nancy Tuana

INTRODUCTION

Second Wave feminism(s) appeared in the late 1960s and saw valiant progressive efforts, including the emergence of the women's health movement (WHM), particularly during the 1960s and 1970s in the United States. The WHM has now evolved over time, reflecting the progress that has been made, the threat of regression, and the incentive to continue developing the movement. Considered as a liberation and epistemological resistance movement, the WHM was first mobilized within the larger scope of the women's movement and was inspired by the civil rights movement of the time. Feminist philosopher, Nancy Tuana, describes how the focus of the WHM is "on women's bodies and women's health, with the goal not only of providing women with knowledge but also of developing new knowledge." ("Speculum" 2). In order to have a more profound understanding of contemporary women's health, it is imperative to trace the history of the movement's motivation, goals, and progress, especially in order to fully grasp the realities of the movement today. It is important to note that I will focus my analysis on North America; however, the WHM is a global, widespread, and diverse movement that holds different histories, goals, and achievements internationally.

I will begin by historicizing the WHM by inspecting the history of birth control and the female orgasm while unpacking the inspiration behind the WHM and how it was historically mobilized. I will then draw on Tuana's understanding of epistemologies of ignorance within the WHM in order to demonstrate how the movement is a reaction to the willful ignorance of hegemonic medical practices. Lastly, I will focus on the modern WHM, specifically looking at the burden of birth control and the invention of the male pill as well as the recent importance placed on intersectionality and the rejection of gender essentialism. Throughout this research paper, I will explore the extent to which the Women's Health Movement of the 1960s and 1970s has shaped the modern movement and influenced women's experiences in relation to medicine today.

HISTORICIZING THE WOMEN'S HEALTH MOVEMENT

The earlier stages of the WHM were committed to "redefining [women's] sexuality [which] included redefining anatomical knowledge of the clitoris." ("Speculum" 7). Until the early nineteenth century, male genitalia was considered to be the true and natural form of human biology, consequently regarding women's sexual organs as simply the interior and subsidiary version of men's genitals ("Coming to Understand" 199). Moreover, in earlier centuries, the female orgasm was thought to be necessary for conception; however, after this idea was debunked, female pleasure was no longer considered to be an important aspect of sexual relations and not worth the investment of medical knowledge. It was not until the sixteenth century that the clitoris was widely discovered as a source of pleasure, and again, following this revelation, it was stigmatized and excluded from anatomical texts and imagery until after the introduction of the WHM.[1]

These figures exemplify the contrast between conceptions and depictions of female anatomy before and after the WHM. Additionally, this contrast demonstrates how medicine and science have historically systematically silenced women and controlled women's bodies in terms of health, pleasure, and agency, ultimately placing women's importance in society as solely child bearers and

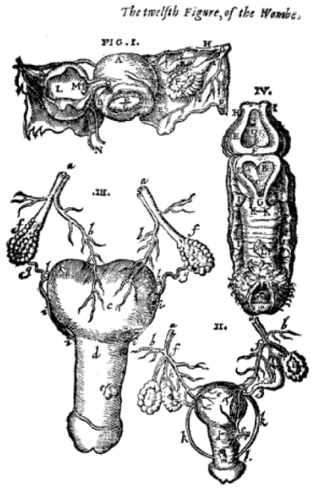

Illustration 1: The workes of that famous chirurgion Ambrose Pare, translated out of Latine and compared with the French by Thomas Johnson. London, Printed by T. Cotes and R. Young, Anno 1634. Page 127.

Fig. 1. Retrieved from Nancy Tuana's "Coming to Understand: Orgasm and the Epistemology of Ignorance."

rearers. This is particularly harmful because science and medicine are considered to be sources of "objective knowledge" within society, hence acting as a form of structural and epistemic violence. The notion of epistemic violence within the medical sphere is maintained when examining the history of the birth control pill.

One of the most relevant cases of the fear of female bodily agency dates back to 1873, when anti-pornography campaigner, Anthony Comstock, lobbied for the support of Congress and state legislature to outlaw the production, distribution, and education of birth control (Wardell 736). Comstock's hegemonic efforts to control access to birth control sparked Margaret Sanger – an activist, sex educator, and nurse – to respond by challenging him through law and ultimately motivated the creation of her campaign, Planned Parenthood (736). Sanger draws an important link between history prior to the WHM and the WHM

[1] Compare fig. 1 to fig. 2. Fig 1 depicts the archaic medical imagery of female genitalia as the interior of the phallus while fig. 2 is from the 1980s and is a scientifically accurate depiction of biological female anatomy and includes the clitoris.

today. Although Planned Parenthood prevails in the United States today more than a century later, Donald Trump's new administrative rule on the Title X program has made access to women's healthcare increasingly difficult, particularly for clinics that rely on federal funding as well as low-income women (Atlantic). The history and current state of Planned Parenthood demonstrates how modern conceptions of birth control and women's health continue to be controlled by oppressive systems of power and tainted by structural sexism.

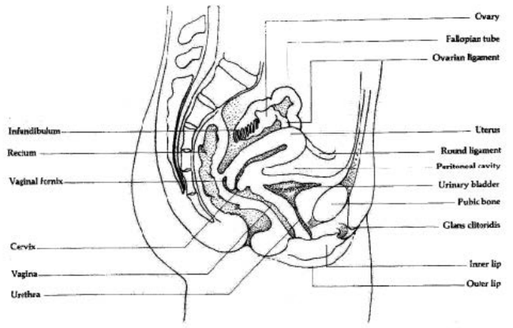

Illustration 2: Figure 4.3, Sagittal section of female internal anatomy (Rosen and Rosen 1981, 138).

Fig. 2. Retrieved from Nancy Tuana's "Coming to Understand: Orgasm and the Epistemology of Ignorance."

The side effects of the birth control pill were largely hidden and undermined by the medical industry until the WHM. These side effects were brought to the attention of Barbara Seaman, a health columnist, when she began receiving reports of women's experiences of blood clots, depression, loss of libido, heart attacks, and their speculation that their birth control was the cause of these symptoms ("Speculum" 9). The development of women's anecdotal evidence inspired Seaman to launch an investigation into oral contraception based on women's experiences. In 1969, Seaman published The Doctors' Case Against the Pill, where her investigations and findings ultimately led to the federal hearing on the safety of the birth control pill (Nichols 58). Seaman's work illustrates how one of the central tactics of the movement was the valuing of experience and anecdotal knowledge – I will unpack this concept further when discussing standpoint theory. Our Bodies, Ourselves, published in 1970, was written by a feminist collective and their work is another key example of women reclaiming the production of knowledge – the publication was described by the New York Times as "America's best-selling book on all aspects of women's health" (Sundwall 847). The WHM challenged the biased epistemic objectivity of medicine and science which led to various reformations and the proliferation of women's experience and knowledge.

THE WOMEN'S HEALTH MOVEMENT AS AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL MOVEMENT

The WHM is an epistemological movement because it seeks to challenge the ways in which the production and circulation of knowledge are linked to systems of privilege and power and how these are systems based on willful ignorance. In other words, as Tuana puts it, willful ignorance is "knowing that we do not know, but not caring to know." ("Speculum" 5). As I have highlighted in its history, the WHM began as a reaction to willful ignorance in the medical sphere and has since functioned as a longstanding and widespread grassroots movement in order to uphold the advancements made by the movement

in addition to continuing the much needed pursuit of progress. One of the central causes of willful ignorance in medicine is rooted in the gendered mind/body dualism wherein the mind is linked to the masculine while the body is linked to the feminine. This mind/body dualism enforces the notion that the woman is the object while the man is the creator of knowledge and reason and, therefore, women's subjectivity has been negated, particularly in the medical sphere. Moreover, the dualistic linkage between women and the body has enabled medicine to legitimize malpractice, mistreatment, and ignore women's health in general. For example, the negative side effects of the birth control pill – such a loss of libido and depression – were dismissed by doctors as innate symptoms of womanhood despite these symptoms really being side effects brought on by medicine. Another example of the association of women with the body is the hegemonic regulating and illegalizing of
medical abortions justified by the narrative that women are meant to be mothers based on their biological bodies. The gendered mind/body dualism has subliminally contributed to the epistemology of medicine in terms of who the creators of knowledge are, who the knowledge is about, and the means by which this knowledge is discovered. The WHM exploits these underlying issues and strives to reclaim the narrative in order to transform women's health.

Standpoint theory is a conceptual framework that analyzes inter-subjective discourses; situates knowledge within the authority of the individual; and influences the ways in which one experiences and contributes to social constructs. A feminist standpoint is achieved rather than being an innate position or perspective. Moreover, the experience of inequality shapes an individual's or group's standpoint. I argue that standpoint theory relates to Marie-Benedict Dembour's understanding of the protest school of thought which is "concerned first and foremost with redressing injustice" and sees human rights as "rightful claims made by or on behalf of… the oppressed." (3). The link between feminist standpoint theory and the protest school of thought, in terms of the WHM, lies in the fact that the theory influences the thought. In other words, the protest school does not exist without standpoint. One must experience inequality and have an emotional response to subordination in order to conceive the opinion and perspective that aligns with the protest school of thought. Through the dynamic between feminist standpoint as the protest school, we can see the ways in which the WHM is conceptualized, motivated, and mobilized.

THE WOMEN'S HEALTH MOVEMENT TODAY

Today, there are only two available forms of birth control for men: condoms and vasectomies. With the rise in the birth control pill in the 1960s, drug companies decided that research into male hormonal contraception would not be profitable ("Speculum" 4). Indeed, the common side effect of loss of libido in women ultimately prevented the drive to invest in the male pill which reflects the historical trend in society and medicine to prioritize men over women, especially when it comes to sex and pleasure. The male pill is now a technology in the making and has the potential to be a cultural revolution in terms of making birth control the responsibility of both males and females, representing a monumental achievement for the WHM. With that being said, even something as seemingly progressive as the male pill is nevertheless tainted by the impulse to preserve masculinity, thus continuing to place the burden and blame on women. For example, according to Geoffrey Waites, the male pill would "occupy niches, e.g., when delaying vasectomy, when female methods were not tolerated, and during the post-partum period." (617). At first glance, this does not seem to be a harmful statement; however, to say that the male pill would merely act as a niche or backup option of birth control is counteractive to the promising possibility of equality that the male pill has the potential to offer because Waites insinuates that the first, best, and main option is for women to be held accountable for birth control.

Linda Gordon highlights the importance of an awareness of history and ideology in understanding the contemporary movement. She states that, "[to] understand [the struggles of the WHM], we must first understand something about the nature and sources of censoring ideology." (7). Gordon's idea of censoring ideology is complementary to Tuana's concept of epistemologies of ignorance and we can see there is a clear trend in the understanding of the WHM as being a movement towards dismantling hegemonic systems of knowledge. The modern WHM is focused on campaigning for economic justice, freedom of speech, and the extension of women's rights to the level of democracy in which women's voices are not only equal but prioritized when it comes to health (Gordon 7). These struggles fuel the WHM because of the continuous injustice in these areas that reinforces the necessity for the movement today. There is a strong interconnectedness between the economy, freedom of speech, and democracy in the political climate of North America today. Moreover, the WHM faces different obstacles compared to the mid-late twentieth century because the movement must overcome the deception of a postfeminist society. This illusion of a postfeminist North America hinders the movement because it enforces the belief that there is no longer a need for the movement and that justice and equality in relation to women's health have been fully realized when this is in fact far from the reality. There are many areas of women's health that remain underdeveloped, neglected, and devalued. According to Francine Nichols, the WHM of the 21st century demands "greater emphasis… on cultural diversity, effective means to decrease violence against women, and increasing the link between research and effective health care for women." (62).

Kimberle Crenshaw conceptualized intersectionality in 1989 where she used the example of the multidimensionality of Black women's identities in order to describe the experience of being "multi-burdened" simultaneously by race and gender (140). Crenshaw's intersectionality has since been extended to describe other intersections and layers of all marginalized identities. Intersectionality has become a buzzword and the cornerstone of Fourth Wave feminism(s), including that of the WHM. The modern movement employs an intersectional lens when looking at women's health, for example, when it comes to race. There is no denying the racial gap in women's healthcare when statistics show that African Americans are more than twice as likely to die in infancy (Dominguez 4). Furthermore, "[d]ifferential treatment in the healthcare system is another way in which racial bias is institutionalized at the macro-level. Racial/ethnic minorities receive less intensive and poorer-quality health care services than do Whites. African American pregnant women are less likely to be given medical advice [and less likely] to be informed of medical complications or risks (9)."

Another example of the intersectionality of

the WHM is the problematizing of gender essentialism. Gender essentialism is the idea that gender is innately linked to biology and sex rather than being a social construction and the property of an individual as their own intimate personal truth. Gender essentialism is strongly perpetuated through the medical sphere, negatively impacting the physical and psychological health of those who do not conform to the normative sex/gender paradigm. Through understanding contemporary objectives and standpoints of the WHM, I invite the possibility of queering medicine as a potential solution to epistemologies of ignorance by creating a holistic health care system in which those who have been systematically marginalized are able to contribute their subjective knowledge(s) to mainstream medical practices. A holistic healthcare system would aid in dismantling the hierarchy within the mind/body dualism, as I have previously discussed, and it would challenge the biased objectivity of medicine by enabling a conversation between science and the subject. In the case of queering medicine, the term 'queer' refers to the overarching embodiment subsumed by the Other and is a way of describing identity-constituting discourse (Sedgwick 8). Interrupting dominant discourse by queering medical narratives engenders a sense of inclusivity, equality, and connectivity, which is in keeping with the objectives of the modern WHM.

CONCLUSION

The WHM is not a movement limited to a specific time, place, or event. It is rather a continuous, widespread, and all-encompassing movement composed of small-scale silent progresses as well as radical public victories. The movement has evolved alongside the larger feminist movement and is now geared towards the equality of any and all self-identifying women and the pursuit of justice for their bodies, health, and pleasure. The WHM exemplifies the continuous struggle for human rights, freedom, and the extension of democracy and justice to women's health. Since its emergence in the late 1960s, the WHM has overall seen important progress and achievements such as research and publications; an evolution of sexual education; political reform; and economic investment. The movement is aimed at reclaiming individual property of bodies that have been historically subjected to the sexism, oppression, and violence of medical practices through exposing the relationship between power and knowledge. Namely, "feminist epistemologists and science studies theorists have carefully demonstrated that… theories of knowledge and knowledge practices are far from democratic, maintaining criteria of credibility that favor members of privileged groups." ("Speculum" 13).

The history of the WHM has shaped the current state of women's health and is imperative to the understanding of the modern movement – the threat of returning to what used to be and the tangible potential of what could be drives the movement today. It is considered to be an epistemological movement because medicine, itself, is composed of systems of knowledge, methods, and practices; therefore, the WHM seeks to demonstrate the ways in which medicine has been skewed by the external forces of prejudice and bias. The movement is mobilized through academia, activism, as well as grassroots efforts motivated by the unification based on womanhood and/or identity of Other and the importance placed on self-help within the movement (Norsigian 845). Self-help and the valuing of anecdotal evidence is one of the most unique advances of the WHM because it is a form of resistance to ignorant medical practices that exert power over women's bodies and health. The WHM dared to demand: "what is it that women do for each other that transcends the scientific/medical?" and the movement has proven time and time again that women have valuable knowledge and input concerning their bodies that science alone cannot uncover (845). The WHM has seen decades of progress and yet the movement is still as urgent as ever, which ultimately begs the question: will there come a day when the movement is no longer needed? Or will the medical sphere perpetually be corrupted by inequality, prejudice, and injustice?

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RESISTING PATRIARCHAL CONSTRUCTS OF GENDER AND VISIBILITY VIA INSTAGRAM

RACHEL MACARIE

Historically, Hollywood narrative cinema has functioned in terms of binaries, such as the gender binary comprising the active male subject and the passive female object. Women have been hypersexualized and objectified on-screen to provide heterosexual visual pleasure. In other words, visual appearance has been historically controlled and determined by gendered norms. Now, in the twenty-first century, individuals have become visibility addicts due to the pervasiveness of social media, and these gendered norms are often reproduced in social media such as Instagram. Social media platforms have worked to fuel this visibility addiction, functioning to distribute accessible and visually pleasing images that are uploaded directly from a producer and instantaneously disseminated to an audience of consumers. I have used Instagram for years, but I never realized the kind of hyper-visibility Instagram provides. I also never considered the ways in which Instagram allows for normative binaries and systems of oppression to be challenged. The multifaceted nature of Instagram allows for the application to function as a powerful tool for resisting social constructs of gender and power. Using Laura Mulvey's frameworks surrounding vision and visibility, I will interrogate how Instagram functions as a scopophilic machine that reinforces patriarchal ideologies. More importantly, I will highlight how tangible resistance to patriarchal norms is particularly evident through the Instagram account of gender nonconforming author, performer, and speaker, Alok V. Menon, who consistently challenges socially constructed norms of gender, subjectivity, and visibility via their Instagram platform, @alokvmenon.

Instagram can work to reinforce patriarchal ideologies and oppressive structures of vision and visibility. Accounts like @hollywoodactressmodels echo Mulvey's framework surrounding phallocentric structures of vision, ones that prioritize the phallus and male heterosexual pleasure—translating to the male gaze. Mulvey explains "the paradox of phallocentrism in all its manifestations is that it depends on the image of the castrated women to give order and meaning to its world. An idea of woman stands as linchpin to the system: it is her lack that produces the phallus as a symbolic presence" (14). In other words, women threaten phallocentrism and imply castration simply by lacking a phallus. Moreover, not surprisingly, the women featured in this account are predominantly white, cis-gendered, and normatively beautiful. Through this account, scopophilia, "where looking itself is a source of pleasure," functions to "reflect the dominant ideological concept of the cinema" (362-363). Mulvey's arguments are reflected within the content of this Instagram account, and the phallocentric binaries of film and heterosexual pleasure are especially obvious in posts one and two (Appendix). Post one hypersexualizes actress Eiza González by focusing the image on her plunging neckline that reveals her chest and cleavage. The second post contains a reproduced movie scene where a woman spills coffee on her blouse and removes her shirt in front of her male counterpart. Her breasts and black lace bra are then exposed for the man, the audiences of the film, and the viewers of the clip, to gawk at and enjoy. The latter post uses hashtags such as #prettylittlething and, more disturbingly, #blacklivesmatter, presumably to garner more virtual traffic to the visually pleasing post and to further reinforce female objectification.

At the extreme, this account regards women as erotic objects and fixates upon them to a point where sexual satisfaction comes from looking at these women (Mulvey 363, 366). The account seamlessly distributes heterosexual visual pleasure through Instagram—reinforcing male voyeurism and scopophilia. Consequently, women are objectified and subjected to a "controlling and curious gaze"—including the creator of the account and anyone who views the posts (Mulvey 363). Teresa de Lauretis explains "Cinema defines woman as image: as a spectacle to be looked at and object to be desired, investigated, pursued, controlled, and ultimately possessed by a subject who is masculine" (99). Like cinema, this Instagram account reaffirms how women are defined as images and by images. Evidently, Instagram can function as a voyeuristic-scopophilic machine that upholds patriarchal structures of film and visual pleasure.

However, Instagram can also function as a powerful tool for resisting patriarchal norms. Roberta Sassatelli explains that "technology shapes our visibility regime as much as the gendered shaping of our ways of seeing" (125). Multifaceted technology like Instagram has the capacity to shape visibility and ways of seeing. This is evident in Alok V. Menon's Instagram account. Menon's Instagram platform, @alokvmenon, unlike @hollywoodactressmodels, radically challenges those ways of seeing and provides visibility not only for themselves but also for marginalized groups. Their account serves as a platform for activism and social justice by highlighting resistance to gendered and patriarchal norms. In fact, posts three and four exemplify Menon's powerful resistance to social constructions and categories (Appendix). Menon posts publicly and eloquently about why they are gender nonconforming and non-binary to an audience of 543,000 followers. They highlight the transcendent beauty in resisting social norms and binary ways of thinking. Menon articulates the importance of resisting constructs of gender, stating, "I want people to understand how scary the gender binary is and how we can get rid of it so that everyone can just…exist" (Appendix). Through these non-normative Instagram images, Menon resists constructs of patriarchal and gendered visibility, such as the female object and active male subject. Menon acts not as an abject individual, but rather, as a subject who provides visual pleasure while disrupting patriarchal ideals of visibility and beauty.

Menon uses Instagram in a resistant way to challenge patriarchal notions of visibility, look, and gaze. Kaja Silverman explains that "the look has all along possessed the capacity to see otherwise from and even in contradiction to the gaze. The eye is always to some degree resistant to the discourses which seek to master and regulate it, and can even, on occasion, dramatically oppose the representational logic and material practices [that] specify exemplary vision at a given moment in time" (156). This concept is applicable to Menon's Instagram posts, for Menon challenges the gaze, and makes themselves visible in a way that is resistant to discourses that seek to master them—such as socially constructed norms of gender or beauty. This is particularly resonant in post five, which features Menon in a virtual keynote video educating the public about cultural transphobia and the impact of the gender binary for not just minorities.

Menon opposes traditional patriarchal structures of vision by redefining who is visible and what ideals are expressed via Instagram—emphasizing revolutionary resistance to oppressive ideals. Understanding the systemic origins of anti-trans violence, they highlight the dire need to dismantle and disrupt the gender binary. Similarly, in post six, Menon educates others about the history of trans and gender nonconforming individuals (Appendix). Menon highlights how gender non-conforming people are not "new," and Menon educates others on how even in 1940, trans people have resisted society's gender norms at the risk of violence. Menon explains part of the incentive behind their platform, "If you don't see us then we can't exist, right? … This is why I fight so hard to #DeGenderFashion. Because I know my history. Because I honour those who came before me. Because so many people suffered so that I could be here" (Appendix). Menon is poignantly vocal about resisting binaries of gender, visibility, and beauty in the tradition of their ancestors. Menon resists patriarchy through images, videos, and impassioned captions that can inspire tangible social change. In posts seven and eight, Menon exemplifies resistance to patriarchal norms by highlighting how others disregard their visibility by misgendering them and making assumptions about their gender based on gender norms. Judith Butler argues "The forming of a subject requires an identification with the normative phantasm of "sex," and this identification takes place through a repudiation which produces a domain of abjection, a repudiation without which the subject cannot emerge" (3). Through Instagram, Menon eloquently rejects the phantasm of "sex" and embodies the subject who repudiates normativity within their Instagram posts.

As a subject, they use their platform as a political vehicle to spread awareness of what it looks like living beyond binaries—emphasizing the freedom felt in living authentically. Butler also explains "collective disidentifications can facilitate a reconceptualization of which bodies matter, and which bodies are yet to emerge as critical matters of concern" (3). Certainly, Menon resists sexual constructs and they challenge what bodies matter by representing themselves as gender nonconforming and hairy, as is evident in post nine, for they use the hashtag #NothingWrongHair in a hypervisible way that celebrates fluidity and challenges gender and sex binaries (Appendix). Menon acknowledges "that personal, intimate, analytical, and political knowledge of the pervasiveness of gender, [and knows] there is no going back to the innocence of 'biology'" (De Lauretis 20). Consequently, Menon is threatening patriarchy because they do not adhere to constructs of "biology" and thus, they cannot be controlled by oppressive forces. Menon displays subjectivity, power, and agency through their Instagram. Menon allows their account to remain resistant and visible despite receiving comments of hate. Sonja Vivienne and Jean Burgess explain that queer social activists "wish to catalyze social change by challenging popular stereotypes, rather than simply consolidate their values and affirm their identities among like-minded people. They wish to impact unknown, imagined, even antipathetic publics" (366). Menon's Instagram page engages with a diverse range of viewers, and Menon responds to vicious comments with grace, as is clear in image ten (Appendix). Evidently, Menon chooses to educate ignorant commenters instead of tearing them down in a reciprocal manner, further resisting patriarchal norms with beauty and light. Clearly, Instagram allows Menon to maintain subjectivity even in the face of adversity. They represent non-normative visibility and complex fluidity despite being a continual threat to patriarchy and binary ways of thinking.

Menon resists normative and binary constructions of gender, vision, and visibility via Instagram. In Menon's Instagram, the mainstream is marginalized, and the marginalized become mainstream, because of their visibility and purposeful resistance to the patriarchal norms that Mulvey emphasizes in her essay. Menon has subjectivity through their platform, and they recenter ideals of the gaze and the look by focusing on non-normative opposition to power and patriarchy. Menon provides hope to those who are marginalized by positioning themselves as visible and active in the continual fight for social justice. Although it is clear patriarchal norms can be reproduced through Instagram, Menon uses the political potential of Instagram and their hyper-visibility as a form of tangible resistance to patriarchal norms. They reimagine constructs of visibility and binaries of gender—ultimately inspiring social reform.

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PER-POSE

EMMA FLETCHER

CHECK BOX MARKED FEMALE

ANGIE PEARL MOSHER

Women loving themselves
is such a great sin to some men,
such a vain, villainous act, and
I must say some men, so as
not to offend all men, like they've
never said anything similar.

As if women don't have to go through life
prioritizing the fragility of masculinity,
stroking egos until our hands ache,
Giving away every private part of ourselves
even when there is nothing left to take.

Sometimes I forget that my body
is supposed to be packaged and sold,
my insecurities perfectly grown
so I can buy them back from the men
that manufactured them.

If I am to fit in the box marked female,
if I am to squeeze myself between rigid walls,
I have to learn to be small, I must shrink my myself,
my stomach pouch, and shut my mouth.
I am to be seen, not heard,
like a porcelain doll with wax skin.

I will melt in the heat of my rage
because I'll never be the right woman,
and still there are so many wounds untouched,
the body is only the surface.
Beneath the skin there is still violence.
Femininity can be the wound and the weapon,
my body: a temple and a place where cruelty happens.
The trick is finding the balance:
dancing on heads of pins and praying for practice.
Maybe I can tear down walls and make a home of my own.
Can I reclaim something stolen from me so long ago?

GLAMOUR: REFLECTIONS ON THE 'MODERN WOMAN'

KENYA GUTTERIDGE

Audio essay can be accessed via provided link: https://ojs-o.library.ubc.ca/index.php/thatswhatwesaid/article/view/444

—YOU WANT TO EAT IN MY BED?

[MARCH 2020 CHRONICLES]

CARLY NORTON

the strangest way
i've ever gotten to
know someone

bare-face, messy-bun, bare-body
many more days than she's seen me in
"outside clothes"

naked cheeks bloom poppies
under unfamiliar eyes that are always
looking at me

last night i fell asleep next to
a dick she calls "old faithful" and on top of
a piece of melted kit-kat

it didn't matter
nothing matters
in pandemic

they tell us to
stay inside, isolate
the best way to play responsible

silent streets outside
moans echo off the house walls
replace footsteps

i'll let her come inside
break a piece off
eat me in bed all day

THE HIGHLIGHT REEL

SARAH REAY

Comparison,
    An emotion deeply rooted in envy and self-loathing.
    But how can one not compare
    When the infinite scroll pulls you down the rabbit hole.
Why don't I have that?
    The hourglass figure,
    The lack of stretch marks,
    The perfect life.
Feeling like your body, choices, and existence are inadequate.
    In a continual state of questioning
    Whether the life I am living
    Compares to someone else's highlight reel.
With the constant bombardment of idealized ways to live,
    It's easy to forget that there is an actual person
    With an imperfect life
    Living behind those photos we scroll past.
There is so much we don't see.
    Forced smiles
    Lonely days
    Failures and mishaps.
No one wants to put those online.
    Expose that they don't have it all together
    Break the fourth wall
    Invite people in on their worst days.
It makes it so easy to forget,
    Who you are posting for
    Who you are performing for
    Who you are living for.
Yet how do you live from behind a screen?
    We say we take photos
    To capture the memories we want to last forever.
    But we don't actually experience the moment we're capturing.
We should all take a step back,
    Appreciate the unique set of experiences we have been given
    And live out our own highlight reel
    Rather than try to conform to someone else's.

NEW NORMAL

KARLEEN RUTTER

I have always had a problem with the word ‘normal’. As I reflect on my childhood, maybe that is because my home life did not look like that of my peers, and maybe that meant that my family did not fit into the strange category of ‘normal.’ It was always challenging to explain my brother in a way that people understood. From an early age I felt I had to learn how to explain all the things Jed could not do, why he did not learn how to talk until he was five, why at the age of eighteen he still does not eat orally, why he has the cognitive ability of an eight-year-old, and ultimately, describe how he will never be able to independently work, socialize, eat, and live separate from our family. It is a strange thing for a little girl who is infatuated with her baby brother to constantly answer the question “what is wrong with him?” But after years of confusion and interpersonal struggles I finally have a definite answer and that is: absolutely nothing. Not only is there nothing wrong with him but rather life with Jed has taught me that if the world slowed down and focused on how people like Jed lived and loved, just maybe our busy and distracted lives would become a little bit warmer, more accepting, and safe.

In March of 2020, the global pandemic brought abrupt stillness and a sudden halt of productivity to the world, including myself. After sulking in the loss and solitude that overwhelmed me as I moved back into my childhood home, I began the process of reimagining what I wanted my life to look like after I began to crawl out of the unnatural physical and emotional isolation that seemed to consume my every waking moment.

Now, I must note that I understand the privileged position that I hold in the affordance of time and a safe space that allows me the mental clarity to do this re-imaginative work. Studying from the confines of my family’s home meant that my day-to-day life intermingled with the daily endeavours of my mother, father, and most importantly, my not-so-baby brother. Jed is now in grade twelve at a school for teenagers with moderate disabilities, where one-on-one educational and medical supports are guaranteed. Due to the pandemic-related health restrictions, Jed was also home and learning solely online. Little did I know that it would be our involuntary confinement and exposure to one another’s educational routines that would expose me to the greatest life lesson I did not know I needed.

Jed met every day with his teacher, educational aides, and about twelve classmates to dive into what their modified curriculum required of them, including basic math, elementary reading, and ‘quiet time.’ As I made my morning tea and gained the daily courage required of me to tackle whatever research paper or presentation laid ahead, I would stand in our kitchen and listen to the morning greetings of Jed’s classmates in the room next to me. As a new face popped up in the grid of Jed’s Google Meet, he would give an over-enthusiastic “GOOD MORNING!” that was always reciprocated with the same excitement and vigor. This greeting was the first thing that struck me as different, particularly when I would log in to my classes seconds later, only to be met with a sea of tiny grey boxes and muted microphones. I was faced with this bewilderment that I was the one in the family pursuing the ‘Western’ standards of a supposedly ‘normal’ education, only to be forced into such strange and robotic social situations.

These scenarios are not normal to the inherent need of personal connections and relationships that seem to propel the natural course of human life and that vibrantly lived in Jed’s classroom. As I grappled with this unique observation, I realized that if I removed myself from the emotional and self-focused demands of my university education and just listened to Jed’s enchanting social framework, maybe I could begin the process of reimaging a more human and loving environment within the disconnected world of virtual learning.

It was on Jed’s last day of class before the holiday break that I was exposed to the most inspiring way of being I had ever witnessed. Their classroom had their annual talent show where they could perform a talent, show something in their room or house that they loved, or just sit and watch respectfully. Jed had been perseverating on this day for weeks, constantly asking his patient teacher when he could perform and tirelessly practicing a song on his drums that he intended to play. With all the excitement that Jed embodied, I could not help but get wrapped up within the buzz of his anticipation and ensured I cleared my schedule that Friday so I could be there with him. The first performance was by Jed’s best friend, who was heavily obsessed with the Disney movie, Frozen . It was not a surprise when he announced that he would be performing the movie’s lyrical hit “Let It Go” to the enthusiastic audience of his Google Meet classmates. As Jed’s friend began his dramatic performance filled with singing and improvised dancing, I could not help but worry for how the other teenage boys would respond to a performance generally reserved for an audience of five-year-old girls with blue dresses and blonde braids. As he hit his last note and took his final bow, Jed’s laptop erupted in applause and pixelated cheers. The teacher then facilitated questions and compliments that the classmates impatiently held their hands up to share. Student after student shared their love for the performance, asking and exclaining, things such as: “where did you learn that song?”, “that was amazing!”, “you are so good!”.

I could not help but be emotionally caught off guard by the non-judgemental love and kindness exclaimed by Jed’s classmates. This amazement was followed by a moment of sadness as I realized that, for an eighteen-year-old boy to perform Frozen at a ‘normal’ high school, like the one I attended, there would no doubt be social backlash and horrific comments rooted within malaise and perhaps homophobia. Even after years outside of the socially conforming halls of high school and my pursuit of an academic field that embodied the encouragement of diversity and acceptance, I had never witnessed a social framework so deeply rooted within a space of unconditional love and unwavering permission to be oneself. This should be the ‘normal’ and default way people interacted.

The response to Jed’s performance was no different; his friends cheered and left him with graceful compliments and well wishes. Even one of his closest friends, who is unable to talk , used her computer as a vocal aid to say the words “cool” and “rockstar.” This love and acceptance was not new to me because Jed has always filled my life with these empathetic qualities, but it was this communal support that was built on a foundation of respect and positive affirmations that caught me off guard. I began to realize that this time at home that engulfed many of the lives of people I knew was an opportunity to question our lives before the pandemic and ask ourselves if those social habits of judgement were really spaces we wanted to go

back to once we were able to reconvene. I am still in the process of re-learning from the guidance of Jed and I cannot yet provide a coherent solution to creating more inclusive and safe spaces where authenticity can be fully celebrated. I look forward to following in Jed's footprints as he leads me down unknown paths away from previous ways of being towards a normal that is precisely not normal; a mode of living where love, compassion, and appreciation is our default.

INDIGENOUS JUSTICE AND PHILOSOPHIES: ARTICULATING THE PATH OF RESURGENCE

TAYANA SIMPSON

INTRODUCTION

What does a world predicated on Indigenous philosophies and justice look like? This question, and others like it, are addressed in the works of numerous Indigenous political theorists and scholars. Dale Turner, Sheryl Lightfoot, Glen Sean Coulthard, and Taiaiake Alfred, engage with this discussion of Indigenous global justice in markedly different ways. Each theorist provides a unique and integral perspective on resurgence and resistance; understanding them together holds new potential for Indigenous global justice. While their politics may differ, the underlying theme of Indigenous sovereignty holds power and significance, and situates these authors within a resurgent movement of freedom, survival, self-transformation, and ultimately, the break-down of the settler colonial state.

Settler colonial states, such as Canada, provide a significant barrier to the full realization of Indigenous sovereignty and justice. Notably, settler colonialism is predicated on the dispossession, eradication, and assimilation of Indigenous peoples and their culture, land, and traditions. And while the history of decolonization led many states to independence, settler colonialism continues to perpetuate ideologies of dispossession and assimilation, forcing discussions of self-determination and justice to occur within structures that were founded on racism and white supremacy. Glen Sean Coulthard, using Patrick Wolfe, conceptualizes settler colonialism as a structure rather than an event.[1] Whereas an event is fixated within a specific temporal and geographical lens, Coulthard emphasizes that seeing settler colonialism as a structure allows it to be seen as "territorially acquisitive in perpetuity", recognizing the ongoing injustice.[2]

Coulthard's analysis demonstrates that the structure of settler colonial states continues to prove antithetical to a realization of global justice and self-determination. The existing framework of settler colonial states has performed what Dale Turner calls a "specific injustice against Indigenous peoples' rights to land, resources, and self-determination by only recognizing state sovereignty as fully legitimate".[3] Indeed, the power settler colonial states hold is largely due to the fact that their structures have been built upon the historical dispossession and domination of Indigenous peoples, proving that the realization of Indigenous justice and settler colonialism are entirely at odds.[4]

INDIGENOUS PHILOSOPHIES

There is a clear and fundamental opposition between Indigenous justice and selfdetermination and settler colonial states. While settler colonial states, and Canada in particular, have attempted to quell the calls for Indigenous rights through a politics of recognition and reconciliation, there remains a disconnect between these liberal politics occurring within unjust systems founded on dispossession and oppression, and global Indigenous justice as nondomination and self-determination. This brings us to a precipice, where the question of the state as an entity comes into play. Can settler colonial states be revised to allow for self-determination and nondomination and thus, global justice? Should they? And if not, how can a realization of global justice be practical with the existence of settler colonial states?

Dale Turner and Sheryl Lightfoot focus largely on the ability of existing states to develop new forms of governance not predicated on hierarchy and colonialism. Turner's work is arguably the most practical, focusing more specifically on the role of Indigenous citizens in repositioning state interest through a politicized engagement with state institutions. Turner refers to the usage of "word warriors"; individuals with a distinct knowledge of Canadian state apparatuses that can work within these apparatuses to shift the politic. His argument is predicated on an understanding that Indigenous "traditions, rights, sovereignty, and nationhood must be integrated into the existing legal and political practices of the state," stating that Canada must recognize the nationhood of Indigenous peoples, begin the process of empowerment, and give back land.[5] Yet, Turner notes that while these responsibilities of the state exist as requirements of justice, there is no guarantee of them. Hence, the strategic engagement of Indigenous peoples within the state to convince the government and people of the legitimacy of assertions of Indigenous rights. Lightfoot moves more drastically towards a revision and dismantling of current institutions. She notably calls for "radical systemic change," stating that a global Indigenous politic relies on a questioning and rectification of exclusive systems.[6] The integral question becomes how to redesign 'new, plural, overlapping, and multiple types of sovereignties… within and across state borders…".[7] And while Lightfoot notes that such a transformation of the state-Indigenous relationship will take sustained and prolonged effort and commitment to re-assert Indigenous rights, the end result will be a radical system

[1] Glen Sean Coulthard, Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014): 125.

[2] Coulthard, 125.

[3] Dale Turner, This Is Not a Peace Pipe: Towards a Critical Indigenous Philosophy (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006): 202.

[4] Turner, 203.

[5] Turner, 78, 83-84.

[6] Lightfoot 205.

[7] Lightfoot 206.

[8] Lightfoot 211.

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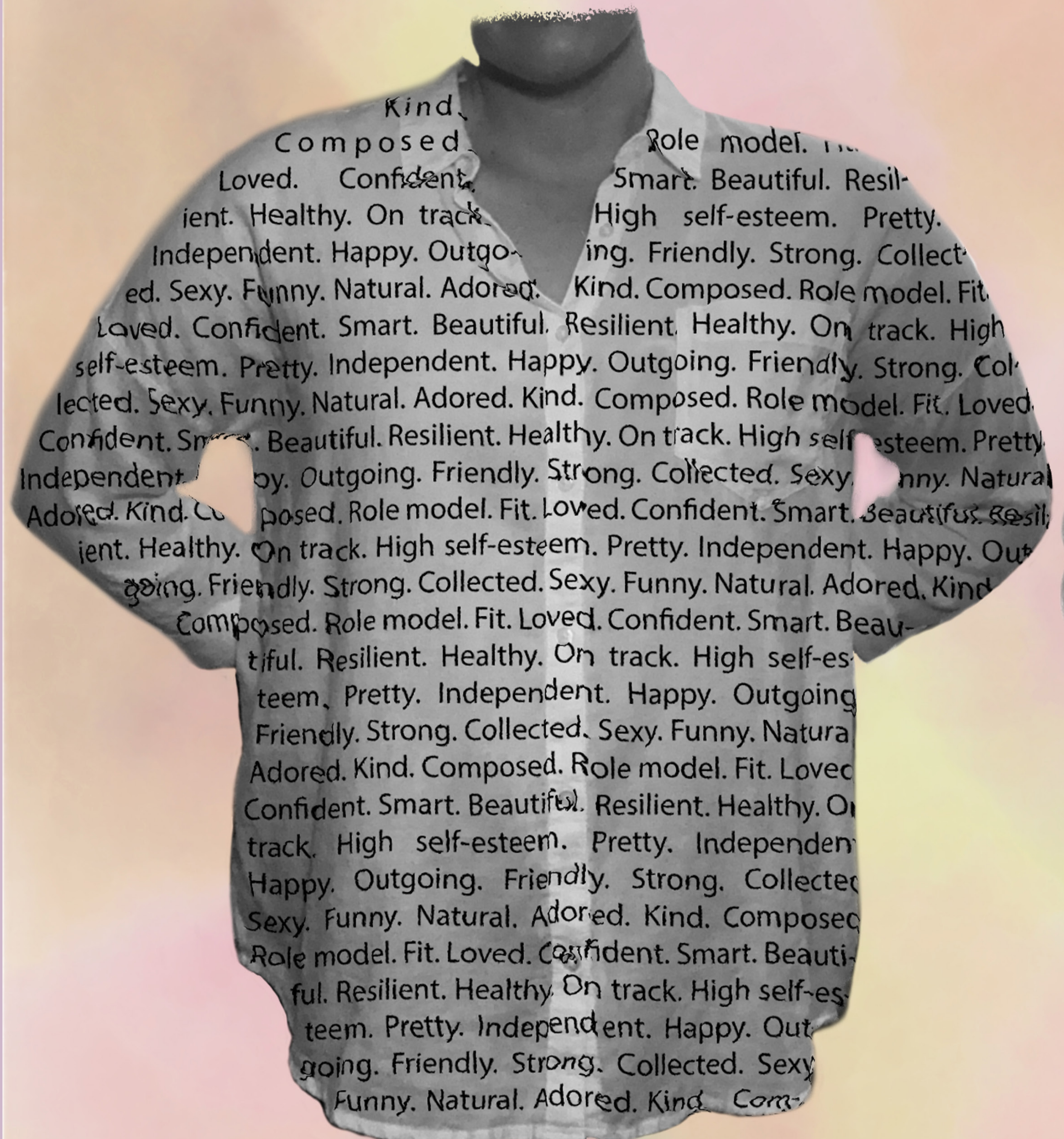
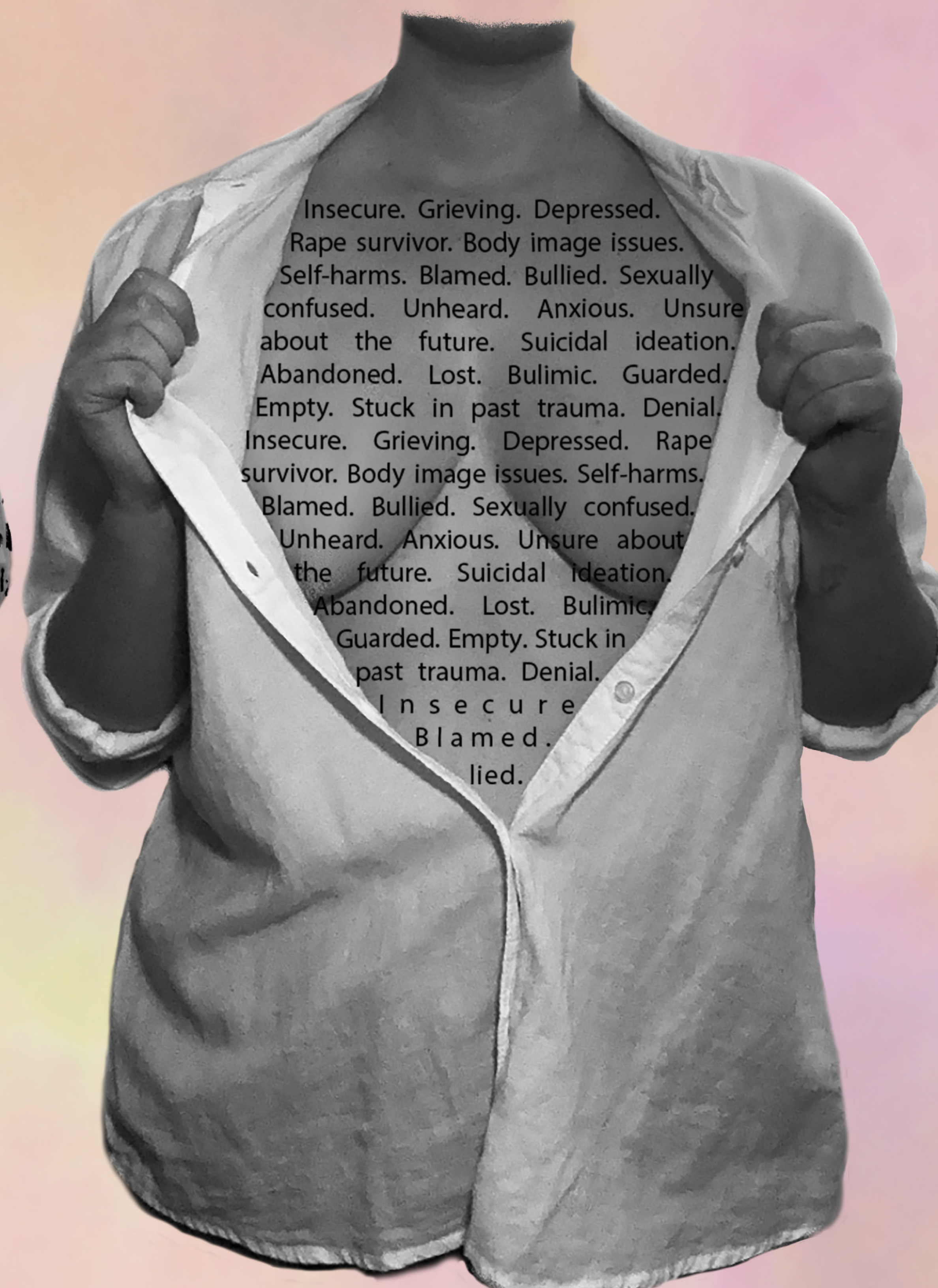
MORE THAN WHAT IS PORTRAYED

HANNAH SCHMIDT

there is more than what is portrayed .





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change that drastically changes the nature of the relationship.[8] A statist lens guides these philosophies as they seek to dismantle the state from within.

Lightfoot's radicalism is furthered by Glen Sean Coulthard's Red Skin White Masks. His condemnation of the politics of recognition, a distinct settler colonial political tool, is founded upon the argument that recognition of Indigenous rights by the state reproduces the power dynamics that the assertion of Indigenous rights attempts to transcend, rather than creating a relationship founded on peace and reciprocity.[9] Utilizing the politics of recognition as a baseline for his argument, Coulthard states that the relationship between Indigenous people and settler colonial states has "remained colonial to its foundation.".[10] Ultimately, Coulthard is rightly skeptical of the ability to construct an equitable relationship in a state that was founded upon inequality and dispossession. His argument mirrors, and in fact references, the famous masterslave dialectic posited by Hegel: the dialectic holds that when the slave realizes he exists beyond the master's recognition and seeks to break down his identity as slave, his actions must entirely create a new way of being or risk reproducing and reinscribing the hierarchy and dominative aspects of the original master-slave relation.[11]

Coulthard's chapter, "For the Land" demonstrates a microcosmic example of his argument in the context of the Dene's struggle for self-governance in the Northwest Territories. In the chapter, Coulthard lays out the challenges experienced by the Dene as they put forward agreements to the federal government for the assertion of their right to self-government. The agreements were continually shut down, and the final agreement that was signed noticeably excluded a number of points that had been vital to the initial assertion of rights by the Dene peoples.[12] The politics of recognition and reconciliation failed the Dene by forcing them to accept the unilateral power of the government despite Canada's supposedly progressive politics.

This skepticism of the ability of the settler colonial state to simply revise in the realization of global Indigenous justice is proposed by Taiaiake Alfred in perhaps a more radical yet way. Alfred's book, *Wasáse: Indigenous Pathways of Action and Freedom*, draws from Indigenous philosophies to suggest a resurgent dismantling and transformation of settler colonial statehood through reconnection with Indigenous traditions and knowledge. Indeed, Wasáse refers to a coming together of multiple politics to create a new, truly multicultural set of relations governed by equality.[13] While Alfred is against a violent revolution, he states that the realization of Indigenous rights and justice necessarily requires the rebuilding of settler colonial governments from the ground up.[14] Alfred's particular form of rebuilding holds significant interest:

> The true spirit of revolt is not the motivation to crush or overthrow colonial structures and bring in replacement structures but an invocation to the spirit of freedom, a drive to move mentally and physically away from the reactive state of being compelled by danger and fear, and to begin to act on intelligence and vision to generate a new identity and set of relations that transcend the cultural assumptions and political imperatives of empire. And therefore, to be free.[15]

Alfred's book is written entirely for an Indigenous audience, calling for self-transformation through reconnection with Indigenous teachings and traditions, that will lead to a collective resurgence intended to lay bare the dominative violence of settler colonial states. His work holds no place for colonial institutions: Alfred dedicates a portion of the text to consideration of Indigenous engagement with capitalist enterprises, such as casinos, for revenue purposes. His anti-statist, anarcho-Indigenous worldview is founded entirely on Indigenous philosophies, pluralism, connection, and community as tools in the ongoing breakdown of the state with the end goal of an anti-state. Indeed, this view drastically contrasts with theorists who advocate for revision.

Coulthard discusses a summary of Alfred's political ideology that perhaps sums up the discussion of justice within a settler colonial state: "Alfred's resurgent approach to decolonization demands that we challenge the commonsense idea that one can construct an equitable relationship with non-Indigenous peoples and a sustainable relationship with the land by participating more intensely in a capitalist economy that is environmentally unsustainable and founded, at its core, on racial, gender, and class exploitation and inequalities."[16] As Coulthard notes, constructing an equitable relationship within the colonial nation-state must also be challenged; the realization of Indigenous justice requires no absolute authority, no coercive enforcement, no hierarchy, and no separate ruling entity.[17] In the negotiation of Indigenous rights within a settler colonial institution, Indigenous justice has come to be framed in a statist way, essentializing and reducing Indigenous philosophies in such a way that they can be translated into Western political frameworks. Alfred's work relates to Turner's reliance on Indigenous action, but where Turner expects Indigenous action within state apparatuses, Alfred envisions an entirely new organizational structure that transcends statehood. While the final creation is founded within more abstract philosophies like pluralism, peaceful co-existence, and anti-statist views, his denunciation of settler colonial statehood and the attempts at revising statehood are concrete.

It can be difficult to align the two perspectives of revision and abolition, yet perhaps it can be done through a discussion of transitional justice, justice used to transition a state from a period of conflict to one of peace. Notably, Turner's work is practical in nature, something Turner himself notes, while Lightfoot leans towards an intricate radical practicality.[18] In contrast, the work of

[9] Coulthard, 3.
[10] Coulthard, 6.
[11] Coulthard, 28-29.
[12] Coulthard, 76-77.
[13] Taiaiake Alfred, Wasáse: Indigenous Pathways of Action and Freedom, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999): 19.
[14] Alfred, 27, 31.
[15] Alfred, 201.
[16] Coulthard, 159.
[18] Turner, 83-84.

Coulthard and Alfred is more abstract, working with potentialities and guiding philosophies. Through a temporal lens of transitional justice, however, Turner and Lightfoot's politics begin the process of transitioning to Alfred's final vision of Indigenous relational justice. Coulthard notes that settler colonial states falsely manufacture transitions in order to cast colonialism to the past, and attempt to delineate between the settler colonialism of the past, and the reconciliation of the present and future, without acknowledging the intertwining of settler colonialism through current state structures and institutions.[19] Yet, transitional justice has proven to be a useful tool of states to move from one period to the next; a form of revision and abolishment of a past regime or power dynamic. Can its usage be a subversion of the settler colonial co-optation, a reinforcement of the present nature of colonial marginalization coupled with a true manufacturing of transitional justice to move beyond the hierarchical power dynamics of settler states? Indeed, transitional justice remains a powerful tool of global justice and marginalized communities through its ability to bridge the gap between just and unjust.

In this sense, Lightfoot and Turner's work fits well within a practical application of transitional justice. During the consistent false manufacturing of a transition by the state, Indigenous action has the potential to change the narrative by focussing the attention less on reconciliation and recognition, and more on Indigenous rights and justice. By reinserting the persistence of settler colonialism, the false transition breaks down and opens up space for a true transition of justice. Arguably, this is happening in our current political climate in Canada, where Indigenous nations are co-opting the politics of recognition to force attention to Indigenous rights across the country. Frantz Fanon, discussed by Coulthard, refers to this as self-recognition, wherein the colonized begin to recognize their own potential and rights. As Coulthard states, "Fanon showed how colonized populations, despite the totalizing power of colonialism, are often able to turn these internalized forms of colonial recognition into expressions of Indigenous self-empowerment through the reclamation and revitalization of precolonial social relations and cultural traditions".[20] The self-recognition is echoed in Hegel's dialectic, and again with Alfred's necessitating of self-transformation as the beginning of the resurgence. It is through selftransformation, I believe, that we turn to the dismantling and re-creation of Indigenous philosophies as advocated by Coulthard and Alfred.

Coulthard's skepticism of statehood and Alfred's envisioning of a new structure constitute the realization of Indigenous global justice as nondomination and self-determination. Harkening back to Hegel's dialectic, the slave must create a new relationship in order to not perpetuate the hierarchy of the master and the slave. Similarly, I believe Alfred's vision is the necessary structure wherein Indigenous self-determination can occur within an environment of sovereignty, nation-nation relations, and the assertion of Indigenous rights. Turner's word warriors lead to Lightfoot's radical system change, which leads to Coulthard's skepticism, which must lead to Alfred's revolt for freedom. To make the jump from Turner and Lightfoot's politics

[19] Coulthard, 109.
[20] Coulthard, 153.

to Alfred's, I believe Coulthard's five theses for decolonization provide a foundation. Coulthard's theses connect a politic that occurs within settler colonial constraints to a politic that mimics Alfred's, and relies on Indigenous philosophies. Mentioned in Coulthard's final chapter, Thesis 1 calls for the necessity of direct action. Coulthard utilizes events such as Idle No More and other Indigenous protests and blockades to demonstrate the efficacy of action that block state power and hegemony in a clear sense.[21] In Coulthard's words: "Through these actions we physically say "no" to the degradation of our communities and to exploitation of the lands upon which we depend. But they also have ingrained within them a resounding "yes": they are the affirmative enactment of another modality of being, a different way of relating to and with the world".[22] Thesis 2 calls for a move away from capitalism, echoing the earlier mention that it is impossible to create equitable relations in an unjust, market-based society.[23] Here, it is emphasized that not only should Indigenous resistance involve an inhibition of capitalist tendencies, but it should also seek to create alternatives to capitalism. Without these alternatives, any resurgent politics remains reliant on the "parasitic" nature of capitalism.[24] Thesis 3 refers to the physical displacement of Indigenous peoples from their traditional land historically and presently from urban areas through acts of gentrification.[25] Here, the power relations that inform physical space and organization must be questioned and broken down to dismantle the ideologies of land ownership and rights.[26] Thesis 4 calls for an acknowledgement of the power of Indigenous women, alongside the systemic and symbolic violence enacted against them.[27] Notably, this undercurrent of gender justice runs alongside discussions of Indigenous justice in various articles, and emphasizes the importance of equal relations within and outside of Indigenous communities. Lastly, Thesis 5 demonstrates the move towards transitional justice, advocating for Indigenous justice to move beyond normative nation state relations towards a skepticism, self-reflection, and caution that must inform engagements with statehood.[28] This is where Coulthard's work aligns best with Alfred's: "[our present condition]... demands that we begin to shift our attention away from the largely rights-based/recognition orientation that has emerged as hegemonic over the last four decades, to a resurgent politics of recognition that seeks to practice decolonial, genderemancipatory, and economically non-exploitative alternative structures of law and sovereign authority grounded on a critical refashioning of the best of Indigenous legal and political traditions".[29] These theses present a bridge between the practical nature of Turner and Lightfoot's work, and the aspirational nature of Alfred's. Yet, the arguments of the above scholars remain in concert with one another, working in such a way that one leads to another in the full realization of Indigenous justice.

CONCLUSION

This work has demonstrated the oppositional nature of global Indigenous justice and the existence of settler colonial states. Settler colonial states are predicated on the continual supremacy of Western ideologies and politics that afford

[21] Coulthard, 167-168.
[22] Coulthard, 168.
[23] Coulthard, 170.
[24] Coulthard, 171.
[25] Coulthard, 176.
[26] Coulthard, 176.
[27] Coulthard, 178.
[28] Coulthard, 180.
[29] Coulthard, 180.

Indigenous peoples just enough rights to quell direct action. In Canada specifically, the politics of recognition as identified by Coulthard holds ramifications for the realization of Indigenous self-determination. As such, settler colonial states become antithetical to the full realization of Indigenous justice.

Many Indigenous scholars have grappled with the idea of statehood in the ongoing discussion of philosophies, governance, and sovereignty. While the four perspectives I have introduced in this work seem opposed, I argue that through a lens of transitional justice they can work in concert with one another. Through the sustained effort of Indigenous advocacy networks, Turner's word warriors can manufacture a transition leading to systemic change, which in turn leads to a precipice with Alfred's final vision. Coulthard's five theses then provide a manifestation of the action necessary to move towards the final vision of a restructured state. Perhaps the full re-articulation of relations in line with Alfred's argument is impractical. Yet, what remains of the initial question is this: Indigenous justice requires a prolonged and sustained effort within settler colonial states to change the narrative from recognition awarded by the state to a narrative guided by Indigenous philosophies of freedom and resurgence.

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COMING TOGETHER WHILE STAYING SIX FEET APART

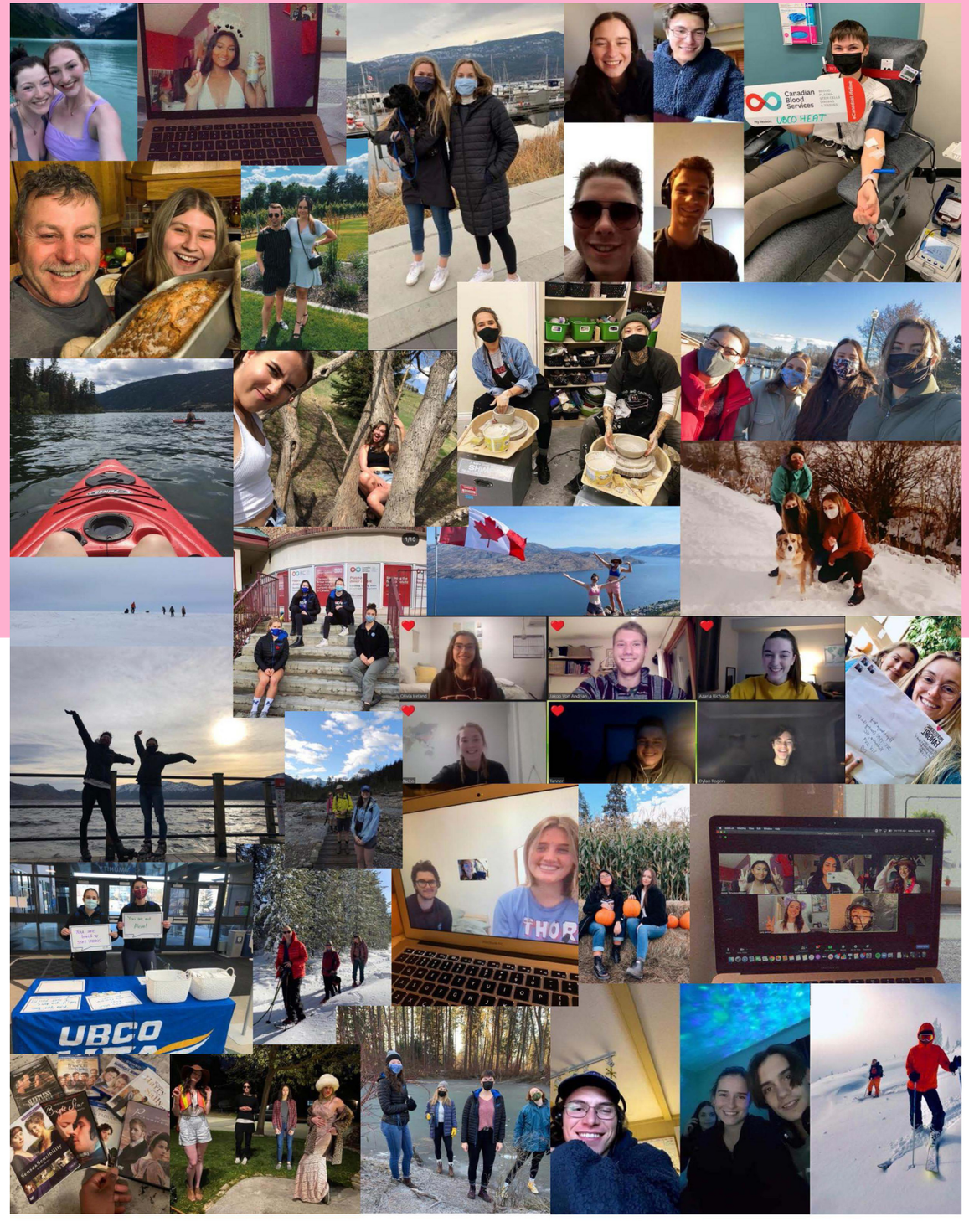
SADIE TAYLOR-PARKS

From the making of sourdough bread to the Black Lives Matter Movement, people have been finding ways to come together throughout the pandemic while remaining six feet apart. Ever since the moment the world came to a halt in March of 2020, individuals have been finding innovative ways to reconnect with their loved ones, build communities, and help make resources more accessible.

After I pushed past the initial anxieties regarding the unknown, I connected with others through various forms of media. Utilizing Zoom, TikTok, Instagram, and online petitions, I created and maintained relationships with individuals around the world, all while staying within the comfort of my own home. Although I am grateful that I was able to do this while maintaining my bubble, I understand that not everyone shared this experience and that this pandemic exposed many global social inequalities.

While some fought for toilet paper, others fought for fundamental rights and the recognition of their lives as humans. Some secretly travelled to warm destinations in hopes of escaping the pandemic in their home country, while others struggled to pay for their rent and maintain a safe place to live. As an anti-masker protested for their "freedom," a healthcare worker tirelessly worked to keep others and themselves safe and alive. Sports fans gathered for large in-home viewing parties regardless of restrictions while athletes took a knee during national anthems with sayings such as "SAY HER NAME," "VOTE," and "I CAN'T BREATHE" across their shoulders. During this historical period, privilege has been more prevalent than ever. This division has led to an increase in the importance of building and supporting communities, in an attempt to create a world that is more inclusive than the one we are currently living in.

Here is a glimpse at thirty different people's ways of coming together while staying six feet apart...



QUESTIONING THE PRODUCTIVITY OF CANCEL CULTURE IN A TIME OF EXTREME SOCIAL CHANGE

JENN WILLIAMS

"As the world becomes safer,
our definition of harm expands"
- Robert Henderson,
University of Cambridge

INTRODUCTION

2020 was a monumental year for social change. The dissatisfaction with on-going social inequalities gained enough momentum over the years to result in the expressions of outrage that took place throughout the entirety of my most memorable year to date. For the first time in my lifetime, I witnessed protests and communities coming together for social movements that were previously non-existent and invisible to the average household. Now, the themes of these protests are common knowledge and have been added to our vocabulary on a daily basis, often coming up as a recurring conversation at the dinner table. As these opinions regarding change become stronger and societies are in the process of rebuilding, I've noticed a larger divide between people than ever before. While it is easy to compare left to right, I believe this divide is much larger and more complex than a simple binary. Such opposing views and unwillingness to accept anything less than supposedly moral behaviour has resulted in what is now known as "cancel culture." By way of the internet, cancel culture has become a common phrase used to explain the ways in which we no longer support those who have exhibited racist, sexist, abusive behaviour, and all other unethical practices from anywhere between now and forty years ago. Ranging from Don Cherry to Harvey Weinstein, household celebrities, friends, and family are being "cancelled" and forcibly removed from the lives of their former supporters.

It is important to note that the internet plays a significant role in the production and reproduction of cancel culture, as the digital structure has revealed itself as not being a friendly space for anti-racist and anti-misogynist narratives (Board, 2020). Preventing or simply cutting racist and misogynist perspectives from the source proves to be more difficult than ever before in this digital era, when identifying a majority sentiment is more difficult and the voices of the radical fringe dominate the space (Holder & Josephson, 2020). Extremists can now, very easily, find support and community at their fingertips (Holder & Josephson, 2020). Although there is little academic research regarding cancel culture currently, I'm sure you have witnessed the process, or even cancelled a celebrity or friend, yourself. However, I question how truly effective cancel culture is in producing change towards a better quality of life for all people. Unfortunately, this idea only operates under the assumption that all of us have the same morals and perception of acceptable behaviour

for every person in the world, which is clearly not true. By analyzing the meaning of cancel culture, its origin, repercussions, and space created for women, I question its productive capacity in a time of major social change. This article unfolds cancel culture in a series of topics ranging from its roots in disagreement to its positive relationship to our brain, while asking thought provoking questions regarding its general success. The big question to you is — and I believe that there is no single answer — to what extent does cancel culture succeed in identifying and policing immoral behaviour, therefore reducing social inequality for all people?

WHAT IS CANCEL CULTURE?

On one hand, cancel culture may be thought of as negative or imposing on one's freedom of speech, although it is both knowingly and unknowingly practiced regularly. According to Rob Henderson (2020) in Psychology Today, "cancel culture refers to ending (or attempting to end) an individual's career or prominence to hold them accountable for immoral behaviour." Henderson explains how, driven primarily by "young progressives," "most often through social media, cancel culture has attracted controversy since it swept into the national conversation." Such national conversation ranges from major celebrities to some of our closest friends and family members. Cancelling someone can be as easy as unfollowing them on social media, a complete removal from one's personal life, or a lifetime sentence in prison. Racist tweets and abusive behaviour have resurfaced from decades ago, ensuring people are being held accountable for their harmful actions and their lasting repercussions.

However, there are some positive opinions regarding cancel culture in that it has contributed to the downfall of serial predators such as Harvey Weinstein, Kevin Spacey, and Bill Cosby (Henderson, 2020). Additionally, it has given voice and influence to those with no other way of holding powerful figures accountable, operating as a tool for social justice, instilling new values of equality and destroying dangerous precedent (Henderson, 2020). Similarly, according to Meredith Clark, a professor at the University of Virginia's department of media studies, "[cancel culture] is ultimately an expression of agency" (as cited in Bromwich, 2020). By unfollowing and ignoring someone whose opinions and morals do not align with your own, cancelling them and disassociating from their life may seem to be the simplest way to cut them off from any further contact or indignation they represent. Having the agency to banish a supposedly undeserving celebrity from their life in the spotlight or to cut someone out of your life is not only liberating but it is powerful in that it proves one's unwillingness to associate with such behaviour. There are celebrities who have been cancelled that have been seen to resurface and come back from their mistakes, such as Kevin Hart and Justin Trudeau. However, there have also celebrities who, to this day, are cancelled for their actions from years since with no chance for forgiveness or re-entry back into society with their previous status. This ultimately begs the question: Is cancelling someone a modern-day death sentence? Does anyone deserve to be entirely cancelled, forever?

In this conversation surrounding cancel culture, I found myself interested in the origin of disagreements and how exactly they function in society, especially within relationships that are closest to us. After all, disagreements -- to a certain extent -- are inevitable in every relationship and are part and parcel of human existence (Mölder & Simm, 2020). If the very root of cancel culture rests in our inability to act according to the same "good" morals, I wonder exactly where the line is drawn between two opposing views. At what point is it "fair" to cancel someone? How different do the opinions need to be in order for someone to be cancelled? What is the difference between a mere opinion and someone's deepest moral beliefs? Theoretical philosopher and author of "Disagreements: An Introduction," Bruno Mölder (2020) reassures us that the comprehensive categorization of disagreements, the unpacking of premises, contexts, and conclusions have been a significant tradition in the study of philosophy but should be of interest and importance beyond the realm of philosophical research and into the hands of less theoretical applications. In this article, Mölder (2020) explains how further analyses of disagreements will deepen our understanding and awareness for different resolution strategies, which is a crucial component of cancel culture. For example, we rarely feel the need to cancel an individual after a minor inconvenience or misunderstanding, but it often feels like the only resolution strategy when it reaches a certain point. Other times, it may be unclear whether an individual should be cancelled. For example, for sexual predators, the case may be clear-cut, but for those who posted prejudiced tweets as a teen, the case is more ambiguous, yet many people are targets for what some might perceive as minor transgressions (Henderson 2020). So, there is no formula dictating who exactly deserves to be cancelled and at what point in their purported mistake. In order for cancel culture to be successful, we must agree on what it means to transgress and the severity by which is acceptable. Additionally, If cancelling someone isn't a justified solution for every level of transgression, I begin to reconsider the ethicality of cancel culture, entirely.

But, we are forced to revert back to the limitation resting in the assumption that there could be a universal set of morals and acceptable behaviours. I chose to connect Mölder's (2020) conversation regarding meta-ethical pluralism and moral discourse to cancel culture. Mölder writes meta-ethical pluralism as the "view that our ordinary moral discourse contains a plurality of moral concepts." In other words, this concept explains how moral discourse for individuals is much less uniform than commonly assumed. With this being said, we realize that there are people who have different morals than our own and are compelled to question how this fact operates in relation to cancel culture. Cancel culture not only exists due to the difference in morals but also in the belief that one's set of morals is above another's. With the existence of meta-ethical pluralism, although controversial, is it fair to assume that the foundation in which cancel culture is built on to be inevitable?

For a disagreement to occur, someone must be at fault for acting outside the confines of acceptable behaviour. However, if an objective set of morals does not exist, then disagreements cannot be any one person's "fault." Mölder explains the controversial opinion of faultless disagreements by saying that if there is no official signification in which fundamental principles or commitments are incorrect or false, then "it is also hard to see how one party to a deep disagreement could be making a mistake" (2020). Also, the very fact that such disagreements are so common within our daily

lives provokes the question of what we should do in the face of disagreements that appear to have no straightforward solution (Mölder & Simm, 2020). So, are deep disagreements between family members different than distant disagreements between yourself and a beloved celebrity? Should we excuse generational differences since we are all socialized and enculturated within the context of our own lifetime? Does the evolution of thought render the grounds for cancelling? It goes without saying that the ability to dismantle deeply ingrained ideologies and socialized processes regarding meaningful subjects such as politics is extremely challenging. But are all political conversations considered to be deep disagreements? Are deep disagreements only about politics and economics or can they be about supposedly meaningless subjects such as television and favourite pizza toppings? I have a hard time believing that solutions for disagreements could ever truly be categorized and formulated to cater to all styles of conversations. I do, however, believe it is important to gain a deeper understanding of how disagreements function in relationships and how their contribution to cancel culture can be analyzed. Perhaps a better understanding of disagreements could prevent them from happening. Is the goal for us to disagree less? Or is the goal to disagree more productively?

SO.... IS CANCELLING PRODUCTIVE?

There is a reason why refusing to watch any Kevin Spacey films ever again or blocking a racist friend from high school on Facebook feels good and productive. The ability to condemn wrongdoers "implies that one can be above such transgressions and be a better person than the latter" (Henderson, 2020). Not only do humans desire to be respected but studies have shown that we desire to be accorded more respect and deference than others (Anderson & Hildreth, 2016). However, the effort to boost one's social status by doing something good outweighs the effort it takes to simply publicize the bad behaviour of others. After all, social status is all relative. So, one person losing social rank is comparable to another gaining it (Henderson, 2020). Rather than looking to increase one's social status through the cancellation of others, perhaps more sustainable progress can be achieved by working through and understanding varying values. However, evolutionary psychologist, David Buss, explains how modern living allows humans to be less worried about survival, thus not feeling the need to spend time and energy on maintaining meaningful alliances with others (as cited in Henderson, 2020). Henderson writes that in the ancestral human environment, "death was often around the corner, so people depended on one another...But modern life is so comfortable that people are rarely presented with serious challenges to survival" (2020). Therefore, people are no longer required to prove themselves to others within their social lives, making it complicated in distinguishing genuine from deceptive friendships (Henderson, 2020). So, aligning one's morals with others' is no longer essential to our survival as a species. If we can live in disagreement, then why should anyone argue against cancel culture?

Is there an alternative option if we do not want to cancel someone who acts immorally? Rather than cancelling someone, another answer could be to take the moment as an opportunity for growth instead. In other words, the wrongdoer is given another chance, hopefully proving themselves in the future or even becoming an activist for their unethical actions. For instance, Kevin Hart could take his experience with resurfaced homophobic tweets from 2009 and become an activist for the LGBTQ+ community. But, is it naive to think that every time you see a racist Facebook status posted by your aunt that this is always a chance for a new learning opportunity? Perhaps a conversation could have the ability to change the opinion of a racist family member. But, are all people capable of changing? How do we go about instilling this willingness to alter people's preconceived perceptions?

HOW DOES CANCEL CULTURE AFFECT WOMEN IN PARTICULAR?

So, with this comprehensive overview of cancel culture, I am curious about its effects on women, in particular. As previously mentioned, many of the recent cancelled male celebrities in the media have been specifically called out for their sexual harassment and abuse allegations and controversies regarding inappropriate behaviour against women. As a woman, I believe that cancel culture has shown me that people are finally listening and holding abusers accountable of their actions that have gone unnoticed for so long. Most notably, the #MeToo movement's exposure of Harvey Weinstein in 2017 finally gave victims of sexual assault an audible voice. At the same time, the movement gave people a more accurate understanding of the magnitude of sexual violence against women. Originally founded in 2006 by American activist, Tarana Burke, the #MeToo movement paved the way for sexual misconduct to go public. This activism paved the way for Harvey Weinstein receiving a twenty-three year prison sentence on Wednesday, March 11, 2020 (Levenson et al. 2020). Along with the sentence, The Weinstein Company (TWC), was eliminated from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (Barnes 2017). Watching the trial and the cancelation of The Weinstein Company unfold gives women the security that their voices are beginning to be heard and that this behaviour will no longer be tolerated at a higher level of power. When abusive men are held accountable, women are then able to feel more comfortable using their voices as the victim. On the other hand, due to the overwhelming amount of men cancelled for their history with sexual violence, often women take the brunt for the negative implications of cancel culture. A common perception for women is that they are now severely lacking a sense of humour, finding a reason to be offended by everything in the media. In an article titled, "What could it mean to say that today's stand-up audiences are too sensitive?," author Phillip Deen (2020) writes about former comedian, Lindy West. West, who is now a cultural and political writer, admits that some people may actually be humourless but believes that "'contemporary audiences' criticism of comedy arises not from oversensitivity but from the inclusion of previously marginalized voices and an expansion of basic moral decency" (Deen, 2020). The former comedian explains that, "what Seinfeld and some other comedians see as a threat, I see as doors being thrown open to more and more voices. ... It's so-called political correctness that gave me the courage and the vocabulary to demand better from the community I love" (West, 2015, as cited in Deen 2020). Therefore, individuals like West show how women play a significant role in the functionality of cancel culture, and that cancelling people can have a positive effect on marginalized individuals.

CONCLUSION

This essay is designed to be a thought provoking, open-ended conversation, encouraging readers to think beyond the confines of their own social circles and dive into the depths of discomfort and disagreement. Questioning our common practices as social beings is the first step required in order to enact social change. It is clear that I, myself, have yet to come to a conclusion regarding the productivity of cancel culture. However, I do know that there is room to question how we act in the presence of "immoral" behaviour. Cancel culture is inherently divisive in that it excludes individuals based on their moral beliefs and social behaviour. Although disagreeing with someone will no longer affect our ability to survive as a species (even though it feels like it can sometimes), there is room to evolve in the direction towards social equality, increasing the quality of life for people on a global scale.

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CLOSING

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Take care of yourselves out there!

Warmly,

TWWS Collective

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