THE PATHS OF IDENTITY

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FOREWORD

The uniqueness of our identities derives from the paths we live, which lead us to the person that we are today. We are each shaped by the world around us through our experiences, interests, families, and friends, which determine who we are and how we see the world. This becomes our identity. Rooted in Rhetoric Volume IX takes the reader on a journey through some of those paths from our authors' unique lives and experiences. Within these pages, contributors have shared their experiences through different disciplines, such as Rhetoric, English, and History, while using various literary forms.

Learning about the lives and journeys of others allows us to put ourselves in their shoes and build connections and relationships, which is sadly lacking in today's world. This journal shows it is possible to rebuild these human connections through the unique creativity of our contributors, such as game creation, and a connection to Winnipeg through poetry, blasting us into the past to better grapple with racial disparities and the very intimate challenges of personal identity.

This volume of Rooted in Rhetoric aims to show that while each of us is moving through life on different paths, we can still enjoy and participate in learning from and sharing our paths with others. We welcome you to join us in the diverse collaboration of ideas that merge our paths together.

Precious Gauthier, B.A., B.Sc.

INTRODUCTION

"The Paths of Identity" is the ninth volume of Rooted in Rhetoric, an academic journal published by The University of Winnipeg's Rhetoric, Writing, and Communications department. This collection demonstrates the different paths we take to forming identity in a variety of piece genres. It explores these paths through creative nonfiction, rhetorical analysis, rhetorical critique, research essay, poetry, and even game creation. This edition's authors, like many past editions, have come together from various university departments, such as Rhetoric, English, History, Geography, and Biology.

We have established, both in this edition and past editions, that we are all unique in our identities. But what makes "The Paths of Identity" distinct is that it highlights the differences in the paths we take to get there. We are surrounded by global depictions and interpretations of the "best" or "correct" ways to get to where and who we want to be. Social and mainstream media flood us with strangers' stories about how they got to where they are and then tell us how we should be living in order to achieve the same or similar goals. What our authors show us is that there are many ways to form your identity and that your path to identity will look different from your peers. There is no correct path to identity, but a variety of paths.

Thank you to all of our contributing authors this year for sharing their unique pieces that came to us in many unique writing genres. Thank you, as well, to this year's supervisors, Dr. Jaqueline McLeod Rogers, Dr. Helen Lepp Friesen, Dr. Ryan Clement, and Dr. Eunhee Buettner, for their expertise and guidance. Thanks to this year's editors who volunteered their time and skill. And, lastly, a special thank you to the department of Rhetoric, Writing, and Communications for their continued sponsoring of this student-led journal that publishes and recognizes the voices of their students.

Kaitlynn Couto, B.A. (Hons.)

RETURNING WITH THE TIDE

CAELIN BRUNETTE

Caelin Brunette is currently working towards their BA in Rhetoric and Communications. They are interested in digital communications, and enjoy analyzing the way politics and rhetoric have changed since the introduction of the internet. Outside of class, Caelin can be found producing digital art, and they plan to pursue a career that will allow for the utilization of both their written, and visual products.

Out of all the indoor pools in the Winnipeg, Pan Am is technically the most impressive. It contains four swimming pools, seven diving boards, seven staircases, and a five-lane running track. For a building with such a breadth of offerings, it still maintains the potential to bore you to tears. I know this to be true thanks to the frequent hosting of its most tedious event, the swim meet. A swim meet is a competition in which swimmers from all over the province compete for the quickest times over a period of three days. Due to the great number of competitors, race categories, and lack of pools, the meet requires the swimmers and their unfortunate younger sisters to stay at the pool for eight-hour days, days in which they may only swim two or three times.

With my brother Rylan swimming competitively throughout secondary school, I had more than enough time to count the pools, the diving boards, the stairways, and the lanes of the running track. My options for entertainment were slim. He competed in an era before children had phones, and my parents were often glued as close to the pool as they could be, up against the barrier and shuffling through their stack of schedule papers as if Rylan's next race wasn't four hours away and could sneak up on them at any moment.

Bothering Rylan himself was out of the question. As my parents reminded me, he "needed to focus", and was more inconveniently confined to the deck where non-competitors as myself were strictly forbidden from entering. I could sneak a peek at him occasionally by leaning over the railing, my long hair swinging below me as I strained up onto my tip toes, my hands white-knuckling the railing for support before a nearby parent told me to cut it out. This lack of options left me to explore every corner of the building in search of a way to keep my boredom and subsequent insanity at bay. While there were other children trapped at the pool in a similar predicament to my own, I was typically the oldest by far, and as a result, we had little to talk about aside from our shared hobby of watching the clock seemingly stand still and wishing we were at home.

At the time, despising a pool in such a way was new for me. Swimming had always been such a deeply personal activity, one so strongly associated with my family. Some of my earliest memories took place in the frigid lake at my grandparent's cabin, or in any of the many other indoor pools where my brother and I learned to swim. After her separation, my mother prioritized a house with a pool, and we spent many years learning to care for its delicate ecosystem, enjoying the luxury it provided. We would spend the summer inventing new games with our friends, splashing until our eyes stung with chlorine, the days framed by the flapping of our towels drying overhead, strung across the fence, and pulling heavy on the line. My mother was adamant that her kids would be strong swimmers, and she accomplished this by keeping us in lessons from the moment we could crawl, up until we had run out of lessons to take. I had told my mom I wanted to quit one of those years, after the lessons had become focused on first aid and spinal skills rather than swimming. She laughed like it was the funniest thing she had ever heard, and the conversation ended without another word.

I ended up getting my wish a few years later regardless, when my brother and I were informed that we were not old enough to enroll in the final class offered, the one that left its graduates with the certification of a

professional lifeguard. According to the city, twelve is too young to be the sole caretaker of a pool. After meeting this temporary end of the road, Rylan decided to pursue competitive swimming (much to my parent's delight), while I went in my own direction, exploring several new hobbies. None of which could be done at Pan Am Pool.

One of the days on one of those endless weekends, inspiration struck me. I had been blessed with a brilliant idea on how to pass the time, a revolutionary new way to most productively and efficiently entertain myself. The idea was to steal from the canteen. Canteen is kind of a loose word: it more so resembled a pop-up table with snacks on top. A single piece of paper taped to the front declared it to be a canteen arguably in name only, with a high schooler parked behind the table in service of it. Its offerings were limited to protein bars and cling-wrapped baked goods, and on this day, I had decided these were a worthy target for my impromptu heist. To be honest, I didn't even want the banana bread. But it was my dad's favourite, and the theft seemed to be less of a slight against the pool than burning it to the ground—something I had also been considering. It also gave me an excuse to bother my dad so conveniently after I had just run out of new ones, and I was starting to have a good feeling he'd be on board.

My good feeling did nothing to dissuade my nerves when actually pitching him on the idea. I was asking him to help me steal after all, a request that is generally met with mixed results from most, let alone a parental figure. I paced around the stands above the railing, waiting until my mom slipped away to join Rylan on the deck (Since when was she allowed?) before I struck. I sauntered up casually, my fingers dragging along the railing behind me as if to convey the depths of my nonchalance. "How goes the pool?" I asked, stopping beside him and turning to face the pool, letting our shoulders bump.

"Oh same as usual, Pea." He borderline shouted, straining to be heard over the cacophony of splashing and cheering echoing off the high walls of the pool. "Anything new up in the stands?"

I shook my head. "Nothing to report. Although…" I dropped a pause to drag him in, rocking back on my heels and stretching my arms taught from where my hands gripped the railing as he glanced over from his schedule, highlighter in hand. "… I did have an idea. Are you free right now?"

"I could be." He said, turning to face me with a smile, eyebrow raised. "What did you have in mind?"

It dawned on me then that I had put all my energy into working up the nerve to pitch the idea, and none of it on the pitch itself. Why would he do this again? What did either of us have to gain from such a foolish exercise? Rather than considering the very real validity of these questions, I pushed forward, doubling down on the casual vibe my nerve had already granted me. "Want to come see if we can steal the banana bread from the canteen with me?"

The immediate regret was intense. He looked me straight in the eye, his face dropping, instantly becoming stony and serious. "Caelin." I repressed the urge to flee. "I'd love to."

For an activity pitched solely as a time-waster, it took very little time at all. We first scouted the area, doing a few rotations on the running track to determine the best angle to approach from, and map our escape route in case disaster struck. We then executed the heist with zero planning other than my dad's briefing: "I'll distract while you grab with your nimble child hands."

It turned out to be almost easier done than said. I slipped behind my dad as he leaned over the table, asking the attendant about their gluten-free offerings. Using his body to block the line of sight, I snagged a slice off the surface as I walked by, casually sliding my hands into my sweater pocket. I couldn't keep the smile off my face as I kept walking, listening to him wrap up his phony conversation and start jogging in my direction to catch up. We rounded the nearest corner, giggling like schoolgirls as we took shelter in an alcove leading to the pool doors and I revealed our bounty from my pocket.

"Pretty slick maneuvers!" He said, picking up and examining our newfound treasure. He laughed as he tossed it back in my direction. "You might be a little too good at that."

I smiled at him and shrugged as I unwrapped the slice. Not wanting to keep him from our spoils, I scarfed down my half and extended the other to him. He smiled and waved his hand, "I'm good, you keep it."

I opened my mouth to argue when a roar suddenly cut my opportunity in half, bursting forth from the nearest door to the pool. The cheers signified the end of a race, clearly a nail-biter judging from the enthusiasm. My dad slipped his phone out of his pocket, glancing at the time and swearing under his breath. Our time had run out.

"Sorry Pea," he said, tucking his phone away and making his way back towards the viewing area. He leaned in to kiss the top of my head on his way by, and I lowered the banana bread, cellophane crinkling in my hand. "That was fun."

I hummed an agreement and watched him walk towards the pool doors, tugging them open and wincing as the newly unmuffled clamour poured through. I could feel the humidity that engulfed him immediately, just barely reaching me from my safety on the other side of the door.

He paused before the door could close completely, propping it open and leaving a sliver of fluorescence peeking through that landing near my feet.

"Tomorrow," He yelled over his shoulder, straining to be heard over the cheers, "let's go for the brownie!"

I laughed alone as the door finally swung shut, the light disappearing and the noise muffling instantly. Even so, as I walked away, I could still hear the whistle blow, and the splashing of the athletes as they launched into the water. The smell of chlorine was similarly inescapable, following me as I walked further and further away from the pool. I settled down into one of the seven staircases, sliding down the wall into a seat and smiling to myself as I began brainstorming what tomorrow's heist would look like.

ON BEING GIVEN THE WRONG NAME

CLAY MYKIETOWICH

Clay Mykietowich is a Métis, queer and trans student who is entering the final year of his honours degree. Clay's writing often centres around his experiences in navigating identity and acceptance, touching on numerous aspects of the communities he is a part of. His work is often over looked by his cat, Zima, who contributes to the process by jumping on the keyboard and enforcing regular breaks for treats. In addition to his writing endeavours, Clay is passionate about all things creative and dabbles in drawing, embroidery and live performance.

You were given a name. In fact, you've likely been given many names. Whether it was given to you before you were born or sometime in your first moments doesn't matter much. You were given a name. Ever since you were given your name, it became the first seed of your identity, the first point of introduction that differentiates you from others. You, who you are, begins to bloom from that name you were given. Yet, it was given to you by someone who had no idea who you were or who you would become; someone who hadn't even met you face to face yet. What if they were wrong?

The name I was given was wrong. It didn't fit. From the moment I was able to say my name myself, I knew. It was sticky as it bubbled up from my throat and it clung to my teeth every time I forced it from my lips. I could hear my voice saying it, but that name was never mine. Growing up, I was considered a shy kid, but this wasn't because I didn't like being around people. I avoided interactions because telling someone my name felt awful. Followed by hearing someone repeat it: my name that didn't feel like it belonged to me, was like torture.

I accepted the shy label and let my parents do my introductions for me. This method was nearly foolproof, working in most situations to save me from choking on the object of my name. But no matter what, I would be met with moments where I could not avoid that fate.

Sitting on the cool laminate floor of my kitchen, my brother and I wait eagerly beside the blocky old radio while our mom stands in the doorway, ready to dial the phone number for us. We listen carefully to the crinkly commercial break that interrupts the radio broadcast and wait for our favourite voice to return, Ace Burpee. Today we are trying our luck to get on air and win a special kids' prize pack. We really don't care what the prize is because the real treat is hearing ourselves talk with Ace on the radio—we're radio stars!

The final commercial comes to a close, and the familiar HOT 103 jingle fills the room. My brother turns up the volume dial, making the static gurgle even worse, but Ace's voice can carry through. Ace welcomes us back and explains the rules of the contest: the first child to call in and answer a riddle correctly will win the prize.

"What gets wetter the more that it dries?" Ace asks. My brother, having four years more experience than me and already being in grade school, knows the answer immediately. He whispers it in my ear and tells our mom that I know the answer. My mom dials the number and hands me the phone. I let the spiraled coil of our extra-long phone cord stretch and compress around my finger that I've wiggled into its center while the phone rings. My breath catches in my throat as the ringing stops and his familiar voice flows into my ear.

"Hello and thank you for calling HOT 103! Who am I speaking with?" Ace asks.

"What?" I blurt out.

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"What's your name, kiddo?" Ace asks again. Everyone and everything in the room suddenly disappear. It is only me, Ace, and the phone between us. I stumble. Why doesn't Ace Burpee know my name? I know his name so well. Why can't he tell that it's me? Doesn't he have a caller ID? I bring the receiver of the phone as close to me as possible, the yellowing plastic almost touching my lips, and I mumble out my name.

"I didn't catch that! Can you please repeat that?" Ace asks once more, unaware of the turmoil he's putting me through. I repeat myself, a little louder this time, no longer wanting to be a radio star.

"You're going to have to repeat that one more time for me," Ace says.

"My name is…" I try to yell into the phone and trail off to nothing. Ace and I continue in a never-ending, fruitless battle. We are stuck in a loop, and I can't escape. The name cuts my tongue and rips my cheeks every time it's repeated, but Ace is never satisfied.

"I'm sorry but we are running out of time! Do you know the answer to my riddle?"

"Yes." I say.

"What gets wetter the more that it dries?" Ace asks.

"A towel." I say. I throw the phone in my mom's hands and leave the room. I won the contest. The next week my mom, my brother, and I went for a drive to the HOT 103 station office to pick up a giant gift basket. I won the contest and all its amazing prizes but lost one of many battles that all began with me being given the wrong name. This wasn't the first battle, and certainly wouldn't be the last.

WHO ARE YOU, REALLY?

EM PENNER

Em Penner (they/them) is a queer, nonbinary, Anishinaabe student in their fourth year of a Rhetoric and Communications degree. Their family is from Peguis First Nation. They are working on reconnecting to their Indigenous culture. Em's work tends to focus on a passion for 2SLGBTQIA+ and Indigenous topics.

Have you ever had a moment where you felt uncomfortable in your own skin? Like you were simply a soul floating in a vessel that was not meant to be yours? Perhaps there was some sort of mistake when you were born, that your essence was on its way to a different body but got nudged off-course. Or perhaps not. Maybe, just maybe, you are exactly who you were meant to be, discomfort and all. But knowing when it is right and when it is worth the discomfort can be challenging.

As a child, I always felt a bit uncomfortable in my body. I was told that it was a normal aspect of girlhood, which was confusing indeed. But as I grew older, I realized that my level of discomfort was not the healthy kind— whatever that may mean. My body became my most vicious enemy, my voice was a dagger scraping down a chalkboard, and my brain was ultimately not my own. I was an imposter in this shell. But when I discovered that I could mould my body, identity, and mind to work in harmony with my soul, I knew I could feel peace. Slowly, I found myself in a body that could be called mine and realized I was most "me" as a nonbinary person. Nonbinary can be a tricky concept for some people, but to me it is simple. When describing it to people, I always say that I am simply a person. I am not a girl or a boy, I am just Em. I am just me. Not everyone understands what that means, and it can be rough waters to tread. "This generation has become too soft," some have said.

But my identity is not a joke, and it is not some new anomaly. People like me have always existed and they always will. The difference is that now we can create space for ourselves to be seen. It is difficult, undoubtedly. Sometimes I forget that not everyone sees me the way I see myself. There are places in this world where my existence is a heinous crime. It is saddening, to say the least, but I try to remind myself that I am lucky to be me, and the world is lucky to have me in it.

When I came out as nonbinary, I felt as if a thick layer of cement had been chiseled away from my lungs. The world stopped for a moment, and I could finally breathe. I remember exactly as it happened. Sitting in my basement during the COVID lockdown under a single flickering pot light. Around 10 p.m. Trying to complete an essay, but a dark mass of dread swirled in my belly. I felt nauseous. I had for a long time. Everything was wrong. I needed to do something about it. I went to my Instagram biography and stared at the nauseating, mocking pronouns presented beside my name. My body physically recoiled. I felt my heartbeat drumming in my ears, getting louder and faster. Click on the pronouns. Do it. Type it out. Show yourself and everyone else who you really are. I do not know how long I sat and stared with my thumb hovering over my phone screen. And then I did it. I clicked on the pronoun option and changed those wretched words to they/them. I placed my phone down. Suddenly, everything went quiet. My heartbeat slowed. The pot light above me ceased flickering for a moment and shone a steady beam over me. My tense shoulders ached as they relaxed for the first time in years. The turbulence in my stomach settled. I took one slow, deep breath and closed my eyes. This was who I really was.

Since that moment, I have never looked back—though some might and that is okay. Finding peace within yourself is not an easy feat. But the journey here was important. If I had to do it all over again, I would not change a thing. I am who I am today because of who I was yesterday.

A friend recently asked me, if I would want to go back to high school as the person I am today, if I had the chance. Of course not. I am me, thanks to every single moment that I have experienced in my life, no matter how big or small. And I made a promise to myself to only look forward from now on. Being nonbinary is the most at peace I have ever felt with myself. My soul has always been my own, but my body has not. I have reclaimed this space inside myself and created a life to nourish my soul. Although this journey may not have been a straight path, it is mine. I would relive the turmoil and joy and love and loss a thousand times over if it meant that every time, I would become exactly who I am today. I hope my story may inspire you, reader. I wish so dearly for you to find peace in yourself if you have not yet discovered it, and for it to always stay strong and steady inside you if you already have. It is not always easy, but it is always worth it. Your body is your home, your vessel. And it houses the essence of your entire being. Be kind to it, and it will be kind to you. We are malleable creatures, and though I have found peace, I will continue to change because that is simply part of who I am. But it does not change that I am me. So, I encourage you to turn inward, reader, and think: who are you, really?

ON MY BELT

KYLE CHEMERIKA

Kyle is an honours student in Rhetoric and Communications at the University of Winnipeg and is fascinated by the discourse surrounding societal issues, such as polarization, radicalization, and social media. With a lifelong passion for writing, he hopes this publication will be a stepping stone to many more in the future.

My belt is frayed at the end where I'd cut it some 13 years ago and melted down the fabric. The length is stained in the brine of my sweat and countless dips in the Columbia River where it winds through the BC trails, and the heart of the Rockies. It's too short for my growing waist, and the buckle bites my belly when I sit slouched for too long. The colour and build scream militaristic utility—not suitable for suits and evidence of my misbegotten status as a 'narc' for those who care to use the term. Yet, I can't seem to let it go.

It is probably equally the history and sentimentality that I feel, in combination with a kind of awe at its robustness, that makes me unable to part ways. Purchased in my inaugural year of military service, I'd bought it to replace the issued belt: a flimsy and ugly pain-in-the-ass strip of nylon that necessitated feeding and un-feeding its length through a loop every time I needed to undress. My new belt in comparison, was easy as it required the need to feed the length through the loop—but only once—then I could snap the cobra buckle together or apart with only a finger and a thumb. Any excess length lay flat against my waist, held together only by a hook and fastened loop. Where the standard issue belt was somewhat soft and prone to fold under pressure, the new one had a second layer that meant I could hang gear off it, and not worry about it collapsing. Even, it has a loop at the front as a backup harness when rappelling.

I haven't had to hang anything off my belt in seven or eight years, and the little loop at the front has never been used. What use are these considerations now? Even when I was young and tough and could take on anything, I had no desire to rappel. I avoided it at all costs, feigning sickness, injury or any other excuse I could employ to escape. Even distant, these memories of prevarication still give me angst. A humbling reminder of my fears.

For Christmas this year, my wife bought me a replacement belt. It has a similar cobra buckle, nylon construction, and a neat little loop for hanging your keys—much more helpful than a backup loop for rappelling. I haven't worn it yet. Notionally, this is due to the lack of hook and loop. All the excess length sticks out from my body, and I foresee it annoying me endlessly. Of course, I could always cut it like I had with my old belt when I first purchased it.

That evening was so long ago that it's difficult to remember. The riverside house of my buddy's parents, diffuse lamplight illuminating a living room with supple leather couches upon which four of us sat, arranged around a five-foot square box full of an assortment of gear. We'd ordered an array of things—pants, vests, pouches, booklets, and of course, belts. My belt came all folded in a small plastic bag that, when I unfolded it, left it bent at strange angles and smelling strongly of new plastic. The others had their own goodies however, I paid them little attention as my hands ran the length of my belt, pinching and prodding, gripping and pulling.

"Try it on," said one of my friends, as if I needed any additional reinforcement. Uncoordinated, I fed the tough material through the loops of my pants and found the width such that it barely fit. Oh no…I bought the wrong size. Brute force propelled me onwards as it often did in those formative years. I fumbled, looping the end through the buckle and redoing the process several times to get the tightness correct.

"There." When the tightness felt right, I lifted my arms and shirt just enough to see it fully.

The embrace was like nothing I'd felt from a belt since. From the couch, one of my friends reached out and tore my belt, and by extension, my body, towards him. It did not give, but my lack of foresight and poor stance did, resulting in me collapsing down upon him and the others seated around him. There was an uproar of outrage and laughter, followed by a series of further tests—a pantsing attempt, the fitting of various pouches and a holster that clipped to the belt smartly. I was impressed by the security it provided to my modesty and its utility in my role as a soldier.

In denying my new belt, is it the utility I'm safeguarding or the memories of my life and the most difficult periods of it? Those supple leather couches and the laughter come as quickly to my head as the other darker memories —of a knife and the night, both heavy and dark and interminable in their malice. My choices and their consequences and of my freedom and or lack thereof. Perhaps such recollections are better off in the dustbin of my memory so that I may make new ones and imbue them upon some other artifact. Perhaps my belt belongs there, too.

A TALK ON BEADING AND RECLAIMING CULTURAL IDENTITY

MADDIE FORDYCE

My name is Madison Fordyce. I am a third-year student pursuing a degree in Rhetoric and Communications with the hopes of minoring in linguistics. I have loved free writing and learning about cultures around the world. After graduation, I intend to travel and write about the world.

It all starts with a thread and a needle, an image and a piece felt. You pierce your needle through the felt string attached, placing 1 then 7 then 16 beads until eventually that 2D image becomes vibrant and lively. With every pierce of the needle and bead placed, stories are told, and experiences are exchanged. Hi everyone, my name is Madie, and today I want to show that Indigenous beading is more than just art, it is community. It is the chance to learn, reintroduce, and strengthen one's connections to their culture and identity. But before I begin, I want you to think about a question throughout my talk. In the end, I want to come back and ask you this again, have you ever struggled to find yourself? Now I know it is a broad question and I am sure some of you are still learning about yourself, but I want you to think about it. Do you find yourself through acts of self-love, in hardships, or could it be something within your cultural identity?

 My family is predominantly Eastern European. I am Scottish and English with some Hungarian sneaking its way in and that is all I know. I have never learned about my background, nor have I wanted to. I have always been told that those traits are just part of my DNA and have nothing to do with who I am on a personal level. But looking back, I thought as such because my parents did not know themselves.

Unlike Indigenous practices, I never understood the need to learn about the practices in my ancestry because it was in the past, that was until I sat with a thread and needle and started to listen. I had the opportunity to learn to bead at the Aboriginal Student Services Center where I met a group of women who were excited to teach how to bead and share the practice. There were some like me who just started; no experience and no idea what they were doing just pushing the needle through the felt to place their next layer of beads. At the same time, there were those who were well-practiced in the art form. Meticulously counting out the number of beads they needed, weaving intricate designs, making things like earrings and even pieces of a quilt. It was overwhelming because these women were so experienced, but I soon realized as I worked on my little flower that there is so much more to beading than the art itself.

Every pierce of the needle through the felt came with a story or experience. One woman spoke of going to a sweat, she explained the entire process and the visions she had during it. Another talked about the stories and knowledge that were taught to her by Elder Dan the last time she saw him. All of them were so eager to tell their stories and exchange experiences, I felt surreal.

One that stood out most was the life story of a younger girl sitting next to me. She was fair skinned with blond hair, and if I'm being honest if she did not tell me she was Metis I would have thought she was Icelandic. She came from a small town outside Winnipeg where she told us that growing up her parents did not really practice any Metis traditions. It was not until she came to school here and found the beading club that she developed a deeper connection to herself. She expressed how every time she came and listened, it excited her to experience traditions in her culture like a Sweat or a Powwow. She talked about how she found the missing piece of herself, all because a group of women sat down together and helped her reconnect with her cultural identity.

Now I know I went off on a bit of a tangent, but I cannot see another way to express that embracing Indigenous beading practices is not just about the physical experience. It is more than just art with a needle, string, and some beads. It is a community that has helped many individuals reconnect and find themselves. It is a small piece that helps create a safe space for storytelling and for knowledge to be passed from one generation to the next. In a way beading is like a form of medicine for the soul.

Even for someone like me who has no Indigenous lineage, I felt a stronger sense of self. I remember finishing my first piece and although it was awful I could not wait to start the next. I realized though I was not looking forward to the beading, but to the chance to learn and to listen. What I thought was just going to be about making some flowers turned into me wanting to experience the stories I heard these women share. It made me want to look deeper into myself and learn about the parts of my identity that may be missing as well.

Taking it back to my question earlier, I asked, have you ever struggled to find yourself? Take a second and think about it. I am sure many of you said yes and for many, I am sure you are still looking. For these women, it was no different. Finding themselves in a world that wants to keep them down was not an easy task. It took practices like beading to help them feel confident in their identity. It did not matter if they were Metis, Cree, or Anishinabe, all that mattered was the thread and needle, and the chance to connect with who you are on a deeper level.

AN ESSAY OF THE HOME

RAQUEL TORRES

Raquel Torres is a Rhetoric and Communication major at the University of Winnipeg. Born in Winnipeg, Raquel was raised by an incredibly tight knit (at times overbearing) Latin American family. Her love of storytelling is one she hopes to carry into her future professional career, whatever that may be.

Home

We moved onto Pentonville Crescent in the summer of 2004. David, my younger brother was just ten days old when the U-Haul pulled up into the unfinished driveway, rocks and sand crunching under the weight of our belongings. Mama stepped into the foyer, my brother swaddled in her arms, and sighed with relief. After over a year of attending open houses and having lengthy meetings with the realtor and financial advisor, my parents decided on building in the new community of River Park South. The humble bungalow sandwiched between two neighbours who happen to have the same name (Don 1 and Don 2) was a definite upgrade from the apartment we left empty on Pembina. The new tenants of our apartment would most likely be international students at the University of Manitoba like the rest of our neighbours in the complex. We settled quickly into our new home, eventually getting the driveway paved, the front and back yards landscaped, and the basement finished with additional rooms. Like the maple tree my dad planted in the front yard, our roots sunk deeper into the soil and our branches stretched their reach to the sky; this space was ours. This was no longer an empty house; this was the Torres-Boluarte home. My mom has always been exceptional at making a space feel welcoming.

Her eye for interior design was not passed down to me but I appreciate all the effort she puts into decorating the house. She's never satisfied though, something my dad would always tease her about. She wanted to paint the walls for aesthetic reasons whereas my dad wanted to get the roof re-done to maintain the house in good shape. Well, the roof has been fixed and the basement is fully painted. The upstairs is still a work in progress. The walls have markings of paintings that were once hung, tape residue from holding birthday streamers and baby shower garlands, faded marker stains from a mischievous David and then grandkids, dents from moving furniture around when Paloma (my older sister) moved out. The walls say so much without saying anything. Memories good, bad, happy, sad, the walls have seen it all and kept it sacred. This house is my comfort, my joy, and my peace. It's kept us warm on cold Winterpeg nights and cool in the summer heat. Twenty years have passed since we moved in and it still feels like it was just yesterday.

Hole

Papa's hands have always been much bigger than mine. I would purposely follow his trail to my parents' bathroom to wash my hands with him instead of joining my older sister in the sink we shared after coming home from feeding the deer at Assiniboine Park Zoo—one of my fondest memories I have of sharing time with my dad as a little girl. I could barely reach over the sink, but I was always there eagerly waiting for him to turn the tap on. His large dark hands would envelope my chubby kid fingers, lathering them lovingly with soap and rinsing with warm water. Despite papa's gentleness, I would still feel the callouses, rough knuckles, all the life that had marked his skin. I think I realized early on that his hands held so much experience and wisdom and it fascinated me. He would dwarf everyone in my family, and his stature and presence were solid and safe. As I sat next to the hospital bed, my hands cupping his, I could feel the man I thought was invincible, slipping away.

The rock of the family was eroding before my very eyes. The doctors in the ICU told us he would not likely last the night, prompting my sister and her family to swiftly catch the quickest flight to Winnipeg from Calgary. She came straight to the hospital from the airport, while my brother in-law settled at our home with the kids and my younger brother, caring for them in our stead to spare them the long and difficult night ahead of us. Papa's hands didn't feel the same anymore. They were swollen and grayish in colour; a stark contrast to the cinnamon hue his large boned fingers and wide dorsal had forty days prior. Maybe they were still that colour a week before but neither of us could know since visitation to Covid patients in the ICU was restricted. The last time I saw my dad was to say goodbye to him. But even then, as I played his favourite music and spoke of beautiful memories with my mom and sister, a part of me hoped some remnant of his soul was still in the vessel that was his dying body. I was surprisingly calm through it all, caressing his brow and telling him it was okay for him to go. I think I had subconsciously accepted the fact that he wouldn't come home some time before, sparing me the distress my mother felt and the panic and almost delusional hope my sister clung to until the last moment. His lungs no longer drowned him. He was set free from the tubes and needles that pierced his body and the machines that breathed for him. In the early hours of New Year's Eve, my world changed forever. His hands were my home. His arms wrapped around me in a soothing embrace were my home too. I would hear his heavy footsteps above my head from my room in the basement as he made his way into the kitchen after a long and tiring night shift, bringing me peace and comfort as I could finally slip into a deep sleep. All that was taken from me, from my family. I felt like a sapling that was yanked from the ground and left to shrivel up and die on the side of the road. Stepping foot into the house after papa died, I felt lost and confused. What was this place again?

Whole

 "Come to Calgary, we need to be together." That's what Paloma pleaded. Mama looked down at her feet, phone in hand as tears welled in her eyes. I could see her being torn. We nearly moved to Calgary; we were very close. Of course, we needed to be together but leaving Winnipeg also meant leaving Papa. Now, I know that's not really true. Not a day goes by that I don't feel his presence. It's a different kind of presence now, but I can't shake it, so I know he'll be with me wherever I go.

And yet, Winnipeg and specifically our home is what Papa left for us to enjoy. All his life he worked so hard and gave so much of himself to create a home that he never had for us to live comfortably and happily. When I was younger, my house was my home and now that Papa is resting, I realize this house was a home because he and mama made it that way. It took some time for Paloma to understand this. I know it's not easy for her to be so far from us. There was a time she came to visit without my niece, nephew, and her husband and it felt like the good old days when we were kids again. It was the first time she allowed herself to feel Papa's spirit that still warms the house, and, in that moment, I think she knew we couldn't leave Winnipeg. There's that silent acceptance and understanding between her, mama, and I. The house is just a man-made shelter, but we've cultivated a heart within its walls that still beats ferociously. I was lost for a time, but I think I've found my footing again. I rest my shoulder against the bay window frame of the living room for support and rest my eyes on the red maple tree. Though its branches venture far into the sky, the roots run deep in the soil. It's not going anywhere.

GAMBIT GDD

DANIEL SHAYAN

Daniel Shayan (he/him) is a communicator with over six years of experience in television production and content development. He is a recent graduate from the University of Winnipeg where he received his Bachelor of Arts in Rhetoric & Communications. Currently based in Vancouver, Daniel continues to write, play games, and enjoy weekends at the park with his dog, Leela.

Gambit—Design Statement

Project description

Gambit is a grid-based, trick-taking card game for two players. Set during a presidential election in a fantasy realm called The Prospects, players take the roles of opposing oligarchs vying for control of the nation. Their chosen battlefield: the forums on a social media site called Gambit. Drawing from a collective deck of 52 cards, players will pit their resources against each other to win the election.

Themes

Conceptually, Gambit attempts to speak to the relationship between power and influence. By inhabiting the roles of two powerful oligarchs, the players take advantage of the differences between their constituents to achieve domination. Culture wars are the major theme which the story of the game rests on. The opposing suits, called "Wings" represent the polarized masses, who fight against and alongside each other by the manipulation of their masters. Players use agents of both Wings to achieve their political needs.

Deception is another major theme of the game. Players attempt to position their cards and call each other's bluffs to trap opponents and avoid bad outcomes. Additionally, unity exists as an alternative to independent domination. There is one option for mutual victory in the game, however, on top of a narrow set of conditions being met, both players must agree to accept the mutual victory. Otherwise, they are thrown back into the game. Peace is always an option, but leaders must set aside their egos to achieve it.

This game attempts to reproduce the effects of oligarchy on democracy. In Ian Bogost's chapter, "The Rhetoric of Video Games", he argues that "[games] make arguments about how social or cultural systems work" (23), and it is the goal of Gambit to reproduce the effects of political influence on social media. However, it is explicitly not the role of this game to reproduce the people that participate in this real-life consent-manufacturing. The game is a sandbox to explore the ideas without becoming the evil it portrays. In his seminal Game Studies book, Homo Ludens, theorist John Huizenga posited that play does not operate morally and that "it lies outside the antithesis of wisdom and folly… of good and evil" (6). Just like children who portray the titular characters in Cops and Robbers or the capitalists in Monopoly, the oligarchs in Gambit are morally divorced from the people who portray them, and yet they serve as teachers, reproducing their ideologies in an environment that yields no real-world harm.

Gameplay

Win Condition

Gambit is a fast game and intended to be played through quickly. The goal is to gain 20 votes before your opponent. The winner takes the match.
If the players exhaust all their voters and still do not have a winner, the game ends in stalemate. This signifies mutual defeat.

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If the players both reach 20 points at the same time through use of the Scapegoat card, then both players win. This signifies a mutual win, and the players must congratulate each other.

User Skills

Players must be able to strategize their gameplay and keep track of cards as they move around the grid.

Game Mechanics / Instructions

There are two classes of cards in the deck: Voters and Gambits. Each card also comes in both Wings (suits). The voters range in value between 1-10, they appear in both red and blue Wings, and there are two copies of each card. In total, there are 40 Voters in the deck. There are 10 gambit cards in both red and blue wings. In total there are 12 gambit cards (6 cards in both Wings). The entire deck has 52 cards.

Gambit	Effect
The Scapegoat	Both players gain points equal to the value of the opposing soldier.
The Martyr	Both players lose points equal to the value of the opposing soldier.
The Troll	Opposing player must skip their next turn.
The Re-poster	Convert opposing soldier to your control.
The Influencer	Replace this card with another from your hand.
The Shadow-ban	Choose one card from the opposing player's hand at random. Discard it.

At the start of the game, players each choose a king piece to represent their oligarch. These pieces are placed center at opposite ends of the board. The deck of cards is placed on the center tile, blocking that space on the grid until the deck is exhausted.

At the start of each turn, players flip a coin to determine who goes first. Players have three phases in a turn: a draw phase, a play phase, and a move phase. On the draw phase, players can draw one card from the deck. On the play phase, they can play one card next to their king piece; on the move phase, they can move all their cards on the board up to one space in any direction orthogonally (up, down, left, right).

When a card collides with another card or king piece, this starts a contest. The winner of a contest is determined by a few factors: if a card is in the dominant Wing, it will always win the contest, but if both cards share the same Wing, the higher value card wins. In a case where two cards of identical value and colour collide, both are destroyed and neither player gains any votes. Gambit cards are always destroyed at the end of a contest, and when two Gambit cards collide, sometimes nothing will happen and both cards will be destroyed. The winning player gains points equal to the difference between card values. For example, if one player's blue 10 collides with a blue 4, they gain points equal to the difference between their values: 6. If that same player's blue 10 collides with a red 4 on a red tile, the other player gains 6 points instead, because red is the dominant wing. If a voter collides with the opposing king piece, it does direct damage and its controlling player gains points equal to its value, then it is destroyed. The game board consists of blue and red squares, like a chessboard.

Marketing

Demographics

This game is intended for everyone aged 10+.

Production Costs

Each unit includes a 10"x10" board with a 5x5 grid, a deck of 60 square cards, a trifold instruction sheet, and a box to house everything in. According to production estimates, it would cost CAD $43,619.22 to produce an initial 5000 units of *Gambit* (PrintNinja). This comes out to approximately $8.72 per box. Selling this game at $30/unit would yield $150,000, nearly triple the initial production cost.
$150,000 (revenue) - $43,619.22 (production costs) = $106,380.78 (profit).

Industry Engagement

There are several options for industry engagement. We can reach out to the following distributors: Universal Distribution, Outset Media, and Lions Rampant; participate in distributor tradeshows such as the Retailer Summit in Toronto (Universal Distribution) and Canada Plays at Niagara-on-the-Lake (Lion's Rampant); and participate in public conventions such as PrairieCon (Brandon), Game-a-lot (Edmonton), and SHUX (Vancouver). We can also send out copies of *Gambit* to popular board game influencers for sponsored reviews.

Notes

Design Concept

Gambit was born out of the synthesis of two mechanics. Grid-based tactical games and trick-taking games. Grid based games are some of the most well-known and involve traveling across a grid in ruled movements. Chess is the best-known example of this type of game. These games are highly tactical. Trick-taking games require contests between cards played by either player. The winning player is usually the one who plays the highest value card, although highest value can be defined as the highest number or dominant suit (Board Game Geek). Trick-taking games often require the ability to bluff your opponent to win more tricks.

Part of the issue that arose out of designing this game was understanding heuristics ahead of any actual playtest. The term "heuristic" is defined in The Classification of Games as the common understandings by which players learn and play games. These are the rules, both explicit and implicit that define gameplay (Elias, Gutschera and Garfield, 1 Basics 11) and affect the metagame — the game outside of gameplay, including the evolving discourse surrounding it (Elias, Gutschera and Garfield, 7

Superstructure 203-204). The first step was to look at games that had similar mechanics to the ones I wanted to reproduce, such as Chess and Hearts—and then synthesizing them into something unique. The next step, which turned out to be the most difficult, was creating a theme that was both cohesive and interesting. Even Chess, a game with no narrative supplements is at least vaguely about medieval warfare and conquest. Gambit did not start with any solid, cohesive theme, which made writing it hard. The game needed to be about opposing powers who utilized the same resources to fight each other. After a few failed attempts to realize a theme, I looked to Ian Bogost's aforementioned text to understand why my narrative mattered at all. He says, "[one] use of procedural rhetoric is to expose and explain the hidden ways of thinking that often drive social, political, or cultural behavior" (128), and just like that, Gambit was revitalized by some old class notes. The game already had its gears, and all it needed was an exterior that complimented its mechanics and portrayed its message.

In his article, "Game Design as Narrative Architecture," Henry Jenkins describes the theatrical tradition of commedia del arte*.He describes how each mask represents a stock character whose actor is able to express themselves within certain limits (particularly the specific characterizations of each stock character) (Jenkins 9). The cards designed for this game were initially called "soldiers" and the gambit cards had a variety of vaguely medieval-espionage names. This did not make sense in the context of the game, so they were changed to be reflective of an online and heavily polarized world. For example, the Troll and the Influencer represent the types of real-world propagandists we see in culture wars. The only cards usually able to accumulate points, however, are the "voters." It is important to note that the reproduction of oligarchical ideologies does not make up for a narrative. While players can infer a larger narrative from the thematic elements of the game, there is no actual story to the game. Games may contain narrative elements, but they are not inherently narratives (Juul 2).

Even though Gambit does not contain an explicit story, it does have one of the most compelling narrative features: a relatable protagonist. In portraying the oligarchs, the players feel compelled to win because they identify with their characters. Jesper Juul identifies the relationship between the player and the game, stating that the constant narrative feature that brings people back to games is the player (7-8).

Changes from Pre-playtest Game

- Gambit was initially set in a generic, modern city, and did not include an election. This setting left the game feeling boring and inconsequential. The setting was changed to feel more important, and comment on the relationship between culture and power.
- Cards will be renamed to match this new theme. The Beneficiary becomes the Scapegoat. The Destroyer becomes the Martyr. The Poacher becomes the Re-poster. The Stranger becomes the Influencer. The Saboteur becomes the Troll. The Exorcist becomes the Shadow-ban.
- Previously, the game board was a 5x7 grid. Each player had ample space to retreat to and unfortunately, this led to prolonged gameplay. The board size will be reduced to 5x5 squares to force more frequent conflicts.
- Previously, tiles were painted onto the board. This game would benefit from movable tiles that players can create at the start of a game.
- Some cards, such as the Stranger, were received well in the playtest, while others were not. The Collector and the Forger cause the players to surpass the limit of cards they can hold in their hands. These cards will be removed. Additionally, the Enforcer and the Jailer did not appear to make the game interesting so they will be removed.

- There were too many gambit cards in the initial playtest. The original ratio was 1:1 between gambits and voters (previously called soldiers). Players tended to push their gambit cards forward and held voter cards back. This resulted in anticlimactic gameplay. Most initial conflicts were between two Gambit cards, which would often have no effect since these cards are largely contingent on facing a voter. One solution would be to reduce the total number of gambit cards in the game, including removing certain gambits entirely. Another solution would be adding values to the gambit cards so that they can have effects when they run into each other.
  - After removing the Forger, the Collector, the Enforcer, and the Jailer, the total number of gambit cards is 12 (6x2).

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A PERFECT DAY IN DOWNTOWN WINNIPEG

DARA BABATOPE

> Dara Babatope is a scraggly haired Nigerian writer majoring in English, with plans to minor in Rhetoric. With diverse influences ranging from rock to conscious hip-hop, his work leans towards the introspective and the complexity thereof. This second-year writer illustrates scenarios through the lens of macabre and surreal, showcasing life's absurdity.

Nirvana and blurry broken glass are all I think about.

Well, I distinctly remember winter's darkness
Walking around with frightened allies
People, hoping for a home stumble into
Wells.

Their imagination flies
And grants them high heroin wings

Masses missing, on the streets
Entwined in cold cocoons; needles of morbidity
Strong smells evoked
Rebuked by passers walking by

The suffocating smoke
My assaulted nose

In the shower of metal, while bodies froze
There's an exposed angsty fuse of a Man
Waiting to be lit into an inferno

AD ASTRA

DARA BABATOPE

My lovely son's ashes are at shore.
Making him to study till his bore;
Mumbling in grandiose ignorance
I heated up the kettle of argument
Reached the boiling point, he melted through the floor

Climbing the poles, I searched
the alleys for a sign, a Star
anything, even an ant to give my black hole a raison d'etre
The birds sang no more
Won't you pick up the broken stones?

Pick it up
Pick it up
Up, hark, it's too late!
Velvet red and streams of gold flow through his carpet's valley of returnal
Ceasing to be.
I wish he was here
I wish the arrogance had no air

Father Sun continues to weep regretful rays of eternity
I'm thirsty, please give me water
I wanted to bloom, like a flower

HOW AN INFLUENCER USED INEFFECTIVE ETHOS TO DEFEND SHEIN: A NEO-ARISTOTELIAN RHETORICAL ANALYSIS

ALEAH KAMERMAN

Aleah is a student enrolled in the University of Winnipeg and Red River College's Joint Communications Program. During her time at the university, Aleah particularly enjoyed studying rhetoric, culture and media. Aleah grew up just outside the city of Winnipeg, and has always enjoyed challenging and productive discourse.

In June of 2023, an influencer named Dani Carbonari uploaded, and then later deleted, a series of videos documenting her brand partnership with fast-fashion company Shein. One of these clips showed Carbonari participating in a Shein-orchestrated tour of a manufacturing facility, praising the company. This clip, originally from Carbonari's Instagram account @danidmc, was reuploaded to X by a user with the handle @thisisnefertiti (Carbonari). A neo-Aristotelian critique reveals the video's argument hinges on ethos but lacks persuasive power to garner audience trust in the rhetor and the promoted company. The neo-Aristotelian method of rhetorical criticism includes three steps: evaluating the context of the object text, applying the five rhetorical canons, and analyzing the effectiveness of the object text's rhetoric (Foss 32; Newbold). Beginning with a context evaluation helps determine necessary background details about who the rhetor is, and what motivated her to create this video. The rhetor, Dani Carbonari, is an American social media influencer and plus-size model.

Her predominant platform is YouTube, and she has branded herself as a "confidence activist," with her content revolving around body positivity and plus-sized fashion (Connelly). In June of 2023, Carbonari participated in a Shein-funded trip to Guangzhou, China to visit Shein facilities and share the experience with her followers. The fashion company likely held this brand trip to improve their image, which has been tarnished by reports of Shein engaging in "human rights violations, forced labor and child labor, pollution and environmental degradation, as well as the use of unsafe chemicals…" (Ebben 10; James 248). Shein likely chose to use influencers to promote their brand because consumers often see their favourite influencers as relatable and trustworthy (Farrell et al. 37). Carbonari would have been motivated to partner with Shein because as a content creator, paid vacations and brand deals could help increase her viewership and profits. Additionally, one of Carbonari's key messages is promoting accessible plus-sized fashion. Sustainably made fashion is often more costly, and that cost increases when brands adjust their patterns and methods to accommodate larger sizes (Davis 19). Shein, however, offers larger sizes for a bargain price (Gómara 20). Evaluating the context also includes determining the audience of the rhetor, and what would persuade them. Carbonari's intended audience would be young women on social media who appreciate plus-size fashion inspiration, entertainment, and are persuaded by Carbonari's body-confidence rhetoric. A comment made on the video on X says, "I like Dani, but [I] didn't see this propaganda. No, girl, we're not doing that" (MEG4N). This demonstrates that fans of Carbonari would likely not expect or seek out social justice activism content from her but still hold Carbonari to a high enough standard that they do not want to see her partnering with a fast fashion company. However, the news of Carbonari's partnership with Shein spread beyond her intended audience. Carbonari went viral after posting about her experience at the Shein facilities, garnering negative attention from millions of internet strangers and several media sites such as The US Sun, Vice, Daily Mail, and New York Times (Connelly; Fenwick; Gissen; Malone).

After examining the context, the object text itself must be analyzed by applying the five rhetorical canons. Four of these canons include the memory, arrangement, delivery, and style (Foss 32; Newbold). The object text is arranged as a one-minute mini documentary style video, with a voice over from the rhetor. She uses phrases like, "I was really excited and impressed to see the working conditions" (Carbonari 0:13), and "Shein is just such a developed and complex company, and it was so beautiful to see firsthand," (Carbonari 0:21) thus demonstrating that the rhetor is lacking memory, or knowledge of Shein's unethical practices. The pro-Shein rhetoric shows that Carbonari under researched the company before partnering with them. However, Carbonari's delivery of these phrases is confident, and the video and voice over are high quality. Considering that this was originally an Instagram video, the language used in this object text has a professional style, with Carbonari swapping her usual bubbly energy for a more serious tone. However, the video still follows conventions of influencer content: the montage of the tour is filled with staged shots that are designed to look candid, and Carbonari uses some colloquial language relevant to her audience on social media, including referring to herself in the third person; "...you guys know me, she's an investigative journalist" (Carbonari 0:28). She is also wearing a trendy and revealing outfit and makes expressive and excited movements gesturing towards the facility (Carbonari 0:16). These traits make Carbonari a more relatable rhetor, and the rhetoric more digestible to online audiences.

The remaining rhetorical canon to consider is invention, which is what the argument is built upon. This object text's argument is built upon Carbonari's appeal to character and authority, or ethos. Twice in the minute long video, the words "own two eyes," are used (Carbonari 0:06, 0:56). Additionally, the rhetor calls herself an "independent thinker," "one that always likes to be open minded and seek the truth," (Carbonari 0:51) and "an investigative journalist" because she spoke with a Shein employee during the tour.

Carbonari says that the employee spoke "…honestly and authentically; she was very surprised at all rumours have been spread in the US" (Carbonari 0:28). The hidden message in this rhetoric is that Carbonari should be considered a more reliable authority than the studies or news releases audiences may have seen previously. This implicit message is revealed through the ethos rhetoric that emphasizes how Carbonari has visited and seen the facilities personally, asked employees questions, and therefore should be trusted. Additionally, this video and all other brand-partnership content on the internet are inherently rhetorical because they are ultimately trying to persuade consumers to buy something. This video sends an overt rhetorical message to audiences: watch this tour video and see how Shein is not as bad as some people in the media have made it out to be, and please support this company.

This object text's rhetoric was not effective, as online audiences were quick to criticize the tone deaf video and point out Shein's documented misconduct. Some fans of Carbonari came to her defense during the viral controversy, with one comment under a YouTube video saying, "Some of y'all favourite influencers still buy from [Shein] so I don't know why [you are all] coming for Dani. She is very genuine. Y'all don't know Dani personally as well as what happens behind closed doors with [Shein]…" (Bri). However, these supportive fans who were persuaded by the rhetoric were outnumbered by critics. The X post of the object text has nearly 12 million views and 287 comments — the majority of which are making fun of the rhetoric used in the video. The rhetorical phrases most ridiculed in these comments include "independent thinker" and "investigative journalist," with some X users suggesting that Carbonari is promoting propaganda; "I have never seen a video that fails so hard at hiding it is just blatant propaganda" (Aron). Comments like this one demonstrate that the audience saw through Carbonari's appeal to authority and credibility and were not convinced by this video to trust Carbonari and support Shein. Therefore, the rhetoric was ineffective.

In conclusion, a neo-Aristotelian rhetorical criticism of Dani Carbonari's promotional tour video for Shein reveals that this object text failed to persuade its audience. This audience was broader than Carbonari's usual fanbase, as the video went viral for negative reasons.

Despite her confident delivery and influencer status, Carbonari's endorsement of Shein's practices were not enough to effectively improve the company's image. Using ethos as a persuasive strategy, Carbonari presented herself in this tour video as someone viewers could trust because she witnessed the facility in person. However, this video was met with skepticism and ridicule online, and audiences made it clear they were not persuaded by the rhetoric.

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THE LAW OF ATTRACTION IDEOLOGY: A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF CELEBRITY PASTOR JOEL OSTEEN'S "THE POWER OF 'I AM'" SERMON

ALEAH KAMERMAN

Joel Osteen is a televangelist, businessman, author, and the pastor at Lakewood Church in Houston, Texas. The sermons that he delivers from the stage of his megachurch reach beyond its walls to hundreds of thousands of listeners across the globe. One sermon from 2012 titled "The Power of 'I Am'" is especially popular — so much so that Oprah Winfrey reuploaded this sermon to her YouTube channel, where it currently has over 4 million views (OWN). Analyzing this sermon using the ideological analysis method of rhetorical criticism demonstrates that this object text is highly rhetorical, perpetuates the law of attraction ideology, and presents an argument that some find disturbing, but others are effectively persuaded by. The ideological analysis method of rhetorical criticism includes four steps: observe the rhetorical features of the artifact chosen, connect the ideas, establish the ideology emerging, and then discuss the effects of this ideology on the audience (Foss 242-248; Newbold).

For necessary context, Osteen's argument in this sermon is that what someone says out loud about themselves will come to fruition — good or bad. "Here is the principle," he starts, "What follows the 'I am' will always come looking for you" (OWN 2:15). For example, Osteen argues that when a person tells themself "I am old," they are inviting their skin to become wrinkled (OWN 2:20). Osteen also includes theological implications, saying, "…You should be saying, 'I am fearfully and wonderfully made. I am attractive.

I am getting younger.' You talk like that, and God will renew your youth" (OWN 4:20). Throughout the sermon, Osteen also follows the "I am" statement with words like blessed, talented, beautiful, disciplined, and prosperous.

To begin the first step of ideological criticism, there are several rhetorical features of the sermon, including its context, to observe and analyze. The recording of the sermon opens with a six-second video montage showing Osteen smiling and engaging with young people. A young girl touches noses with a puppy, beams of animated light swirl around the screen, and an enthusiastic choir sings a jingle with the words, "Discover the champion in you" (OWN 0:01). The introduction ends with an image of his ministry's logo displayed alongside a photo of Osteen embracing his wife.

This introduction is akin to the opening for a talk show or commercial; it persuades viewers to see Osteen in an upbeat, good-hearted light so that they may be more receptive of the sermon to follow. Inadvertently, Osteen is establishing himself as not just a preacher, but a brand (Einstein xi). The service begins with the cameras sweeping over the massive audience that fills the Lakewood Church auditorium. This is an impressive crowd, considering that Lakewood Church can hold 16,800 people (Ferguson). Audience members clap and cheer — seemingly for Osteen — just before he begins to speak. While Osteen walks around the stage, three large screens surrounding him display his face as he speaks. These factors elevate Osteen to celebrity-level status and bestow a great level of influence upon him. Other rhetorical features include Osteen's tone and presentation of himself. Osteen looks polished in his suit and tie, and he carries himself confidently. However, he uses simple language, void of any theological complexities and filled with witticisms. He repeats his main points frequently. These actions make him and his content more relatable, informal, digestible, and memorable. He speaks with charisma and a dynamic tone, captivating the attention of his audience.

He is not confined to his pulpit stand, where most pastors would stand to see their notes, choosing instead to wander the stage in a controlled manner. He seemingly never needs to refer to what notes may or may not be written down, and yet never stumbles over his words. He is undoubtedly a professional public speaker. The actual content of his sermon contains the last and most significant rhetorical feature, which is an appeal to scripture and faith to support his arguments. Before preaching, Osteen leads the congregation in a routine chant, or prayer. "Hold up your Bible and say it like you mean it," Osteen says lifting a Bible as the congregation joins him in saying, "This is my Bible, I am what it says I am, I have what it says I have, I can do what it says I can do. Today I will be taught the Word of God...I will never be the same. In Jesus' name" (OWN 1:00). Overtly, this prayer routine sends a message of unity and purpose, signaling to the audience that they are gathered in this building for one common and Godly reason. A hidden rhetorical maneuver in this prayer is Osteen's assertation of his own authority, suggesting that he is ordained by God to deliver a message that will revolutionize the lives of whoever listens. Osteen makes this same rhetorical maneuver again at the end of the sermon when he closes with a prayer for salvation, and then recommends anyone who prayed along with him for the first time to, "...get in a good, Bible-based church" (OWN 27:15). Osteen likely believes his church falls within that category, and therefore is persuading the audience to trust Lakewood Church as a Biblically rooted institution.

What is ironic about Osteen emphasizing the Bible and the importance of being taught the Word of God is how little he uses the scriptures in his sermon. Osteen references passages from the Bible eight times total in the 27-minute-long sermon. Of those eight times, only three times does he cite the chapter or verse the reference is from (OWN 8:09, 17:01, 24:47). For the remaining references, he mentions the name of the entire book from which the passage is from, or simply states, "The scripture says..." (OWN 16:34). Not once does Osteen actually open the Bible he hoisted above his head during the opening prayer.

The large screens never display the texts Osteen references, but instead remain focused on his face for the duration of the sermon. If not for his confident and persuasive delivery, this issue would likely be more noticeable to his congregation.

The second step of ideological criticism is to connect ideas to identify what Osteen is suggesting, considering his overall argument and the rhetorical elements found within its structure. Overtly, Osteen is arguing that what a person says out loud is influential on their life. Inadvertently, Osteen is suggesting that humans can summon God's power and favor to receive divine success and vitality. This sermon takes ideas surrounding positive thinking and connects them to scripture and Christian theology. This connection helps expose and establish the ideology of Osteen's sermon, which is the law of attraction ideology. In this spiritual context, the law of attraction is the belief that one can attract positive or negative experiences by thinking about positive or negative things (Haller 255). Christian teachings that employ the law of attraction are associated with the Word of Faith.

This is a movement within Christianity that teaches believers that they are divinely entitled to health or success, and that words have power in their lives (Harrison 8). Curtis Newbold explains that, "The term 'ideology' refers to any doctrine, belief, value, myth, or principle that essentially guides a person or organization to action" (2017). As a guiding doctrine and belief, the law of attraction functions as the central ideology within Osteen's sermon, as he argues that saying positive things out loud prompts God to send those things into one's life. The law of attraction ideology and Word of Faith movement would be considered "prosperity gospel," which is the common name for these kinds of theological teachings (Haller 268).

Prosperity gospel theology, however, is controversial and often criticized for being an unorthodox expression of Christianity. In 2005, Ole Anthony, the then president of the religious media watchdog group Trinity

Foundation said, "[Osteen is] popular because we live in a nation that demands cotton-candy theology. His service is just a pep rally. It's all about you" (The Boston Globe). Osteen has been questioned by interviewers on the topic and has responded by saying, "I don't really know what the prosperity gospel is... I believe God wants you to prosper in your health, in your family, in your relationships, in your business, and in your career... if that is the prosperity gospel, then I do believe that" (Vu). Osteen gave this response in 2012, the same year as delivering the "The Power of 'I Am'" sermon.

The final step to ideological criticism is to identify the audience, and then discuss the effects these ideologies have on listeners. The audience of Joel Osteen content and Lakewood Church media is expansive, going beyond the in-person attendees and reaching people across the world through television and social media. This large audience demonstrates that the rhetoric and arguments of Osteen's sermons are extremely effective. For example, the sermon being analyzed in this paper is from a reuploaded video found on the Oprah Winfrey Network YouTube channel, because "It's the sermon that changed the way Oprah sees her life" (OWN). This highlights Osteen's popularity and reach, beyond the Christian community and into popular culture. In an attempt to narrow it down, the predominant audience would be Christian Americans — but Osteen would preferably target those who are receptive and approving of his theology. Therefore, Osteen's message could reach some non-Christians who find Osteen's message inspiring even if they do not believe in God.

The effects that the law of attraction ideology has on audiences range from revolutionarily positive to very harmful. The comments sections beneath Osteen's content such as "The Power of 'I Am'" sermon are often divided. Many commenters are praising Osteen for the positive impact he has had in their lives, while others suggest that Osteen is a deceptive preacher of false theology, or nothing more than a motivational speaker (@MA-jx6in).

Individuals who have walked away from these ideologies and churches that teach prosperity gospel theology have shared testimonials online and in print about their negative experiences. Author and scholar Kate Bowler has built a brand and support network around sharing her story of being indoctrinated into these ideologies, and reconsidering these teachings when she was diagnosed with seemingly incurable cancer at age 35. Becoming ill felt like her own personal failure, as she had been taught that she had the power to influence what God brought into her life (Bowler). Bowler's rejection of this theology does not undermine the effectiveness of the law of attraction ideology, but rather demonstrates that only the gravest circumstances can snap someone out of such a captivating and persuasive belief system.

In conclusion, Joel Osteen is a brand and a celebrity with global influence — which is atypical for most pastors. He has achieved this by presenting his charismatic version of Christian theology, referencing the Bible just enough to be considered credible. While some have regarded him as a motivational speaker selling sugar-coated theology, others swear by his teachings saying that he has changed their life. Those who follow his law of attraction ideology may be at risk of severe disappointment if tragedy enters their lives. Whether or not Osteen's argument is Biblically accurate aside, it is certainly persuasive and effective to thousands around the globe.

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THE SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCE OF MICROCELEBRITIES ON FEMALE BODY IMAGE AND BEAUTY STANDARDS

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Marina D'Ottavio is currently going into her last term and will be graduating this fall of 2024 with a Bachelor of Arts in Rhetoric and Communications. She is a passionate writer and has excelled in creative and research work throughout her time at The University of Winnipeg. The creative and research work that she tends to focus on revolves around developing an understanding and awareness regarding the topic of unrealistic hegemonic representations of female body image and beauty standards presented on social and digital media platforms

Microcelebrities have a vast influence on the reproduction of unrealistic and hegemonic representations toward female body image and beauty standards. This reproduces, manipulates, and elevates the ideological influence of the social impact that digital platforms have on their mass audience. With social popularity comes a power where ideological representations are transformed and reproduced. Connected to algorithmic desire that lures users to unrealistic images and portray unattainable female body image and beauty standards, this creates a feeling of desire in the sense of lack. This alteration of the self in terms of a private versus public face connects to the Lacanian concept of the big Other, as well as the continued relevance of Laura Mulvey's "male gaze." This impacts online behaviours and personas as a result of surveillance. It is of major importance to address the effects that social media and microcelebrities have on females of various ages and ethnicities, since it is detrimental to both their mental and physical health. Today, image-based platforms, such

as Instagram, utilize tools in a way that make false representations and realities seem seamlessly "real" to a point that we cannot detect or identify what is authentic and what is not; it blurs the lines between them.

Women are made to feel that they need to have certain physical attributes in order to attract a partner or male counterpart, be perceived as beautiful to the masses, get likes or followers on social media, and feel confident in themselves. This conditions women to rely on the gaze and attention of others to dictate their self-worth and confidence. With this is a connection to the Lacanian concept of the big Other, which describes how the idea of surveillance or always being watched can alter and influence behaviour online. Individuals, specifically women, believe they should present their persona and image to those who are watching them. In Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema, Laura Mulvey enhances this theory through her continued relevance on the concept of the "male gaze." For Mulvey, there is a promotional sense of a "social media gaze" on Instagram that is troublesome for female body image representation. It has now become an appeal to the public's gaze as opposed to solely the male gaze. She describes the production of the symbolic ego ideal of the big Other and the ideal ego where real life identity is dismissed and interpellated through an imaginary sense of image. That this public gaze is attached to idealization in pursuit of indifference to perceptual reality that creates an imagined, eroticized, and fantasized concept of the world that therefore shapes the perception of the subject (Mulvey 836-837).

The unrealistic representations of the female body produced by microcelebrities who maintain social capital and popularity create an attractive desire directed to their female audience that enhances feelings of lack. Use of photoshop, posing from certain angles, utilizing filters to portray having flawless skin and symmetrical features, and manipulating and contorting their bodies in ways that create an illusion of a slim waste, big butt, and big boobs make their female audience believe that those fixed images are realistic and expected of them.

Microcelebrities formulate their image of self and content in a way that creates a relatable attraction to the "average" person. This relates to Patti M. Valkenburg and Jessica Taylor Piotrowski's theory from the thirteenth chapter "Social Media" in their book Plugged In: How Media Attract and Affect Youth where they tell of the private versus public face and self-awareness. Valkenburg and Piotrowski explain how the private face and self-awareness shows who someone truly is and how they really feel through paying attention to the inner aspect of their identity. Alternatively, the public is how one presents themselves and pays attention to how the outside world perceives them, giving them a heightened awareness around predicting outside responses and adjusting their self-presentation accordingly (Valkenburg and Piotrowski 218, 229). It is shown that in contemporary society, the public face is gaining more public traction and importance with the continued rise of social media and the idealization around microcelebrities.

An example of a social media microcelebrity that enhances these narratives is Sommer Ray. She is a fitness model and influencer that portrays unrealistic beauty standards on Instagram, which is where she initially gained her microcelebrity status due to her online identity that focuses on her butt. Sommer Ray enhances the sexualization and belief of the expectation for women to look and act a certain way in order to gain public recognition and be deemed attractive. She poses from certain angles and wears clothing that shows off and accentuates her butt in all of her content, and she uses photoshop to enhance and alter her face and body, especially in her fitness photos. Fans of Ray have also come out to say that her personality is not what she portrays it to be online in comparison to real life. They have mentioned that, in-person, she is extremely rude and disrespectful, whereas online she portrays herself as a sweetheart. She also gets angry when people place focus and talk about her body and butt, when online, she bases her career off it, and again, her identity, which adheres to the fact that she is not being her true, authentic self on social media. This accurately exemplifies the private versus public face distinction as she is

trying to present herself as and convince the public that she is perfect. With the rising importance of the public face, microcelebrities like Sommer Ray being at the forefront of it initiate a persuasion for women to believe these idealized forms of the female body are true. As described in Sommer Kapitan and David H. Silvera's "From Digital Media Influencers to Celebrity Endorsers: Attributions Drive Endorser Effectiveness," consumers tend to internalize a message and claim it as their own beliefs if they are constantly being persuaded by the content of that message (Kapitan and Silvera 555). Being constantly fed content of specific female body ideals, women begin to adopt others' unrealistic female body image and beauty standard beliefs, which becomes toxic to their mental and physical well-being.

These continuous, curated standards and expectations placed on women to obtain the idealized female body image can increase the desire for cosmetic surgeries, procedures, and injections in order to look like the popularized women they see on social media and digital platforms like Instagram. In Sarah Schwartz's book Beneficial or Damaging? Studying the Relationship Between Social Comparison and Happiness, she enhances this point by describing how social media apps base happiness on social comparison and gaining social capital (Schwartz 19). Therefore, these false perceptions and social comparisons that transform the foundation in which women base their happiness, as well as gain reassurance and validation from, become superficial. They, then, rely on others rather than the self. This can trigger negative feelings and emotional responses that have the potential to lead to unimaginable consequences such as body dissatisfaction, eating disorders, depression, severe anxiety, and in some circumstances, suicide. Martin Halliwell states in his book chapter "Body Image, Anorexia, and the Mass Media," that with the immense vulnerability subjected upon the female gender, their bodies can become a magnet and target for unrealistic ideals that undermine the agency and health of their bodies (Halliwell 172). These are terrifying and real reflections, not only for the present, but for the future of social media and its impact on female body image.

Although I chose to place focus on the reproduction of unrealistic hegemonic representations toward female body image and beauty standards, others may disagree or have differentiating perspectives and opinions. The opposing arguments and perspectives to be acknowledged are that we do see more diversity and authentic representations of female body image and beauty standards on social media and digital platforms. It is the perspective that microcelebrities are becoming more real and truly authentic because they present themselves with a sense of relatability and vulnerability regarding their body shape and size, and publicly displaying natural flaws such as stretch marks, body hair, belly rolls, cellulite, and acne in order to normalize them. Another is that there are also unrealistic representations of the male body on social platforms, even though they are not as frequently discussed. Lastly, in Melissa A. Milkie's article, "Social Comparisons, Reflected Appraisals, and Mass Media: The Impact of Pervasive Beauty Images on Black and White Girls' Self-Concepts," she explains how the sociologist C. Wright Mills argued that individuals can choose to reject or denounce media messages that they do not resonate with and that contradict their own experiences (Milkie 192). This is a simplified, close-minded, and easier-said-than-done approach to separate one's self from hegemonic ideals. Ultimately, these opposing arguments and perspectives lack the awareness that photoshop and filters can still be utilized. They also lack the consideration of personal experiences and research that unrealistic male representations are not as dominant as females, and that it is not as simple as just rejecting ideals that are engrained into our minds daily.

It is of value and logic to address an awareness to the negative impacts of social media and microcelebrities on female body image and beauty standards, rather than being numb or in denial to their effects. Individuals, and in this case, females, can be naïve to what microcelebrities offer social platforms like Instagram. So, in openly criticizing these detrimental effects and impacts, it unveils the injustices being done to the female demographic on digital and social media platforms. Society advocates to diminish

feelings of mental and physical illness, and exposing the motives and truths behind what microcelebrities portray online— the truths that contribute to those illnesses—assists and reinforces those initiatives for positive transformations and developments.

It is about bringing into focus the importance of promoting and liberating female body diversity and having no standards to define beauty online to the collective mass audience that partake in social media use. The toxicity of social and digital media platforms combined with microcelebrities facilitate a need for women to be in the constant pursuit of a missing identity of the self. Social media proves that we believe in some form of the big Other where we bank our identities on the external validation that we get from it and submit ourselves to the social surveillance that reproduces the feedback loop. While it is mediated by unrealistic images and standards, we can overcome this through creating safe spaces for vulnerability.

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CRITICAL ANALYSIS: EXAMINING 'THE REACTIONARY MIND'

ZENA BJARNASON

Zena Bjarnason is a Winnipeg-based writer and poet. In 2019, she self-published her poetry collection, "what's lost is mine" and was featured in Advance with the story 'Alternate Dimensions.' Her work was in the 2023 zine from Feminists of Winnipeg. As a Rhetoric student at the University of Winnipeg, Zena is committed to making knowledge more accessible for the public. Her love of human connection keeps her sustained.

Within his work "The Reactionary Mind", Corey Robin opens his introduction with a quote from T.S. Eliot. He believes that by doing a "careful examination of its behaviour throughout its history" and "what its more thoughtful and philosophical minds have said on its behalf", we may find the "fundamental tenets" of a social movement and/or a political party (as qtd by Eliot 3). As Robin moves forward into his analysis of the roots of Conservatism, he uses said quote to define how the movement started, and what specifically makes it considered Conservatism. The first claim Robin makes regarding the Conservatism movement is that in the history of "that marche and demarche of democracy", Conservatism represents the demarche (3). Therefore, as a political movement, Conservatism can be represented as "the felt experience of having power, seeing it threatened, and trying to win it back" through counter-revolution (4). He later goes on to argue that although "a commitment to limited government and liberty, a wariness of change, [and] a politics of virtue" are certainly "by products" of the movement, this is not what Conservatives believe their "purpose to be" (15-16). Rather, one of the main purposes of Conservatism is a world that exists under hierarchical rule within a "natural order" (8).

Through "The Reactionary Mind", Robin sets up his claims with key factual evidence such as how social movements (such as the women's rights movement, the worker's rights movement and the abolitionist movements) were received throughout history, as well as quotes from notable Conservatives. Therefore, as I further unveil Robin's points, I will declare my reasons for ultimately agreeing with this article. Within the middle of Robin's article, he also states that Conservatism is inherently "against the agency of the subordinate classes" and the movement has declared that "the lower orders should not be allowed to exercise their independent will" as "submission is their first duty [and] prerogative..." (7). Two of his main examples as to agency being the most important threat are the American worker's rights strikes and the Abolitionist movement. For example, during the Great Upheaval of 1877, when St. Louis railroad workers took to strike and decided to run the trains themselves, the owners launched a counter strike, as they were most fearful of the worker's independence rather than the threat of violence (6-7). As for the Abolitionist movement, there were various acts to bring an end to slavery such as the Tariff of Abominations and the Nullification Crisis. However, for John C. Calhoun, former vice president, the moment Congress decided to "receive abolitionist petitions" in the 1830's was "the moment when the nation set itself on an irreversible course of confrontation over slavery" (6). Robin uses this assertion from the former vice president to make his other claim about Conservatism, which is that their fear lies with "the private life of power" and what equality would look like in the home (10). The white man is used to identifying "with his mastery" over the slave, and over the wife who is seen as the servant (10-12). This belief of subordination can be seen with Conservative thinkers such as Edmund Burke with the French Revolution and John Adams with the Enlightenment era. Burke's concerns with the French Revolution lied with his paranoia of a "Pandora's box", where "soldiers [would be] against their officers, servants against their masters [...] and children against their parents" (13). As for Adams, he believed in the "consent of the people" as a strong "moral foundation for government", until his wife suggested some of these rights be afforded to her at home (14).

During the second half of Robin's argument, he states that although some scholars believe that Conservatism's roots have no ties to being "a politics of reaction or backlash", this is simply untrue (34). Conservatives seem to debate the idea of being born out of a reaction, as to them, the "purity and profundity of conservative ideas" do not correlate with such "an unthinking, lowly grab for power" (18). However, many thinkers of the movement such as Hugh Cecil, George Nash, and Michael Oakeshott, among others, declared that if "radicalism goes, conservatism goes too" as its purpose is to be non-revolutionary (20-21). This shows that reaction can be found even within "an idea-driven praxis" (17-18). Conservatism's birth came at a time where there were steady declines of "ancient and medieval ideas", a time where the "permanent hierarchy of power reflected the eternal structure of the cosmos." Therefore, Conservatism was built during a time of heightened political tensions and discord between people (18). Even now, supporters of the movement "read situations and circumstances" instead of texts. They choose to "adapt" instead, making them "ever sensitive to the movements and counter-movements of power" (19). As I move forward within this analysis, I will connect Robin's points to modern moments in our culture to identify why I agree with his work.

During the premise of his introduction, Robin writes that during every march against superiors in social movements such as the one for women's rights, the Conservative movement has existed as a countermovement (3). We can look to recent news such as the overturning of Roe v Wade and Planned Parenthood in the US to see "half a century of conservative legal activism" as well as what has been known as "a key element of conservative political identity for decades" (Zimmer). Therefore, Conservative political identity is enmeshed with counterrevolution. Another one of Robin's points as to what constitutes Conservatism is that it is reactionary (34). Fox News, a top news source for US Republicans has often been considered as partisan as well as reactionary. A recent study focused on two control groups, one who watched CNN for a month, while the other group watched Fox News. For those who watched Fox News, "changes in evaluations of

Donald Trump and Republican candidates" were found. As well, participants recognized an alternate reality being presented with issues such as the Trump presidency, where Trump's mistakes were not being covered (Bump). Another example of this reactionary politics can be found once again with abortion. Scholar Thomas Zimmer for example, believes that Conservatives harbour a reactionary view towards abortion as they consider it to be murder "and the epitome of everything that's wrong [...] about liberalism" (ibid). Within an article connecting Donald Trump's presidency to Roe v Wade, a Republican Washington Post writer proves this true, as he states that "millions of previous unborn lives will be saved", and that "Trump made it possible" regardless of his countless presidential 'mistakes' (Thiessen).

The last example I have regarding right-wing reactionary politics is the Bud Light boycott that occurred last year. When Transgender influencer Dylan Mulvaney was asked to participate in "a paid sponsorship deal and promotion" regarding a sweepstake for the company, she was met with intense hate, bullying and backlash. Notable figures such as Ben Shapiro rallied against this show of Trans support, with Donald Trump also publicly supporting the boycott (Stewart). Throughout his work, Robin has provided various examples such as quotes from Conservative leaders and examples of revolutions to back up his argument. Therefore, within the various culture wars co-opted by our society, Robin has proven that as Conservatism started as a reactionary movement, it will thus continue as a reactionary movement, one which could not have existed without public dissent.

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BECOMING INFORMED THROUGH COMEDY

BILLIE-KAY ROBERTSON

Billie-Kay Robertson is a third-year English student at the University of Winnipeg. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, creative writing, staying active and spending time outdoors. Billie believes that the critical thinking skills she has obtained from this degree will benefit her greatly as she pursues a career in law.

Jeff Dunham's comedy skit, "2020 Presidential Election: Will Hiden Trump Grump" is a parody of the Presidential Debate between Joe Biden and Donald Trump held in 2020. Dunham uses his skills as a ventriloquist to mock the debate by using accurate statements and wording used in the original debate to remain informative while still being funny. Dunham's video is an excellent example of rhetoric as he found a way to relay the information given in the Presidential Debate, through a comedic platform. It is believed that through creating the comedic parody Dunham was able to educate more viewers on the parties running in the election, and in turn allowed some of his viewers to make a more informed vote. Dunham was able to do this by using comedic tools to help trick the brain into processing more information than he may have from just watching the original debate. Dunham does an incredible job at mirroring the events of the Presidential Debate in his parody video. He sets the tone for the video by beginning with the character Achmed playing a news reporter on scene of a dark outdoor landscape, the bottom of the screen captioned "Protesters Celebrating Peace Across the U.S" (Dunham 00:24:00). Soon after Achmed starts commenting on the scene, bombs can be heard dropping from the sky (Dunham 00:27:00). Starting off with this contrast at the beginning, it sets the tone for the whole video, implying that the comedy in the video will be paired with a form of darkness. Dunham had some creative liberties with how to change some of the lines in the original debate to be more comedic

in his parody version, though some jokes he needed to stretch more than others. An example of this is when Grump was faced with the question of what his plans are in combating the Covid-19 pandemic. His response was "it's gone I tweeted it away" (Dunham 08:09:00), this being in reference to a tweet Donald Trump had posted that was brought up by Joe Biden in the actual debate stating, "just inject bleach into your arm and you'll be fine" (Insider News 02:09:00). Overall, it is believed that Dunham was able to use jokes like these to provide a new take on the Presidential Debate, whilst remaining factual and entertaining. Comedy can be seen as an important tool in rhetoric as it is a style of presenting a subject in a way that is meant to provide joy and laughter. Over the past decade comedy has become an instrument of relaying information and news statements to its viewers (Garr 3). Comedy can be broken down into different sections, one of these sections being "real world," which focuses on making light of situations that are occurring in the world either for comedic relief or educational purposes (Hurley 7). Real world comedy is what Dunham used to create his parody. Although Dunham remains impartial to taking a side in politics, members from the conservative party make up most of his fanbase. Most fans do not have much interest in sitting through the Presidential Debate to get informed on the candidates running (Lerner 1). By creating the parody, Dunham was able to provide voter information to those who may not have sought out the information themselves. A good balance of information and comedy can make a very strong argument. The art of using comedy in a rhetorical sense is knowing when to push facts and when to make the hard-hitting jokes. However, to deliver a good presentation, one must understand the balance between being comedic and factual. If there is too much comedy the information may get lost behind the laughs. On the other hand, too much information may make one's presentation seem boring and not fitting of the comedic genre. The balance in which information is given can affect how the viewer takes and engages with the content. During the video Dunham's host character Achmed states "Holy crap this country is toast" (Dunham 07:47:00). Though adding this comedic line may have been an insight into Dunham's true thoughts during this election, it also provided

comedic relief after talking about the Covid-19 pandemic a minute prior. The topic of the pandemic was still discussed through a comedic tone. This is an example of having a balance of information and comedy to relay a message to the viewer because Covid-19 in 2020 had been at its peak, and the mention of the illness brought tension so, adding a button like Achmed's line about the country falling apart was a way for the audience to relax back into the comedy. Comedy gives the brain time to rest by storing information in memory (Garr 22). Delivering information in a comedic medium allows the brain to take information without stress, thus helping the mind understand the information better (Kowalewski 8). This is because when one is exposed to comedy the brain processes the information given differently than if presented with straight facts. Comedic delivery of information has been seen to have more of a long-lasting effect on the mind then presenting it with straight facts. This is because the received information could cause stress on the brain, especially if the information has the potential to personally affect the viewer. Oral rhetoric can be presented in many forms for many different uses. Dunham demonstrated that he understands how to properly relay information to a viewer using rhetoric and comedy to make a strong, entertaining and informative presentation. Dunham's delivery used a proper balance of comedy and information to keep the viewer engaged with the presentation. By creating a parody version of the 2020 Presidential Election using comedic rhetoric it is believed Dunham was able to reach more viewers and give them more information so that they could make a more informed vote come election time.

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RACHEL FOSTER: ANOTHER VICTIM TO BE BLAMED

NICOLE ERICKSON

> Nicole Erickson is a second-year student majoring in Rhetoric and Communications. Born in Winnipeg, she moved to a small interlake town for over half her life. Nicole moved back to the "big" city to pursue her goal of continuing her education. With this degree, she aims to attain a career in copy-editing.

"The Suicide of Rachel Foster" is a walking simulator video game released in 2020. A walking simulator is a genre of video game that is more story-focused and is moved along by the player's exploration of their surroundings (Ballou). The game was developed by One-O-One Games. Sonya McCree from Northeastern University says that walking simulators "privilege players' sense of exploration and discovery over sequential storytelling" (7). The game received mixed reviews due to the ending and the inappropriate relationship between the protagonist's father and a teenager. In an interview with JeuxOnline, when asked about the portrayal of the relationship, One-O-One Games stated their intention was not "to justify [the protagonist's father] Leonard's actions, but rather to explore how a deep affection towards a person can often emotionally blind a person into subconsciously justifying such questionable behaviour" (JeuxOnline 2020). This directly relates to Leonard and Irving, who is the antagonist. Their situations are explained but it does not answer for the protagonist, Nicole, or her mother, who also carries out questionable behaviour herself.
 In this essay, I will be analyzing "The Suicide of Rachel Foster", by using narrative criticism. I will be pointing out the protagonist and antagonist of the story, as well as other characters, the plot, and the theme of the artifact. This analysis will provide an interpretation of how this game's plot promotes victim-blaming, misogyny, and depictions of suicide.

"The Suicide of Rachel Foster" follows protagonist Nicole, a woman in her thirties' who has returned to the Timberline Hotel in Montana, during a winter storm for the first time since she was a teenager. The antagonist is Irving Crawford, a self-proclaimed Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) agent who Nicole never sees but has contact with her throughout the game on a cell phone. Other characters include Nicole's deceased parents (Claire and Leonard), the lawyer (Benjamin Jenkins) who is supposed to help Nicole with the inspection, and Irving's sister Rachel Foster. As she inspects, she finds clues that start uncovering buried memories from her childhood, when her father had an inappropriate relationship with sixteen-year-old Rachel, who was the same age as herself at the time. Rachel had allegedly committed suicide after that and was discovered to be several weeks pregnant.

It is revealed at the end that Nicole's mother, Claire, murdered Rachel out of rage and resentment. Irving was the one to leave these clues for Nicole to help discover the truth behind Rachel's death as he is not a FEMA agent, but Rachel's brother. He comes to peace and goes out into the cold to freeze. At the end, Nicole sits in her car with a pipe taped to her window connected to the exhaust with intention to commit suicide.

A major theme throughout this game is victim-blaming. It is not overtly implied but can be gathered by the player from the way Nicole speaks about Rachel and how Claire felt about her as well. Nicole's opinions on Rachel build a narrative that Rachel was not innocent in this situation with Leonard, as if she knew what she was doing. Isabel Grant and Janine Benedet, faculty at the Allard School of Law at the University of British Columbia, say that "the closer girls are to being perceived as women, the more likely they are to be disbelieved or seen as being responsible for the sexual violence against them" (266-292). Rachel was only a teenager; she was vulnerable and groomed by an authoritative figure that she trusted.

Leonard was coaching Rachel with her speech to get rid of her stutter. Nicole hated Leonard for cheating on her mom but not for being a predator; she never acknowledges that he was in the wrong for that specific reason. She admits to Irving that she did not actually hate Rachel, but that she was jealous of her. Despite Rachel being an object of romantic affection in Leonard's eyes, Nicole was still jealous of the time they spent together. This part of the storyline is another way of how the women are pitted against each other.

Another theme that befalls the game is misogyny. Nicole's mother, Claire, comes off as misogynistic as the player learns that she hated Rachel to the point of that being her motive for killing her. She inflicted violence on a young girl instead of having sympathy and reporting her husband who was abusing his power. Games with these portrayals are harmful because it can negatively affect the way people view "women's attitudes and beliefs about themselves and other women" (McCullough, Wong, and Stevenson 266-276). Looking at the game from a feminist perspective as well, McCullough, Wong, and Stevenson from the department of Counseling and Educational Psychology at the Indiana University Bloomington say that experiencing that constant negative representation of women will lead gamers "to accept sexist beliefs as their own as they continue to play sexist games over time" (266-276). Depending on their beliefs and education, some people are more vulnerable than others when it comes to being persuaded by implied themes and ideas. Women who are terrible people do exist, but it is important to not have female characters pitted against each other in digital media. It only supports the never-ending train of people who lean into misogynistic beliefs.

This game comes to an unpleasant end when the player finds Nicole sitting in her car. She is holding Rachel's retainer while there is a pipe taped to her driver's side window that is connected to the exhaust. The only option the game gives the player is turning the car on.

The game does give an out; the player can choose to turn the car right back off, but the scene received many negative reviews about making the player complicit and responsible for a suicide attempt. King, Marsh, and Akcay say that the game "presents suicide as an outcome that feels underserved and insensitive" and that "it is important for game developers to assess the appropriateness of depicting suicide in game" (153-166). Nicole is portrayed to be a strong-minded individual from the start of the game, and the ending contradicts that quality. King, Marsh, and Akcay also said that it was poor on One-O-One's part to use a suicide attempt for shock value, and "detracts from a game that had the potential to tell an emotional story" (138-152). Mental health is one of the serious themes that the game touches on, and they did not do it justice.

The developers of "The Suicide of Rachel Foster" might have had good intentions with their storyline, but they did not handle sensitive issues very well. These implied themes can be harmful when it comes to gamers who are vulnerable to being persuaded and can possibly cause sexism and misogyny to be internalized without realizing it. The portrayal of the characters' personalities and opinions in this game are mostly negative, especially the relationships between the female characters, and it contains negatively implied narratives and themes that include misogyny, victim-blaming, and depictions of suicide.

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CRITICAL REVIEW OF CHARLES C. MANNS 1491: NEW REVELATIONS OF THE AMERICAS BEFORE COLUMBUS

PRECIOUS GAUTHIER

Precious has completed degrees in Biology and English with minors in Rhetoric and History. She is interested in writing about inequalities and disparities in Black and Indigenous communities. Precious has decided to continue her education at the U of W with a Masters in Cultural Studies Fall 2024 program.

The author Charles C. Mann, known for coauthoring Noah's Choice: The Future of Endangered Species and writing 1493: Uncovering the New World Columbus Created, the sequel to 1491: New Revelations of the Americas Before Columbus, is a science and history writer (BookBrowse). The novel 1491 highlights some of the misconceptions taught about the time before and during contact with Europeans, and are accompanied by a focus on various populations of Indigenous people, where the "view of most Indians [was] as incurably vicious barbarians" which Mann identifies as "Holmbergs Mistake" (7–8). These misconceptions include how they interacted with their environments and the structured systems they lived in. Mann intends to set the historical records straight while maintaining the importance of why using the records of Europeans can be helpful in better understanding the history of Indigenous populations. I identified the book's thesis as "The Americas were busier, more diverse and more populous than researchers had previously imagined" (Mann 15).

While I believe the author has well-researched and valid points, there is a disconnect from the populations he is writing about. In this paper, I will focus on the overarching discussion in various parts of the novel, connecting it to my understanding and scholarly publications by discussing that the populations of Indigenous people were larger and more complex than what has been taught over generations, that the colonial impact of the various European societies that travelled to the Americas aided in the decreased population size of the Indigenous people, and that the Indigenous inhabitants had robust and established culture and history before contact.

In the initial chapters of 1491, Mann set the groundwork for the reader to understand the ways in which Indigenous people were structured and meticulously complex, including how they interacted with the land around them and the large population sizes they existed in. One example he stated is, "The Indians maintained and expanded the grasslands … from the top of Ibibate we were able to see…a straight line of trees—an ancient causeway" (Mann 5). This highlights that the Indigenous population in the Americas had developed a form of agriculture, and they had organized systems for the people to be able to structure the trees in such formations as well. To produce this level of complex agriculture, you need large numbers of people to maintain it. This information pushes me to agree with Mann's claim that schooling does give society a false view of Indigenous people as primitive. Logic also should note that someone living in the Americas knows there is extreme weather in every part of the continents and that survival of people foreign to the region would be impossible without assistance, which Mann touches on but should be a more significant part of his discourse.

Mann establishes that while there are many different theories, Indigenous people have been in the Americas for the last twenty to thirty thousand years established with the study of mitochondrial DNA (140). While I understand DNA is a strong form of evidence, there are other ways to establish timelines.

Oral history is becoming a more accepted way of learning and sharing history, and Indigenous teaching states that they have been in the Americas since "time and immemorial" (Belshaw et al.; Beard 529). Mann's discourse of how long Indigenous populations have been in the Americas could also be strengthened if he had communicated with Indigenous communities to have the Indigenous understanding. Scholar Martha Beard explains "that oral history is a highly distinctive example of historical narrative-making, created by 'ordinary' people and contextualised by the professional historian" (Beard 529). Using Beard's concept would have prevented his problematic descriptions of modern Indigenous perspectives like Vine Deloria Jr. as "Indian activists" (Mann 17). Many Indigenous teachings claim them to have been here since "time and immemorial," which, in terms of Western understanding, is a time "beyond memory" (Belshaw et al.). This perspective is lacking in Mann's discussions, leaving the discussion feeling one-sided and disconnected from their humanness and undermining their believed timeline.

The Indigenous populations also sustainably controlled the environment in the Americas. They maintained the land via controlled fires to prepare the land for the next season of growth, which also benefited the wildlife, such as "elk, deer, and bear", thus increasing their dietary options (Mann 250). Some groups like Nazca created "huge patterns they set into the ground. Figures of animals and plants, almost a thousand geometric symbols… [which were] only visible by air" (Mann 238). The level of knowledge needed to complete tasks as intricate as described must be highly advanced, not the primitive perception that Holmberg believed them to be. The impact of the decrease in the Indigenous population had a negative effect on the environment. Described by Francis Jennings as "widowed" because the result on the ecosystem was described as being consumed by "invading endive and rats beset[ing] them, but native species, too, burst and blasted, freed from constraints by the disappearance of Native Americans" (Mann 315). One of the reasons behind the population decrease was explained by Francis Black's virology research, which identified that Indigenous people

were susceptible to illness due to having limited types of human leukocyte antigens (HLAs) (Mann 104). While the HLA information was not known at the time of contact, Europeans did have an understanding of how to manage illness and the Indigenous people were subjected to a death sentence because Europeans did not share that information (Mann 131). 1491 is a very informative novel for understanding the history of when, where, and what happened to the Indigenous population in the Americas before and during contact with European populations, highlighting their advanced understanding of the ecosystems and large population sizes. While I identify this book as educational, and I also believe history can and should be told by educated professionals, it also should have voices of the population discussed included in all dialogues and publications.

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INSTANT MESSAGING: A LOOK AT DISCORD AND CONVERSATION TOPICS

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Alexander Wasyliw is a 2nd Year student at The University of Winnipeg. He is majoring in Rhetoric, Writing and Communications with a minor in Theatre. Classes like Critical Studies of Social Media and Writing for Digital Spaces have helped Alexander to realize the power communication has in a digital world.

1. Introduction

The digital space I am looking at is a private Discord server used by me and my close group of friends. A server consists of a forum with different threads known as channels that relate to different topics. Discord allows users to send files such as images and videos. The server I am studying has areas set up for different topics, ranging from member announcements, introductions for new members, memes, user-made artwork and multiple chats devoted to video games we enjoy. It is the group's primary method of communication. This is because our lives are taking different paths. Some of us do not live in Winnipeg, and it is hard for us to meet daily like we did in high school, so it is easier to meet online.

I believe that Discord, as a platform, is designed in a way to make its users engage in more frivolous, interest-based content over serious discussions of life events. This, in turn, shapes the type of conversations that my friends and I engage in. I want to find out what topic dominates our discussions on Discord, as I believe it is a community centred around our interests.

2. Methodology

My study aims to track the different topics discussed on the Discord server over a four-week period. To do this, I made four different categories in which each conversation falls:

- Interest-related topics are conversations that revolve around shared interests between members in the group, such as TV shows and movies that we favour.
- Arts/Creativity-related topics are conversations about just that: art pieces and other creative works.
- Life-related topics are conversations that revolve around events in one's real life, such as careers or education.
- Events-related topics are conversations that focus on planning and acting out events between members of the server.

I will sort the discussions over a four-week period, from 8 January 2024 to 5 February 2024, into these four categories. Discussions are classified as conversations that involve two or more people in a sustained conversation, so more than just a simple one-word reply. In addition, conversations that involve two topics will be counted as 0.5 in each category. For example, a conversation involving someone talking about an event in their life that also relates to their interests would count as 0.5 points in both the interest-related and life-related categories.

 I will also use the categories to chart out which topics the different channels are dedicated to, to see which topics have the most channels. The same rules apply to the conversations. Channels which fall into two different categories will count as 0.5 points in both categories.

3. Findings
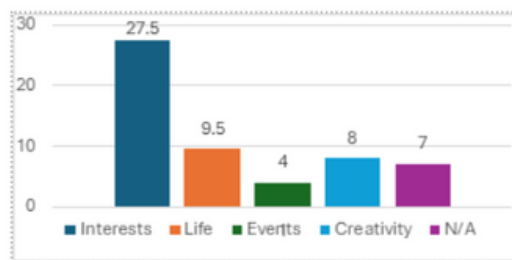
The first theme I noticed was that the server prioritized a number of channels, with the server containing 56 different channels, ranging from memes to photos. Another theme I found was that the channels were heavily focused on interests. Out of the 56 channels, 28 of them were focused on specific interests. Events had the least amount of space dedicated to them, followed by creativity, and then life-related topics. N/A channels are generic ones like the general channel, which do not fit into any category.
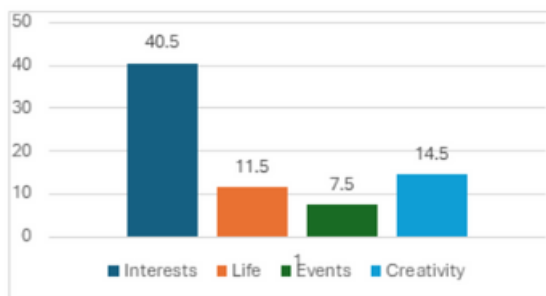
The theme that dominated our conversations was our interests. The conversations that tended to get the most attention and replies seemed to be the ones that linked to the interests that were shared between group members, like the TV series One Piece or the game Lethal Company. Creativity was the second most popular topic, which makes sense as many of my friends are artists. Life-related events were towards the bottom of the ranking, being the third most talked about subject. Events were in last place, but this is because there were not a lot of major events going on this early in the year for us.

4. Analysis
As I hypothesized, the Discord server can be seen as a community centered around our interests, due to how often those interest-related topics come up. As described by Henry Jenkins, these types of interest-based communities, or fandoms, are a participatory culture. People in fandoms

are encouraged to make and share things with other members (Jenkins 82). Throughout my research, my friends engaged in this participatory culture by sharing things related to their interests. For example, one member would not just watch the TV show One Piece, but share their own artwork related to it, with people commenting on the art in connection to the show. Their fandom for the show turned into a participatory culture in which people discussed and talked about their works in relation to it.

It has been shown that people can have a higher connection to their fandoms than their local community (Chadborn et al. 244). Many of the things that users enjoyed, like the game Lethal Company, are not household names. Thus, I can see the appeal of a platform like Discord to discuss these topics. Discord lets you create your own niche on the platform and invite people from all over the world to discuss interests in a way that your local community cannot. The Discord server provided companionship that a local community may not have provided by linking up members who had the same interests but are not physically near one another.

A prevalent theme I noticed was the use of Discord as a platform for sharing rather than discussion. I found that users engaged in what is known as show-and-tell behaviour. Mary Heinz defined show-and-tell as the act of posting on social media in order to either show something off or tell a story. The point of these posts is not to create a discussion but rather to share something and generate a response (Heinz 27). As such, these show-and-tell posts appeal to pathos, or emotion, because they are done primarily to generate positive comments (Heinz 27). As such, the responses to show-and-tell behaviour appeal to pathos because they are supposed to be positive remarks on what is being shown. This behaviour was commonplace on the studied server. This show-and-tell behaviour is reflected in the way people commented on artwork that other users posted. I could tell that people's replies appealed to the pathos of the artist because they would always try to praise the artist, no matter if they posted a finished piece or a rough sketch.

People tended not to give criticism or specific praise when a piece of artwork was posted, and instead, multiple users commented with generic words of appreciation like "sick!" Emojis were also used to react to a person's work. This pathos-driven response is exactly what show-and-tell behaviour looks for, as the art shown off generates an emotional response instead of discussion. A user's ethos or credibility is also an important part of this behaviour, as users need to appear knowledgeable about the topic to become fully engaged in these conversations. I noticed a lot of users asked questions about the world in which the art was based so that they could better understand the work instead of discussing the art itself. In a way, even though they did not know anything about the source material, users became experts through engagement. In that regard, the engagement with these show-and-tell posts were more about becoming knowledgeable about the topic so that they could better appreciate it rather than genuinely conversing about it.

I believe that the way Discord is designed makes users more willing for these show-and tell, fandom-based conversations. For example, we can look at the ways in which Discord lets users make new channels. Accessing the interface for channel creation can be done as simply as holding a button, and the app only requires users to input a name for channel creation. Thus, it was very easy for users to make channels for every niche or interest they might have. In a way, Discord is using subtle reasoning or logos with its users when allowing them to make content. Discord did not ask any questions and made the user interface very easy to make new content. Thus, as a result, users feel compelled to create channels for every little niche, which, in the case of my group, often happens to be our interests. Since the users had so much space to discuss these topics, the topics ended up being discussed more than other topics. By making the creation of these channels very easy and user-friendly, Discord engaged in logos as it gave the users more options for niche discussion.

For example, the chat dedicated to the game Honkai: Star Rail was used as a way for players of the game to showcase their gameplay as well as news on the latest updates. This topic was once dedicated to the general gaming chat but was moved to its own separate chat and saw an uptick in posting now that those who were interested had their own dedicated space. Not everyone shared the same interests, and with Discord making it very easy for users to make new spaces for those interests, it was made a lot easier for users to discuss these topics.

I also believe that the way Discord handled file-sharing also helped to guide conversations toward show-and-tell behaviour. Discord intentionally limited the size of files uploaded to servers to 25MB unless a user paid for a premium membership. This is what is known as a Dark Pattern, which are design choices that make users do things they would not normally do (Cara 105). More specifically, it is what is known as "monetization," which makes the user "complete some actions in order to gain something" (Cara 107). In this case, Discord made the user pay to access larger file sizes.

What is interesting is that, unlike other Dark Patterns, it was more of a minor inconvenience than a malicious design choice. I found that users did not really have any issues with the file size limits, as some people sent short-form, seconds long videos. Instead, in my view, the choice to lock away larger file sizes behind a paywall is a Dark Pattern because it affects how users behave and post on the platform itself. Most of the discussion naturally gravitated towards showing off our interests and fandoms because Discord made it easier to send photos over video. If we want to use visual media, then we, for the most part, are limited to sharing pictures on the platform, thus encouraging us to "show" off content on the platform. As such, I think Discord's design knowingly nodded to the fandom-userbase it is trying to court. Showing off a screenshot of our favourite show would be much more visually interesting on the platform than a text-only update about our university or job, so thus, we were drawn to interest-based discussions.

5. Conclusion

Ultimately, Discord exists to bring together people who have these niche interests. As mentioned previously, people often feel closer to their fandom than their own community, and Discord's design exploits this.

Discord makes it easy to engage in show-and-tell behaviour through its design, and the platform uses a Dark Pattern to guide the medium that people use to communicate. People already have strong connections to the fandoms they discuss, and Discord just strengthens those bonds. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but it does limit the types of discussions I see with my friends when we primarily rely on Discord.

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UKRAINIANS IN MANITOBA:
HISTORY AND MODERN ISSUES

ALISTAIR SMITH

> Hi there! My name is Alistair Smith, and I am a third-year honours history student at the University of Winnipeg. In the last couple of years, I have begun learning Ukrainian dance, which is why I am interested in learning the history of Ukrainians in Manitoba.

Ukrainians have been migrating to Canada in large numbers for over a century. Beginning in 1891, Ukrainians moved across the Atlantic to settle across the country in waves, largely due to the various conflicts that have enveloped the region over the years (Stick & Hou, 2022). As a result, about 4% of Canadians report at least partial Ukrainian heritage. Canada has long offered ideal conditions for migrants due to its vast and diverse landscapes, creating many opportunities for migrants to find work and make new lives for themselves. The Canadian government has also incentivized immigration on many occasions and did so in the late 19th century to help develop the vast agricultural land of the prairie provinces. For the last two years, though, the Ukrainian community has faced immense challenges, both in Canada and globally. The large-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia that began in 2022 has led to the displacement of many Ukrainians, and a significant number have arrived in Canada, including many who have moved to Manitoba. This means that the history of Ukrainians in Manitoba is more important than ever, as it can inform the issues Ukrainians have encountered in the past, and what has made Manitoba such an important place for Ukrainians moving abroad. Around 13.2% of Ukrainians who live in Canada reside in Manitoba (Stick & Hou, 2022).

While this is not the highest number of Ukrainians in a province, it is the highest number per capita, with around 14.5% of Manitobans overall reporting at least partial Ukrainian heritage (Statistics Canada, 2016). Understanding these numbers makes clear the significant cultural impact that Ukrainians have had on the province. This contribution has been both passive and active. With such a significant portion of the population being Ukrainian, there is a natural dissemination of food, religion, language, and more. However, Ukrainians have also made active efforts to share their culture with the rest of the province, and they have participated in Folklorama every year since its inception, being one of the founding pavilions in 1970 (Ukrainian Canadian Congress, 2020).

Between 1891 and 1914, an estimated 150000 Ukrainians arrived on the east coast of Canada (Government of Canada, 2020 as quoted in Stick and Hou, 2022). These migrants were heavily encouraged by the Canadian government and corporations, who advertised the prairies and their agricultural potential to bring in more workers (Canadian Pacific Railway Company, 1891). From there, most moved west and settled in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Manitoba, in particular, was very attractive to Ukrainian migrants, at least relative to its population. This was partially because Winnipeg was the first major stop on the journey by train through the prairies that many Ukrainian immigrants embarked on (Ukrainian Canadian Congress, 2020). At this point in their journey, many chose to stay in Manitoba, dispersing throughout the province and forming communities in and around Winnipeg. As a result, Winnipeg has become an important city in the history of Ukrainians in Canada, being referred to by some as the "gateway to the West" (Yuzyk, 1956). Ukrainian immigration did not end with this wave, though. Another wave of migrants arrived after the First World War when Ukraine was conquered by the Soviet Union following a brief and chaotic independence in the wake of the Russian Empire's collapse (Stick & Hou, 2022). Another wave arrived after the Second World War, and even as early as 1956 around one in eight Manitobans had Ukrainian ancestry (Yuzyk, 1956). Another wave came in the 1990s, as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union. This leads us to 2024, where for the last two years

Ukraine has been once again fighting for its independence against Russia. This conflict has, as with the many fought in the region in the past, led to a mass displacement of Ukrainians around the world, many of whom have travelled to Canada as refugees. As of February 2024, almost 250000 Ukrainians have arrived as refugees in Canada (CTV News, 2024). Of these migrants, almost 29000, or over 10%, have arrived in Manitoba, though how many have remained is not entirely clear (Woelk, 2024). This leads to some important questions that Canadians and Manitobans must answer. For one, what challenges do newly arrived Ukrainians face when they attempt to start anew? One of the most significant problems, of course, is the language barrier. Many new arrivals do not speak much English, which presents difficulties with all other aspects of life in Canada – finding and maintaining work, acquiring housing, and even activities like grocery shopping are all made far more challenging when one does not speak the local language. The language barrier is not a topic that is unique to Ukrainians, though, as many recent migrants to Canada face similar challenges. What circumstances might exist to make the experience of Ukrainian migrants different from the experiences of those from other backgrounds?

Another question is whether Manitoba is doing enough, both at a governance level and an individual level, to make Ukrainian refugees feel welcome and help them find their footing. One factor that certainly affects the experiences that Ukrainian refugees have in Canada and Manitoba is the large pre-existing Ukrainian culture that has established itself. This certainly works to alleviate the language barrier, as a notable number of Ukrainian speakers reside in Manitoba. The Ukrainian community has also come together in numerous ways to aid those who find themselves new arrivals in the province. For one, many groups have put on fundraisers to help Ukrainians escape the conflict in their home country and put down roots in Manitoba. These include tourism organizations, like Cobblestone Freeway, which has hosted events to raise money for Ukrainian families settling in Canada. Other local groups have made efforts to fundraise for Ukrainians, both in Canada and abroad. The Winnipeg-based Troyanda Ukrainian Dance

Ensemble is one such group. Shortly after the invasion of Ukraine began, Troyanda, alongside many other Ukrainian dance and choir groups from in and around Winnipeg, put together the Stand with Ukraine concert, which raised money for humanitarian aid for Ukraine (DePatie, 2022). These organizations represent the Ukrainian community in Manitoba, and their contributions have made it easier for Ukrainians to settle, both in the province and around the world. Manitoba has a significant Ukrainian community which has existed since shortly after the province's inception. Its agricultural potential and place as the first prairie province that migrants arrive in on their journey westward through Canada has resulted in the province having the highest per capita number of Ukrainians in the country. By encouraging Ukrainian migrants to move to the province in the late 19th century and accepting those who have moved or been displaced by the instability and conflicts that have overtaken their homeland, Manitoba has fostered a strong relationship with Ukrainians locally. This has manifested in vibrant and longstanding expressions of Ukrainian culture, such as Folklorama and created greater opportunities for migrants from Ukraine in the modern era. The well-established Ukrainian community in Manitoba has resulted in strong fundraising efforts for humanitarian aid and allowed for easier experiences for Ukrainian refugees fleeing the most recent conflict.

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BARRIERS TO PHILIPPINES DEVELOPMENT: A BRIEF 20TH CENTURY GEOPOLITICAL STUDY

EMMANUEL LOPEZ

Emmanuel is a Geography major, as well as a Philosophy and Rhetoric, Writing, and Communications minors, in his final year of a Bachelor of Arts Honours degree. Emmanuel hopes to pursue graduate studies soon after graduation. Included in this publication is a condensed chapter from his Honour's thesis.

South Korea has proven that former colonial countries could achieve economic success, but these potentials do not apply to the Philippines or explain why it has not achieved rapid economic growth following the Second World War. If scholars can understand this comparison, then the development literature could expand its perspective. This paper will compare South Korea's and the Philippines' pathways to development. Specifically, the paper will cover South Korea's and the Philippines' colonial history and some of their political and economic legacies. Post-colonial policies will also be highlighted.

Japan colonized Korea from 1910 to 1945. Korea achieved independence from Imperial Japan in 1945, and the Republic of South Korea was established after the Korean War in the 1950s. During that time, the Korean government wanted to rebuild the nation into a successful one. The Philippines also achieved independence around the same time, and the government also wanted to rebuild the nation. These two nations had similarities but experience different economic outcomes today. Park Chung Hee (1917– 1979), the president of South Korea, shares a similarity with President Ferdinand Marcos (1917–1989), as the two presidents rose to power in the 1960s.

Korea and the Philippines were both historically and economically influenced by Japan and the U.S. in the post-Second World War era. South Korea and the Philippines allied themselves with the U.S., which made their governments anti-communist. When Park and Marcos both declared martial law in 1972, the leaders centralized the power of their regimes because they were dealing with difficult times and politically unstable nations. Regardless, the two administrations had different political-economic outcomes because South Korea underwent rapid development, and the Philippines did not.[1]

The two countries' different histories reveal that South Korea inherited a government system that was easier to reform. The Marcos regime, compared to other former Asian colonies such as South Korea, was generally a failure in its developmental policies. Despite having a smaller economy throughout much of its history, South Korea's economic growth overtook the Philippines from the 1970s. Today it is much wealthier than the Philippines.[2] To understand why this is so, one must look at South Korea's development. The Philippines government inherited a decentralized nation, and South Korea inherited a unified South Korea. The U. S's land reforms and vast foreign aid to South Korea made it feasible to install reforms; in comparison, the Philippines did not have those preconditions. The Philippines also was tied to the U.S. during the post-Second World War era and the end of the Cold War.

South Korea established a central government in 393 AD, seldom interrupted by colonial nations. Korea's long history of government centralization would make it easier for it to install economic modernization. Meanwhile, the Philippines did not have a centralized government for much of its history. In 1905, the Chosôn dynasty (392–1910) was dismantled by the Japanese, but this prolonged the centralized system and created slight changes in the previous regime's structural systems. The Philippines' centralized government only existed after its independence from the Spanish and U.S. Regime in 1946. This was 1554 years after South Korea had

done so. Differences in the land reforms is why South Korean economy took off and the Philippines did not. The U.S. pressured South Korea to pass a land reform act in 1949, and the Korean Civil War of 1950–1953 weakened the land-owning elites. These land reforms jump-started South Korea's innovative takeoff, and this provided the economic base for future development. Meanwhile, the Philippines has had poor historical land reforms, so their economic base and productive capacity have been crippled. Syngman Rhee, the first South Korean president of South Korea from 1948 to 1960. The Park regime received foreign aid from the U.S. to rebuild, but South Korea did not become economically dependent on them. In comparison, the U.S. gave the Philippine government less budget to fund their industries. The U.S. post-war trade conditions such as the Bell Trade Act and (1946) and Laurel–Langley Agreement (1955) recreated the Philippines as an agricultural market, so this limited the Philippines' market expansion.

Korea has had a relatively uninterrupted centralized government in comparison to the Philippines. This factor is crucial as it allows South Korea's society to enact and absorb developmental policies. South Korea also had stronger land reform policies which prompted the landowner to reinvest their wealth to other businesses in society. Their land reforms led elites to find other markets, and this is one of the reasons why economic takeoff occurred in South Korea. Whereas, the Philippines did not have these throughout history, and has land reform issues today. South Korea had received more funding in comparison to the Philippines after the Second World War period. The Philippines was given unequal treaties as a condition for receiving funding. Thus, the South Korean government funded markets such as the steel industry and the automobile industry, but the Iligan Steel industry needed more funding and was mismanaged by the Philippines state. Those early pre-conditions led the Filipino government to adopt Overseas Filipino Worker policies instead of growing domestic industrial markets that created jobs. These factors explain why the South

Korean state inherited advantageous pre-conditions and made it easier to mould into a developmental one.

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"OH, I'M LIVING THE DREAM, BABY!"
GRAND THEFT AUTO V AND THE MYTH OF THE AMERICAN DREAM

INDIE DUFOUR

Indie Dufour (he/they) is a third-year Rhetoric and Communications student. He plans to obtain a master's in Museum Studies, and is especially interested in the representation and depictions of marginalized communities in media. Their aim is to combine those passions and uplift queer and Indigenous artists and creators.

The Grand Theft Auto (GTA) game series is one of, if not the most, criticized media properties of recent decades. Since the original launch of the game series in 1997, thousands of news articles, blog posts, YouTube videos, scientific articles, and other media have been published criticizing the game for its glorification and glamorization of violence and racism. Some critics have even gone so far as to claim the game has inspired actual crimes, such as an eleven-year-old from Toronto who stole his parents' car (Wang, 2016) or a Louisiana man who went on a "real-life crime spree inspired by the popular video game 'Grand Theft Auto'" (Newcomb, 2013). Despite — or perhaps because of — this infamy, GTA's publisher Rockstar Games has made quite a bit of revenue off the franchise. Encompassing seventeen individual game releases and with the highly anticipated GTA VI to be released in 2025, the series has earned an estimated $9.38 billion, with the latest release, Grand Theft Auto V (GTAV), encompassing 85% of this total, at an astonishing 8$ billion ("List of highest-grossing media franchises"). Additionally, Rockstar Games have implemented Grand Theft Auto

Online (GTAO), a solely multiplayer portion of GTAV that has a number of microtransactions. In this context, microtransactions are in-app purchases players can make to help speed up more difficult or time-consuming sections of the game, such as the ability to quickly buy cars, properties, or make other in-game purchases in order to progress faster. These microtransactions comprise a reasonable portion of GTAV's profits, but most notable is that players interested in this particular style of game do not have many other options for this niche style of gaming. The monetary success of GTAV can be attributed to a number of things; it has been over a decade since its release, and as the most recent addition to the franchise, players do not have many other options for its niche of mission-based, open world games, with realistic graphics, cool cars and guns, and an online multiplayer mode.

 GTAV takes place in the state of San Andreas, a fictionalized version of Southern California. Common themes in the game include the inner workings of gangs, satirized Hollywood culture, collusion, and corruption within the government, and, most critically to this paper, the American Dream. The concept of the American Dream, a term originally coined in James Truslow Adams' 1931 book The Epic of America, is difficult to precisely define, because of how much subjective it is to an individual. The American Dream is an unattainable concept of success in modern America. Depictions of the American Dream include a well-paying job, a house with a white picket fence, a wife and two kids, and just generally being a good, God-fearing citizen. American Dream truly is the guiding mythology of the modern United States, as it is shaped by the concepts that founded the "New World" when it was originally settled; everyone who fits the will be free to work, have a family, own property, and live however they please. In his 2012 book "The American Dream: A Cultural History", author Lawrence R. Samuel surveys those close to him personally, noting "The Dream" as having no specific definition to the majority of the population. Answers he received include "financial stability or, more specifically, making enough

money to be able to retire […] 'the good life' […] to work for oneself, to have (at least) fifteen minutes of fame, the 'pursuit of happiness,'" and noting it as "the guiding mythology of the most powerful civilization in history" (Samuel, 1). The American Dream is frequently referenced and satirized in media, though it is rarely confronted as a colonial institution, and instead usually involves middle aged white men dealing with its effects. Titles such as F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel The Great Gatsby in 1925 (Donahue), Arthur Miller's play Death of a Salesman in 1949 (Lahr) are both examples of characters coping with negative aspects of the American Dream and how it affects their friends and family. On the other hand, Jerome Robbins' musical West Side Story in 1957 (Bernstein) is an example of racialized characters dealing with poverty and other institutions upheld by the Dream. Grand Theft Auto V explores the Dream through its three main characters; Franklin Clinton, a young Black man engulfed in gang culture; Michael de Santa, a white, middle aged, retired career criminal living the life of a multi-millionaire; and Trevor Phillips, another white career criminal, who is still heavily involved in the production and sale of drugs and weapons. These three characters come from varying backgrounds and approach their lives in diverse ways; whereas Michael and Franklin want to escape their pasts and live normal, American Dream-abiding lives, Trevor wants nothing to do with the concept, and in fact directly opposes it.

In analyzing these three characters and applying real-world concepts such as the American Dream, it is valuable to reflect on how satirized and exaggerated the world of San Andreas is. The tone of GTAV is interesting in that it tells a profoundly serious and complex story against a very unserious background. The setting of the game includes everything from the in-game radio stations to the dialogue of pedestrians walking down the street, to the names of businesses, all of which are played for comedy. This is exacerbated by the ironic nature of the game itself: a real person could never get away with committing multiple million-dollar heists, or assassinating dozens of rich and important people, or the number of other crimes one commits during an average playthrough of GTAV's storyline.

These elements of gameplay force an extremely unrealistic context into a story woven with very real narrative problems. This contrast can have a few effects on players. For instance, many players are left with the feeling that their actions does not have consequences. One criticism of the game is that outside of missions, dying or being arrested in the open-world sandbox has no-long term effects for gameplay or the characters. It can be difficult for an audience to connect with a story whose backdrop is so silly. This is why many have applauded the game for its ability to develop complex characters such as Michael de Santa. Michael is, quite possibly, the most 'normal' person in the GTA universe— an astounding feat, considering his introduction to the story shows him committing a bank robbery and faking his death. Through a series of deals with government employees, Michael ends up in witness protection, moving him and his family to a mansion in Los Santos, and living out the life of a millionaire. In the mission Bury the Hatchet, the following monologue can be heard:

Listen, Amanda. We're going to move to Los Santos. Start over. I made a deal. The slate will be totally wiped clean. Trust me, darling. Look at me, Amanda. It was the only thing I could do. Either everyone dies, or one guy gets out. I'm that guy! […] I don't have a choice. Do you wanna die here where it's always snowing? Or do you wanna go and live where it's always sunny? […] Just this one job, and everything is done ("Bury the Hatchet/Transcript").

Michael, after moving to Los Santos, changes his name and was "happily retired, sulking by [his] swimming pool" ("Paleto Score Setup/Transcript"). Michael had, by all means, reached the American Dream; he had a beautiful, mortgaged house, a nuclear (if not stereotypical) family, a few cars, and hobbies. He had left his crime-riddled past and had moved to the ever-sunny parody of Los Angeles. In a 2021 paper titled "'Ain't the American Dream Grand': Satirical Play in Rockstar's Grand Theft Auto V" John Wills argues that Michael's therapy sessions throughout the game, that function

partially as exposition dumps, help players to connect to Michael's emotions. A frustrated and angry Michael reflects on how the "opportunities" (even "achievements") of crime have allowed him to live a rich and opulent retirement-style existence in the Rockford Hills. However, instead of feeling a new sense of ease and contentment, Michael is overwhelmed by the "overriding futility" of Los Santos life. [...] Michael exclaims, "Oh, I'm living the dream, baby, and that dream is fucked" (Wills).

This eruption from Michael represents the greater crux of the problem with the Dream: though he has secured everything from the Dream's 'checklist,' Michael is incredibly unhappy. In fact, he is so miserable that he is intentionally portrayed as an unlikeable character, especially during the opening cutscene of the game, quoted above. Michael has everything he needs to live comfortably, but he is also an alcoholic, his wife cheats on him, and his adult kids are unemployed and constantly fighting. This representation of a white man who has everything and yet is miserable, a man who won the Dream by lying and cheating, is a fascinating glance at a reflection of our real world: the richest people will come out on top, especially if those riches are gained from exploitation and murder.

The American Dream, deliberately fluid and abstract as an evasive construct, is difficult enough to "obtain" for the average person, if not impossible. This difficulty, compounded with the institutional barriers of the poverty cycle, rising mortgage rates, gang violence, and addictions, can make it even more difficult for racialized people to achieve traditional examples of the Dream, such as buying a home or holding a stable, well-paying job. In their 2019 paper, Armstrong et. al. note, "Racism impedes the promise of equality underlying in the meritocratic [American Dream] ideology. [...] if African Americans 'fail' to achieve the dream, they are more likely to attribute their inability to discrimination and opportunities being unavailable to them due to institutional barriers" (Armstrong et. al. p. 232). "Failing" the American Dream is not a moral failure, but more a signifier of how unhappy a person could be in their lives. It is commonly understood

that being comfortable in living– not having to worry about the threat of houselessness or losing one's job– are both supposed outcomes of having achieved the American Dream. Thus, to strive to achieve the dream is to work towards a romanticised ideal of stability. This is not to say a person could never be happy without a stable income or a house, but only that anxiety about financial instability is a driving force behind the motivation to achieve the Dream.

For another GTAV character, the traditional Dream is secured in an extraordinarily non-traditional manner. Franklin Clinton, who is heavily involved in gang violence when the game begins, commits multiple assassinations and robberies throughout the course of gameplay, ultimately leaving the "hood," and gaining possession of a mansion and a comfortable savings account to fall back on. Clinton achieves the Dream, and all it took was the pull of a trigger. This could lead a hypothetical audience to ask, "why spend the time, money, and energy to work an entire lifetime for the American Dream, when criminal acts are quick, easy, and as demonstrated, relatively consequence-free?"

Joslyn Armstrong et al. ask, "How does one attain TAD (The American Dream) when one is exposed to racial inequalities and economic barriers on a daily or lifetime basis?" (pp. 233). The answer for many, including our protagonist Franklin, is to play the game that the universe has set out for you to play, but under your own rules. When GTAV's story concludes, Franklin has had the biggest lifestyle shift of any of the three protagonists, moving from unwillingly selling drugs, as seen in the mission Hood Safari, to becoming a wealthy entrepreneur, making money legally. He returns in GTA Online (GTAO), the multiplayer portion of the game. The story of GTAO is set in the same world, but nearly a decade later. In the mission The Contract, he introduces himself to the player as "A hustler that made it big. Big house, nice cars, a family, and everything. But man, I miss getting these fuckin' hands dirty" ("The Contract DLC All Franklin Scenes" 0:59-1:08). Despite the supposed happy ending in GTAV, Franklin's story in GTAO conveys that "cheating" your way to the Dream is perhaps not as appealing as it seems.

To the aforementioned hypothetical audience, it could lead to further questions— is struggling through a dead-end job worth it in order to be successful, when that success is just as demoralizing? What is success, really?

An important assumption underlying the American Dream is that it is something that all Americans want to participate in. To this point, GTAV explores what happens to an unwilling participant in the Dream. From an objective standpoint, any American engaging in capitalism is engaging with the main ideals of the American Dream: accumulating wealth and physical possessions. The main difference comes when a person actively fights against the "core American ideologies" of freedom and respect for all, including being a law-abiding citizen. GTAV's third and final protagonist Trevor Phillips is a fascinating character for many reasons. Some critics have recognized Trevor as one of the most violent and brutal characters in media, among the ranks of Michael Myers and Jigsaw. Over the course of the story, he murders dozens of people in a variety of horrific ways, while simultaneously running a drug and weapons empire. He single-handedly takes down motorcycle gangs and multinational corporations. In many ways, Phillips has achieved his own twisted version of the Dream. He owns a home, a car, and makes money. He is, in many ways portrayed as having achieved happiness. What is to say this is different from a character like Michael or Franklin? Instead of Los Santos, Trevor had been living in upstate San Andreas in Sandy Shores, a small town whose economy is only fuelled by the drug trade, largely because of Trevor. In the mission Paleto Score Setup, the first major mission in which Trevor is playable, Phillips and de Santa have the following conversation about Trevor's way of living.

Michael: You know, I've been thinking about you, Trevor. Your lifestyle. In some ways you defy categorization. But then... Think about it, where you live...
Trevor: It's off the grid. We're away from it all. It's somewhere real and authentic. This is America, and real people ain't been priced out yet.

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Michael: You're a hipster.
Trevor: I abhor hipsters. I eat them for fun.
Michael: Hipsters love saying they hate hipsters. Self hatred. Common hipster affliction.
Trevor: Why, only because I'm living out here away from the Bean Machines, and the bankers?
Michael: You're gentrifying. [...] Maybe you're not a classic garden variety hipster, but you're what the hipsters aspire to be. ("Paleto Score Setup/Transcript")

While being a hipster is by no means being the same as being anti-American Dream, (and, in fact, being a "hipster" can be very pro-consumerist and capitalistic, as it often relies on trends like fast fashion) Michael's quote about Trevor being what hipsters aspire to be is quite poignant. In rejecting traditional societal standards— living in a dirty trailer, kidnapping people, treating others disrespectfully, for example,— Trevor is inherently anti-American Dream. The home and car he owns (a messy trailer and a military truck, respectfully) are nontraditional examples of these possessions, and his "job" requires he break multiple laws. This is the biggest subversion of the American Dream in Grand Theft Auto V, as while other examples of subversions typically show a character struggling from the affects of the Dream, Trevor had never struggled from it in the first place. He actively spits in the face of the concept, while still fitting the textbook definition of a successful person.

Grand Theft Auto V is an intriguing look into three ways the American Dream is represented and subverted in media. Michael is rich but miserable, Franklin is happy but always wants more, and Trevor is a mirror image of how the American Dream is typically seen— while being completely immoral. These characters, while complexly flawed, could teach an audience lessons about how to be grateful for what they have, regardless of if they think it is enough, a valuable life lesson for its target audience of mostly young people to learn. Greed, consumerism, and the urge to always

have more is one of the largest societal issues leading society as a whole to demoralize and disrespect others for the sake of having more cars, bigger houses, and a higher number in our bank accounts.

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RACISM IN THE MIDDLE AGES

PRECIOUS GAUTHIER

 Racism is currently a prominent talking point worldwide. Some might say racism is a newer construct, while others believe that it has always been a part of humanity. The term racism is defined in various ways around the globe, but most people can agree that it is harmful and the result of discrimination. As many in academia know, the discourse on the existence of racism in the Middle Ages has many perspectives. While the definition of racism can be subjective, the concepts of race and racism did exist in the Middle Ages. The time frame of this era consisted of the 5th to the 15th century, which will be the window referenced without exact dates for this discussion. The aspects of identifying racism include othering, the belief that dark-skinned people are the cursed ancestors of Noah's son Ham from the biblical story of Noah and anti-Black representation.

 First, it is necessary to determine the definition of racism to discuss its existence in the Middle Ages. Ramon Grosfoguel from the University of California defines racism as "a global hierarchy of superiority and inferiority along the line of the human that have been politically, culturally and economically produced and reproduced for centuries by the institutions of the 'capitalist/patriarchal western-centric/Christian-centric modern/colonial world system'" (Grosfoguel, 2016, p. 10). This hierarchy he labels using "diverse racial markers" that Grosfoguel identifies as "colour, ethnicity, language, culture and religion" (Grosfoguel, 2016, p. 10). While the behaviour that contributes to creating the experience of racism has changed between covert and overt actions, how it can be recognized has also changed over the centuries. Nonetheless, the results can still be identified as racism. Initially, the covert behaviour of othering moved into the more overt behaviours of blood purity, cursed ancestry, and negative visual depictions.

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One of the significant reasons that a person can identify racism as a concept that existed in the Middle Ages is the behaviour of othering. Othering can be defined as "relative inferiority and/or radical alienness" (Brons, 2015, p. 69). An example of this occurs for the Jewish people initially through Grosfoguel's "diverse racial marker" of religion, and a similar example occurs for the Irish as well. Fredrickson explains that early Christians initially could not "claim that there was something inherently defective about Jewish blood or ancestry" because they were also Jewish, so they produced a method of othering (Fredrickson, 2015, p. 18). This consisted of blaming the whole Jewish community for the murder of the Christian saviour Jesus, labelling them all as evil (Fredrickson, 2015). This further led to the development of folklore and fabricated accusations of vile, abominable behaviours by the Jewish people (Fredrickson, 2015, p. 20). With the Irish, discrimination was enacted against them using Grosfoguel's "diverse racial marker" of ethnicity. This othering behaviour was observed when the "Guild membership was being denied to those of Irish blood or birth. Additionally, the Irish were forbidden from marrying outside of their ethnicity" (Fredrickson, 2015, p. 24). In both situations, one distinct group of people was excluded and deemed lesser, demonstrating a hierarchy of "superiority and inferiority" (Grosfoguel, 2016, p. 10). While many may disagree with the latter example, as Irish people are now identified as white, the example links the framework for current racial structures representing Grosfoguel's "western-centric/Christian-centric" notion.

Another prominent instance in which one can reason racism existed in the Middle Ages is the claim that there is a curse on the descendants of Ham. The descendants are identified as sub-Saharan Africans "who were cursed and condemned to perpetual bondage because of their ancestor's mistreatment of his father Noah" (Fredrickson, 2015, p. 29). This claim is still currently used in many extremist organizations to justify the segregation and discrimination of Black people. Bartlett discusses additional anti-Black racism with how ethnicity is portrayed in texts. The depiction of "full lips, broad nose and curly hair" is a narrow depiction that is inaccurate because Black people come in many different sizes, facial characteristics, and complexions (Barlett, 2009, p. 134). It has been determined that with

Black people, "there is a greater range of skin colours, hair colours and textures, facial features, body sizes, and other physical traits in this category than in any other human aggregate identified as a single race" (Takezawa et al., para. 1). The depiction in medieval texts is similar to the racist minstrel images and caricatures created of Black people common in the 20th century. These examples align with discrimination through Grosfoguel's "diverse racial markers" of ethnicity and colour.

 In conclusion, while recognizing that racism has changed over time, it is clear that the discourse surrounding racism in the Middle Ages involves various narratives on whether or not it existed. While definitions of racism may vary, it is evident from this discourse that the concepts of race and racism did exist during this period. The behaviours of othering identified by Grosfoguel's diverse racial markers, the notion of the cursed ancestors of Ham, and stereotyped depictions of physiological traits of Black people were prevalent in medieval society. These examples demonstrate a deeply ingrained racist belief system from the Middle Ages, echoing the harmful stereotypes that persist even today. Recognizing the existence of racism in the Middle Ages is crucial for understanding the historical roots of contemporary racial dynamics.

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