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# *Rooted in Rhetoric* *Connections*



Writing and artwork by students of the  
University of Winnipeg

Department of Rhetoric, Writing, and  
Communications

Volume 3 • Spring 2018

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# *Rooted in Rhetoric*

## *Connections*

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Volume 3 • Spring 2018

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## Foreword

In our lifetimes we encounter different people, wander through different places, situate ourselves in different events, and ponder through different ideas. Although our lives may seem mundane and absurd at times, we live in a world where we are all connected in spite of our different backgrounds and experiences. In this collection, students coming from different departments share varied writing pieces which explore these connections and how these connections have shaped their lives and influenced the issues they are most passionate about.

Writers establish insightful connections among various things through a rumination of their past, present, and future lives. It could be a memory shared with a family member. It could be a conversation they are having with a stranger. It could be a dream vacation they are just planning. These connections may not come to them right away, but later on, writers will find that the most random experience they had can lead them to discover something about themselves. Writers learn that these experiences reflect the joys, tribulations, and aspirations shared among humanity. Through writing, they express that we are all connected mentally, intellectually, and emotionally.

In this collection, writing pieces that communicate our connections await the readers to dwell upon. May the effects of these connections remain in our hearts and minds for as long as we live.

*Denise Fajardo, B.A.*

## Introduction

“Connections” is the third volume of *Rooted in Rhetoric*, an academic journal published by the Rhetoric, Writing, and Communications department at the University of Winnipeg. “Connections” showcases student writings from a variety of departments including English, Biochemistry, Rhetoric, Indigenous Studies, and many more. The students featured in this collection have provided examples of their writing as varied as they are; personal narratives, argumentative essays, and critical analyses are all gathered here to offer readers the insights into the minds of each student.

This compilation of student writings is titled “Connections” because it highlights the many connections that people have. A person can be connected to another person, a place, an idea, an event, or countless other things. These connections play a part in determining who a person was in the past, who they are in the present, and who they will be in the future.

Thank you to the students who submitted their work and allowed people a glimpse into their minds with their writing. Thank you also to Dr. Andrew McGillivray and Dr. Helen Lepp Friesen for organizing and facilitating this volume of *Rooted in Rhetoric*. Finally, thank you to the Rhetoric, Writing, and Communications department for covering the costs of production for the journal and for ensuring that University of Winnipeg students have an opportunity to share their ideas with the world.



# Flânerie at the Winnipeg Richardson International Airport

*Maria Josellee Dabalos*

When you think of international airports, you usually think of a busy place with lots of people arriving or departing, but Winnipeg's international airport does not meet these expectations. There was a certain vibe, certain spaces, a certain pattern of people, that set this airport apart from other international airports. In my one hour stay at the airport, I decided to remain at the arrival area where I noticed quite a few things that give Winnipeg Richardson International Airport its character. Although airports are considered as a non-place, of constant mobility and zero connections, there are certain factors that can certainly argue against this idea.

MARIA JOSELLEE DABALOS is in the final year of her 3-year Bachelor of Arts in Rhetoric, Writing, and Communications at the University of Winnipeg. She is graduating in the Spring of 2018 and plans to pursue a career in media and communications. Among many other things, Maria Josellee enjoys travelling, writing, and photography.

When my dad dropped us off at the arrival pick-up area outside of the airport, I noticed a few taxis and cars waiting for their passengers. It was quite loud with all the cars driving by; however, I did not feel overwhelmed by this in comparison to the other international airports I had been to. Upon entering the airport from the east side entrance, I noticed two things: the refreshing airport scent and the individuals who were waiting on a bench across the entrance. My initial thought was that they were waiting to be picked up. They

were not a group: They were individuals who just happened to be sharing the space. Aside from this, they all looked tired and they were looking down on their phones. For some reason, I immediately assumed that they were locals who had just arrived home from a long trip, and perhaps I came to this idea because the vibe was familiar to me and reminded me of the times when I was in a similar state coming home after long international trips.

I instructed my brother to purchase us some food at Harvey's while I sat in a seating area adjacent to the stairs going up to the upper floor where the departure area was. This was when I truly felt like a flaneuse, "an observer watching but not participating in the scenes of modern urban life" (Reynolds 71). The first thing I noticed was how spacious the airport was, perhaps because there were not a lot of people at the airport at that time. The airport was clean, bright, and quiet. There were a lot of empty spaces which, for some reason, gave a comforting feel. I felt that, as a traveler, empty spaces would be considered as a piece of heaven since it is very rare to see this at most international airports. I thought that for the travelers who were there at that time, waiting to be picked up, the empty spaces would have definitely provided them with the relaxation they most likely desired for after their long trips. The last thing a traveler would want when coming home is the hustle and bustle, and Winnipeg's airport definitely provides that space for them. This is something a non-place does not necessarily offer.

Since my brother's order was taking a while to be prepared, I decided to walk around towards where the conveyor belts were. Again, I noticed a pattern of single individuals

arriving rather than groups. Most of these people looked as if they were coming home from business trips, a conclusion I arrived at based on their attire. The pattern of the people arriving seemed to align with the time of the year since it was not exactly vacation season just yet. I decided not to stay long in this area and so I walked back to where my brother was. An interesting thing I noticed while walking back was how orderly things were. Looking back on my past travels and my experiences going through this airport, I realized that I have taken for granted how well maintained this airport was, like how organized and how friendly the staff were. The maintenance of Winnipeg's airport seemed to contradict the idea illustrated by a mobile non-place, disorganized due to the influx of people arriving and leaving, and a disconnect from staff and other passengers whom you may never see again. The orderly and friendly atmosphere of Winnipeg's airport is certainly a feature I love and will boast about, and is something I will try to always keep in mind and admire in my future travels.

Finally, after an hour of being a flaneuse, I came to a more informed perspective of Winnipeg Richardson International Airport. According to Tim Cresswell, non-places are places of travel where "particular histories and traditions are not ... relevant" (78). Although this may be mostly true, I would argue, as a traveler, that airports are where many memories have been made. Sitting down and observing the airport made me ponder about this idea and my own memories in the Winnipeg airport. I realized that I had many memories in this airport with my family—from leaving the country to traveling abroad, from picking up my mom back from her trips to picking up my cousins who had just arrived in Canada. There was certainly a

lot to remember, which makes Winnipeg Richardson International Airport more meaningful than just a “non-place.”

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# What is Home?

*Alexis Ferland*

What makes my place a home? Is it a physical place? My place is a home to my son Cleo, boyfriend Chris, our baby on the way, and me. We are a small family waiting for this little one to arrive. My home is about family; our child is what makes our place a home. My home is a loving relationship between a mother and son, and a father and son. My home is the home-cooked meals and celebrations throughout the year. My home is the commitment to creating time to spend together with open arms to love, laughter, and peace. My home is a safe environment to relax and enjoy the entertainment that the day begins. My home is about traditional medicine and ceremony. We have a very physical household; I work hard to finish school. My boyfriend wakes up every morning at 4 am to start his day for work; Chris works with garbage and recycle. My son either stays home to play with his toys with his sitter, or Cleo is out visiting family while I go to class. Our home reflects from actions.

ALEXIS FERLAND was born February 8, 1991 in Winnipeg Manitoba, Canada and is from the Mathias Colomb Cree Nation, Pukatawagan, Manitoba, Canada, Treaty 6 Territory. Alexis is a descendent of the Ojibwe and Cree Nations. She attended the University of Winnipeg as an undergraduate student, and after Winter Term 2018, she will be a third year

I started the process of making a home before my son was born to decolonize my life from colonization. I use traditional medicines to heal my body and to grow. My home has traditional medicines to protect us from any harm, and to cleanse us for the day. My home is

about re-learning about our ancestors, and teaching my son where he belongs in the world, what his identity is, and what his responsibilities are as a descendant of the Eagle clan. My home is about teaching Cleo about ceremonies, so Cleo can live the good life. I want Cleo to be an Indigenous knowledge keeper so his life can help the Indigenous population. My home is about keeping Cleo safe, and Cleo knowing his dad. A home is a hard working mom and dad doing our best, for our son.

Once I started living on my own, I decided to do more than I had before. I wanted to be a part of the community and to be involved. I liked participating in the Indigenous movement to serve the community, and I wanted to meet the Indigenous people in the community. A friend introduced me to more of my culture, ceremonies, and language. We talked everyday about the importance of our identity and how to shape our homes into a cultural environment for our future children. I started going to ceremonies to get an understanding of my people, and I wanted that to be a part of my home. A lot of Indigenous peoples are dedicated to our community in Winnipeg, and I wanted to become their friends. I met friends through finding my Spirit name, the sweat lodge where I got my name, decolonizing at school, and protesting our rights on the streets. More importantly, I focused on language to teach my son so he can be surrounded by the language. Language is important in the home because language is spoken in ceremony, teachings, and every day life. Language gives us our identity, so one day my family can be fluent. My purpose is to have a

decolonizing home so we remember where we came from, who our ancestors are, and our responsibility to future generations.

My home is to influence others to remember who we are as people. I want my home to be an example of a family that found their identity, follows their culture, and practices their language. I want the wider universe to watch us decolonize ourselves, and I want my home to be known to our community as being involved in living in our old ways. I want the community to learn from us that it is possible to find out who you are, and that many Indigenous people still can connect to our culture today. I want us to be an example to the community of a family who lives by our culture, and who ever may be watching can turn their lives around to decolonize themselves and their families. I know Indigenous people need examples of family life because so many do not know how to decolonize themselves. A family living in the North End can decolonize themselves through Elders and our traditional medicines. My home is about showing my community that the purpose of our ceremonies is for self-care and healing through our traditional medicines. This is our world for Indigenous people.

# The Modern Day in Just Four Days

*Ryan Haughey*

## **Introduction // Thursday Night**

I am proposing an experiment for myself. Pondering the cliché of ‘the modern love story,’ that story being between today’s humans and their own illusions of modernity. I wish to comment on what ‘modern’ really means in our current day. I find that things are rarely depictive of modernity in social, artistic, and political outlooks these days. Even my usage of the phrase ‘these days’ is a reference back to an older time where things were different. What I aim to do over the next weekend (it is Thursday night – or Friday morning at 2am) is discuss my interpretation of the modern day, and what exemplifies this in society. Hopefully by Monday I will have come to some sort of conclusion rather than indulgent and tangential ramblings.

I plan to include an entry for each day from Thursday until Monday, when I hope to conclude this commentary. What I find very interesting about this proposal is not only in the topic, but the idea of recording my findings and reporting on them daily. Rather than collecting research and observations first, I will use each day as a sort of journal entry. My hope for this concept is that the reader will accompany me on this internal journey of absorption and meditation.

## A Lack of Modernity // Friday Night

I've noticed that the present lacks a representation of the present. Where does our society depict itself? Through art, media, and the public sphere. But in these depictions, modernity is overshadowed by either nostalgia or futurism. Our society seems to be obsessed with another time, whether it has already happened or still to come.

The recent film, *La La Land* (Chazelle, 2016) brought back the aura of classic Hollywood films. At times it may push for a message like, "hey, remember *Singin' in the Rain* and *Invitation to the Dance*?" I am not saying that this is a useless expression of artistry. I often indulge in films that reminisce in the shine of centuries past.

RYAN HAUGHEY is finishing his fourth year of university, closing in on a BA majoring in Rhetoric & Communications while minoring in both English and Film Studies. His work has been published in JUICE, The Uniter, and Stylus Magazine. His passion for the literary drives him to become an ever improving writer.

A great example of a film that inspires me to learn more about earlier bygones is Akira Kurosawa's *Seven Samurai* (1954). As it is, in my humble opinion, possibly the best film of all time, it inspires me to read about feudal Japan and watch more films on that subject. Elsewhere in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, another genre was emerging. Neo-Realism took off in Italy with films like *Bicycle Thieves* (De Sica, 1948), and *Rome, Open City* (Rossellini, 1945) which depicted the country after the war and the fall of fascism. The whole point of these films was that they depicted the current state of society.

Another more recent example of this is the film *Frances Ha* (Baumbach, 2013), a film which very accurately described a short period in an average New Yorker's life in 2013. The film was mainly about modern life, and will surely be looked back on as what life was like in the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Even more recent was *Lady Bird* (Gerwig, 2017) – incidentally directed by the star of *Frances Ha*. This film was widely recognized for its depiction of modern society – but the modern society was depicted was still from 20 years ago.

It is very difficult to find our society in a world where fantasies are easy to create. We may be missing opportunities to reflect on our modern society by indulging in these fantasies. So what would it take to artistically indulge in a modern depiction?

### **Learning to Change // Saturday Night**

We see politicians promising to bring back times of prosperity, evoking the public's yearning for the past. Donald Trump's "Make America Great Again" slogan implies that he is trying to shape his ideals around a past world. Without going too far into the social issues and politics of this slogan (i.e. racism, sexism, homophobia, gun control, war, the list goes on) I can see an obvious lack of stock being put into the modern day, and what can be done to maintain it. Of course, thinking toward the future is a must in politics, but when we depend on the future to bring us peace and prosperity, we forget that we can change things here and now.

Many people in society are afraid of change. People often view change as the past versus the future. Society is comfortable with the past, but so much in society is evolving that fear blocks the option of change. As humans, we make decisions based on what we think is in our best interest. However, when our thoughts and values are based solely in the past or the future, we cannot truly make decisions that are best for us in the now.

I'm not saying that we should abandon all thoughts and values from our history or our goals. Rather, I would propose a form of forward thinking. When we accept that the world around us is constantly changing, we can accept that our values are also changing. We should come to some compromise - an understanding that while history and goals are important, the present is the most important time.

### **We're Only Human // Sunday Afternoon**

All humans are just that: human. We can't expect ourselves to be perfect. We must forgive ourselves for making mistakes and move on. However, we cannot forget our past. As I have said previously, history is not something to get stuck in. But history must be learned from. In the modern day we are desensitized to many of the traumatic historical events around the world. The Great War ended a century ago, the Holocaust took place before the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, and the war in Vietnam was back in the Woodstock Rock days. Even more recent events such as the fall of the Twin Towers seem long since passed.

Everything we learn from these incidents must be taken into account in today's modern society. This seems contradictory to my previous statements, but what I wish to convey is that the modern world needs to live in the moment, while learning from passed societal mistakes - only then can we effectively achieve our goals as a society.

There are however positive shifts in perspective in this modern world. We have seen the oppressed rise and, though still oppressed in many ways, share their voice. There are many, many barriers, but ideal mutual respect is beginning to emerge in our modern world. Those who recognize this glimmer of respect must nurture it and help it grow. We do this not by crucifying those who oppose it, but by educating and correcting negativity; helping those who suffer realize their hate and leave it behind.

There is common debate on where (objectively) hateful points of view should be tolerated. Whether these topics such as extreme and alt right views; race, gender, and sexual orientation discrimination should be discussed in public places or left to breed hate in the deep corners of the internet. There are positive ways to create change in behavior, and education should be the goal, not humiliation and rage.

Here I paraphrase wisdom from Tenzin Gyatso, the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama: If you want others to practice compassion, practice it yourself on even your worst enemies.

### **Conclusion // Monday Morning**

We collect things from the past: vintage antiques, old books, music records, and paintings. We strive to advance technology with artificial intelligence, easy access amenities, and a new smartphone that comes out twice a year. We are not living in a modern world, we are living elsewhere.

Not that I deny the benefits of imagination, but our absolved minds create illusions that we are in the future now, or still in the past. Some live the same as it was, indulging in whatever positive comforts as well as negative outcomes arise from that. Others think nothing of mistakes of our earth-walking predecessors, and will stop at nothing to achieve their goals.

I believe there is a happy medium. One where we can think critically of the world around us - of media, of our leaders, of one another, and of ourselves. If we can live in a compassionate world with appropriate concern to history and our goals, we can be an effective modern society.

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# Teach through Me

*Charly Hinton*

Two years ago I was a patient in an adolescent psychiatric ward. This was my third and final time being admitted into the ward, but also my most memorable. I met a little boy in the psych ward who I bonded with. The little boy helped me realize that I wanted to better myself. He became the push I needed to pursue teaching. I will always treasure the moments I spent with this little boy because he is gone now. I hope he is in a place where his sorrows can no longer reach him.

I will always remember the day that little boy walked into the psych ward, he looked so small and scared. He was shaking in his Spiderman pajamas while holding onto his grandmother's hand so tight as if he thought she would disappear. He was walking around the ward when he glanced at me and smiled timidly. I smiled back as he walked away. I thought to myself, "how could a boy that young be put in a place like this?" A little while later I saw him walking around, trying to talk to the other patients, when he finally came up to me and introduced himself.

"Hello, my name is Tommy. Do you want to play with me?" he said shyly.

"I would love to play with you Tommy, and my name is Charly," I responded with a smile.

He then grabbed my hand and took me to play video games with him. During that small amount of time I found out quite a bit about Tommy. Tommy was eleven years old and from a small reserve up north called Pukatawa. I found out that Tommy came to the psych

*This narrative is about CHARLY HINTON'S time in the adolescent mental health ward, and how she was able to help a little boy with his school work, bond with him, and have him impact her life forever and inspire her to become a teacher. Charly would also like to dedicate this to him and hopes that he is resting easy in heaven.*

ward because he was getting bullied back home and had recently lost his sister and mother to suicide. As a result, he was severely depressed and started to harm himself. Tommy began to develop psychosis and tried to hang himself. I sympathized with him. I knew what he was going through and knew this would be a hard thing to face alone, so I decided that I was going to help him as much as I could. We became inseparable during our two weeks in the ward.

We had three hours of school every day in the psych ward. I soon began to discover that Tommy struggled in the majority of his subjects, so I helped him a lot during school. He became frustrated when he did not understand something and easily gave up on assignments. I always convinced him to finish his work somehow. One afternoon when I was helping him he became frustrated and stopped working, then looked up at me with a questioning face.

“How come you are so good at school stuff?” Tommy asked.

“I guess I kind of like school,” I laughed.

“You should become a teacher if you like school so much.” He said in a stern tone.

“I will think about it,” I replied jokingly.

“I wanted to be a teacher, but my classmates all said I was too dumb to be one,” Tommy frowned.

“Tommy, you can be anything you want. If you want to be a teacher, then be a teacher. Do not let anyone stop you from achieving your dreams,” I said with a soft smile.

Tommy beamed up at me, then went back to work.

I spent a lot of time with Tommy. He made me play games. I made him draw. We did our school work together, we ate together and sat together during our group counselling sessions. I told him stories before he went to bed. I taught him how to smudge and I also became the person he would come to if he had a problem. I became his shoulder to cry on – he was like my little brother. We had a good two weeks together, but Tommy eventually had to leave. He seemed excited to go back home and was telling me all of the things he wanted to do when he returned. When it was finally time for him to leave he started to cry; he ran from his grandmother’s grip and gave me one last hug.

“I am going to miss you so much Tommy; please promise you will be safe,” I said tearing up.

“I promise Charly. I will miss you too. Please do not forget about me,” he said between sobs.

“I promise I will never forget you Tommy” I said now fully crying.

We then let go of each other as he ran back to his grandmother and waved goodbye – that was the last time I saw Tommy.

Two years later, my mental health has become much better since I last saw Tommy. Tommy was the little push I needed to get my life back together. Tommy encouraged me to become a teacher. He was the one who got me interested in this career path. I want to become a teacher to help other kids like Tommy and to know Tommy's dream of becoming a teacher can live vicariously through me. No matter how difficult school might get I will push forward for the both of us. I will never forget the sweet and timid eleven-year-old boy I met in the psych ward; Tommy you will always be remembered, rest in peace.

## Connection with Strangers

*Varleen Kaur Kainth*

Everyday we have many conversations with so many people in our life, but the impact of some of these discussions is long lasting, as some conversations give us pleasure when we remember them in the future. Here, I

VARLEEN KAUR KAINTH  
*took Academic Writing in  
the winter of 2018. She  
enjoyed exploring and  
developing her voice in her  
writing.*

would like to share one of the most important and unforgettable experiences of my life. This experience has had a great influence on my mind, as it inspires me to do better in my studies, and motivates me to achieve my goals.

It so happened that five years ago, I met an elderly lady in the doctor's clinic who had wrinkles on her face and was short in height. She was there for treatment, and I was there with my younger brother because he was not well. When my brother went inside the doctor's office, I was sitting outside with the aged lady.

The lady suddenly started talking with me. First, she asked, "What is your name?"

I replied, "My name is Varleen."

She said that my name was very unique, as she had not heard this name before. After that, she started questioning me about my studies and family. I answered all of her questions. Then I asked about her. She introduced herself to me, and said that she was 85 years old and still unmarried. This completely surprised me, as before this encounter I had not met anyone

who was unmarried at the age of 85. She explained that she belonged to a Punjabi community in which it was not possible to be single without marriage.

I asked her, “Why are you still unmarried?”

She told me that she lost her father at very young age, and she had to take care of her siblings.

Suddenly, she started communicating with me in English! This was also shocking to me as English in India is a second language, especially where I come from. She told me that she was a government teacher. She belonged to the same community as me, where few of the older people knew English. Despite this, she was a good English speaker and she was speaking fluently and clearly. Later, she asked me about my aim. I told her, I want to become a fighter pilot. She was impressed with me, and started giving me blessings. She said to me, “God bless you.” She told me that God will fulfill all my wishes and give me whatever I want. Further, I will receive success in my life and will reach the highest point.

At that time I had no words to say to her. I had not thanked her for her blessings as I was completely confused and did not understand why she was giving me many blessings. She left the clinic. Since that day, I have not seen that lady again. I would like to see her at least once more in my life, as I have questions which I want to ask her. One of the questions is why she showed me so much love. For me, it was like I was her daughter.

At the end of the day, I only feel one thing; sometimes we make connections with strangers as we do not have such relationships with our relatives and friends. So, it is good to

be socialized and build new relationships out of love and respect with unknown people.

Occasionally, meeting with new individuals gives us inspiration and motivation from their life experience which helps us succeed in our own life. As I reflect on the sacrifices of that aged lady, her blessings help me reach for the top of the world.

# The *Mestiza* Consciousness through the Narrative Writing and Thinking of a Filipina Canadian Student Writer

*Roselle Panganiban*

The writings by Gloria Anzaldúa, writings which transform how I see words on a page, have spoken to me in ways that I will never be able to let go. As a Filipina Canadian student writer, I also find the ‘heart’ of the *mestiza* consciousness intensely liberating, both a

ROSELLE PANGANIBAN is graduating in June 2018 with a 4-year Bachelor of Arts in Rhetoric, Writing, and Communications with a minor in Interdisciplinary Linguistics. She has worked as a writing tutor for three years and was a proofreader for the first issue of Crossings.

joy and a pain in itself, and while Anzaldúa’s writings have assisted in my own writing and in the ways I identify as a writer, it is not always easy to put the impact of her writings into words. Through the *mestiza* consciousness, I have entered a space for philosophical, political, and spiritual interrogation. Or, rather than entering, perhaps

the *mestiza* consciousness was always within me, and that I simply needed the writerly hand of Anzaldúa (among others) to guide me to be consumed by that headspace. On the whole, the *mestiza* consciousness is difficult to pin down and define, because as writers who approach the *mestiza* consciousness interrogate it and push its boundaries, the *mestiza* consciousness responds through its constant flux, like waves eager to flood the earth while swiftly retreating before we can even perceive them.

Practically speaking, Anzaldúa provides student writers, especially those with very different cultural backgrounds, unique learning experiences that allow them to explore their cultural multiplicity in writing. Conceptually speaking, the *mestiza* consciousness blends the poetic and the literal for writers who have been disempowered by postcolonial, patriarchal, and generally more traditional histories. The *mestiza* consciousness also resists the unitary sense of the self, and so those aligned more to a tradition of Western philosophers, like Locke or Kant (Barvosa 3), may not see much value in the *mestiza* consciousness. Nevertheless, many postcolonial, cultural, feminist, and queer writers, teachers, and activists have responded favourably to Anzaldúa's writings. Her work *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* is especially important for her legacy, as there is much in this text that individuals can learn, share, and question in terms of cultural collisions told by someone who lived on the Mexican-U.S. border herself. But as I have pondered the *mestiza* consciousness myself, I have wondered: Can there be even more to this concept, especially through the critical examinations of an individual who understands the concept of the *mestiza* in a different way? As a Filipina Canadian student writer, my personal interest is how one might reread Anzaldúa's *mestiza* consciousness in relation to the Filipina *mestiza*. In this paper, I draw from my own lived experiences and disseminate the *mestiza* consciousness through narrative thinking and writing.

I first met Gloria Anzaldúa a few months ago. By a chance encounter, I had nonchalantly opened my textbook *The Rhetorical Tradition* to her author page. Though I certainly did not meet her in the flesh, I met her in writing: She called me, rightfully so,

through her Spanish name. Within *The Rhetorical Tradition*, I found it fascinating to find and learn about a female rhetor of non-binary colour, though the authors (Bizzell and Herzberg) did endeavour, in this second edition, to include rhetors contributing to the diversity of rhetorical studies. Through Anzaldúa, I found myself, a minority student, compelled by how an unconventional writer challenged the Western framework of rhetoric that I was familiar with in my undergraduate education. As a concept framed by mental processes birthed from cultural mixing, crossing borders (or borders, themselves, crossing over others), and a tolerance for ambiguities; the *mestiza* consciousness is essentially a psychology based on existing in the in-between, in third space (Anzaldúa 99).

But it was not so much the theoretical foundations within the *mestiza* consciousness that pulled me in. As Edwina Barvosa states, “Anzaldúa’s conception of multiple identities shares dimensions with work by other scholars,” such as William James, Robert Dahl, and W.E.B. Du Bois (55-56). However, knowing how to implement ideas in a compelling, *rhetorical* way to attract different audiences is a different story and is, indeed, grounded upon rhetorical storytelling. As Andrea A. Lunsford notes in “Toward a Mestiza Rhetoric,” what shocked Anzaldúa the most was the attention she stirred from composition scholars (63).

Truly, Anzaldúa’s magnetism came from the ways she understood and critically addressed her vulnerability and limited ways of knowing. In challenging others’ “politics of address” (Lunsford 36), she created a living writing style that was fluid, processual, and transformative—writings applicable to both herself and to readers familiar with the cultural

ambiguities. For instance, she self-labels third space, *Nepantla*, but enters a cosmic view by defining the new *mestiza* as an alien consciousness (Anzaldúa 99) and by expressing the ways in which she has been able to survive and reconcile real, living histories. Most of all, Anzaldúa was able to make herself whole, perhaps too subjectively but necessarily so, through a holistic worldview (Keating).

Just as Anzaldúa opened a dialogue with herself in order to face her multiple selves (Lunsford 36), I decided to inquire more about the *mestiza* consciousness in relation to my own sense of self. I took out the lone copy of *Borderlands/La Frontera* from the university library, and once I felt I had sat enough with the book in English, I decided to share it with a friend of mine so that they could help me decipher Anzaldúa's multiple 'codes.' Though they could not translate everything, this friend helped me to understand the first page of the chapter "*La conciencia de la mestiza/Towards a New Consciousness*" (Anzaldúa 99), and one translation that shocked me was the definition of *mestizo/a* as being a 'mixed person,' or 'black and white.'

Though I personally have very little background in Philippine history, one thing that I learned growing up was that *mestizo/a* does indeed mean a mixed person, but instead of this definition of 'black and white,' the Filipino *mestizo/a* is a bit different. My parents, while describing my father's sister who passed away, explained to me that my Tita Susan (or Aunt Susan) in the Philippines was like a *mestiza* because she was light-skinned. Another anecdotal source informed me that *mestizo/a* means a Filipino who looks like a foreigner. In general,

what I have understood about the *mestizo/a* is that it is almost exclusively defined as a Filipino who appears more *puti*—more white.

A part of me remains skeptic about what the majority of Filipinos think in terms of definitions of *mestizo/a*. Already, I know that my own understanding of the word *mestiza* is a point of contention since I often associate the Filipina *mestiza* with beauty. For instance, in the chapter “Vested Transnationalism” in *Pinay on the Prairies*, Glenda Tibe Bonifacio describes the *mestiza* in relation to young women and fame:

[A] gateway to “celebrityhood” for Filipinos is competing in beauty pageants. Recent winners of competitions have included mixed-blood Filipino women. The *mestiza* tends to be the representative Filipina for such beauty competitions, which has wide-ranging implications not only for the beauty and fashion industries in the Philippines but also the reproduction of a certain standard of beauty.

The Philippines is a beauty-crazed society. The concept of “beautiful” is primarily based on a flawless fair complexion and sharp-contoured facial features, or the *mestiza* look. (Bonifacio 224; emphasis added)

As *mestiza* is defined in terms of the gold standard for phenotypic features, the chapter continues with what is essentially a neoliberal account, or the marketability, of the *mestiza*:

Philippine show business is dominated by the *mestiza* [...] beauty ideal. A few standout non-*mestiza* actresses occupy a niche as comedians or in typecast roles as maids, villains, or poor women in most cases. The dominance of the *mestiza* look in

Philippine cinema is ironic, as it reflects only a small proportion of the Filipino population, who are mainly brown-skinned in different hues. As the face of multimedia, the *mestiza* promotes the subtle institutionalization of what I call a “beauty hierarchy”—the more foreign-looking a face is, the greater its commercial value. (Bonifacio 225; emphasis added)

In general, these passages about the *mestiza* in the Philippines have had an effect on the way I view the *mestiza* consciousness developed by Gloria Anzaldúa. Whereas Anzaldúa envisions the new *mestiza* along the lines of Mexican philosopher José Vasconcelos’s vision for a global, cosmic race (99), the Filipina *mestiza* that Bonifacio describes is endorsed as almost a global commodity by Filipino transnationals.

As a Filipina Canadian, I have pondered and continue to deliberate about what ‘shape’ or ‘essence’ the *mestiza* consciousness now has for me. Much like the dichotomies the *mestiza* consciousness seeks to forever make ambiguous, an exploration of the principles and motivations behind the *mestiza* consciousness persistently remains ambiguous for me. If I continue to tie the threads between Anzaldúa’s *mestiza* and the representative *mestiza* of the Philippines, will I feel empowered? Disempowered? Does the *mestiza* possess a brown body? A white one? What are its other phenotypic features? Do I embrace the hybridity of cultures, or have I become more foreign to myself, more *puti*, by taking upon the *mestiza* consciousness?

Ultimately, as I leave behind the identity of an undergraduate student in this last essay of my degree, I believe I will continue to generate these questions throughout my life as I perform, interrogate, and reflect upon these multiple, ambiguous, but very real identities: Like the flooding and retreating of ocean waves, these identities were meant to struggle and reconcile within me.

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## Full Spectrum

*Abigail Saseniuk*

In 2013, Jackson was the most popular name for baby boys in Canada. Jackson was not on either my list or my husband's list of possible baby names. We couldn't agree on a boy name because I felt certain we were going to have a baby girl whom we agreed to name Isla. We decided to keep the gender of our baby a surprise. We decorated our nursery with neutral grey paint and accented it with bright pops of colour. Two weeks later than estimated, our son Oscar was

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born. His birth was also his first lesson for me; he will always do the unexpected, and keep me on my toes. Through sleepless nights and endless diaper changes, I had conquered many challenges to earn my mom badge. However, there was not a chapter in those *What to Expect When You're Expecting* books that would illustrate the challenges my husband and I would face when Oscar was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. As a child with special needs, Oscar's future was going to be very different than the one we had originally imagined and my role and identity as his mother would constantly adapt and evolve.

I awaited Oscar's arrival in the last heatwave of summer. I would sit with my swollen ankles elevated, and daydream of what the next summers of my life would look like with two

kids. I imagined setting up the sprinklers and the inflatable pool in our backyard, grass in between our toes. I dreaded how our packing list for road trips around the country would expand, but hearts would be equally full of adventure. With my second maternity leave well underway, I would frequent Pinterest during Oscar's nap times and pin everything from homemade baby food to outdoor activities and crafts to try out. I was delusional to think I would have time in the future to do it all, but I dreamt anyway. I liked to envision that Oscar would grow up to be an adventurous rock climber, exploring the heights of the world, since he was a curious and mobile baby. Or, I imagined that he would be an artist like me and we could debate works of art together. After Oscar's diagnosis I refused to completely abandon my daydreams or my Pinterest boards. In fact, my Pinterest boards veered with me, changing to include visual aids and sensory-friendly travel locations. I was unwavering in my decision to provide him with the traditions I had originally dreamt about. I started to study various issues related to autism: noise cancelling headphones, speech therapy, and sensory processing. I knew that my motherhood goals were changing to include a few more lessons and pit stops; nevertheless, we were going to pave new roads together.

I had always loved filling in the developmental milestones in the baby books I had created for both of my son's: first tooth, first foods, and first words. When Oscar was almost two years old he was meeting with a specialist who was filling out her own checklist of his developmental milestones. They had told us that by sixteen months Oscar should have been babbling a few words, but he wasn't. I thought that Oscar would eventually grow out of this

silent phase, but he didn't. Oscar was officially diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder just after his third birthday. Hearing that our son was on the autism spectrum knocked the wind out of me. Breathless, it felt like a tornado swept me up, with every difficult struggle and scenario circling in my mind, over and over. I had always dreaded social situations with Oscar. From the grocery store, to family gatherings, Oscar was always unhappy in large crowds. Loud noises and different smells would bother him. His tantrums, and fits began to make sense. When the tornado spit me back out, I was reeling with the aftermath of new information. I knew I had to take my own baby steps toward understanding autism and how it was going to shake up my family life.

The autism spectrum spans far and wide and I was going to explore every path I could to understand it. I started comparing my mental memories with information on the internet. I noticed common characteristics:

Each person with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is unique and will have different abilities. Symptoms caused by ASDs might be very mild in one person and quite severe in another. [...] The primary symptoms of autism include problems with communication and social interaction, as well as repetitive interests and activities.

(“About Autism – Characteristics.”)

I thought about the fog of the early days of Oscar's development. Splitting my time and attention between both boys had been difficult. Although I felt like I was constantly being pulled into many different directions, in my memories, I could pinpoint the timing at eighteen

months where Oscar had stopped developing at the neurotypical pace. It wasn't an abrupt red light or obvious earth shattering occurrence. It was almost as if his internal clock was on pause: "Some children with autism appear to develop normally until around 18 to 24 months of age and then stop gaining new skills and/or start losing skills" ("Learn the Signs of Autism"). As time went on, and Oscar's development stalled, I wondered, how common was autism? Is autism common in Canada, or within my Filipino background? Was there anything I could have done to prevent it? My research provided me with a few answers:

Autism is now the fastest growing and most commonly diagnosed neurological disorder in Canada. Autism Spectrum Disorder is caused by a combination of genetic and environmental influences. [It] occurs in all racial, ethnic and socio-economic groups. Autism is a lifelong spectrum disorder. Early intervention can make a lifetime of difference. ("Facts & FAQ – Did You Know...")

Armed with my findings, I had become a determined mom on a mission to get early intervention started.

Along with the autism spectrum came a diverse team of professionals that facilitated early intervention strategies. We started to work with speech therapists to help Oscar develop vocabulary and occupational therapists to help Oscar regulate his emotions and energy. Around the same time I scheduled my own parenting therapy sessions and started carving out future goals for Oscar. At my parenting sessions, I had met other parents and formed kinships. We traded weekly stories of victories and challenges. We shared the same nervousness of the

futures of our children out in the world as adults without us. Temple Grandin, a public speaker on autism and animal science would often come up in group conversations. Grandin's perspective on her life experience with autism eased a few of my worries:

Visual thinking has enabled me to build entire systems in my imagination. During my career I have designed all kinds of equipment [...] Some of the people I've worked for don't even know that their systems were designed by someone with autism. I value my ability to think visually, and I would never want to lose it. (Grandin 3)

The insights that Temple Grandin offered reminded me that there are many adults on the autism spectrum who are thriving. Without their accomplishments, thought processes and problem solving, the world would be very different.

People on the autism spectrum will always see a world outside our linear views. If we are lucky they will share those views with us. I am fortunate to experience the personality that Oscar brings to our family. There will always be challenges to we face that an average family does not. There aren't *What To Expect* books to have fully prepared me to raise a child with special needs, but there are Pinterest boards to help with my goals. However, with every new word spoken and every new friend Oscar has made we will continue celebrating small victories. Having a child with autism has taught me resiliency and shown me a full spectrum of emotions.

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## Meeting a Stranger

*Dilraj Singh*

On a fine, brilliant hot summer afternoon, my friend Karan and I paced toward the playground to play football. The sun shone down on my face, through the thick layers of leaves that left strips of sunlight on the gray pavement. Confused by the glorious day, I became dazzled by my own fantasy and ignored Karan's constant talking about how hot it was.

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There he was. Again. It was the third consecutive day that I saw the stranger, sitting underneath the big pine tree in front of Karan's house, hiding from the direct heat of the midsummer sun. I caught the anxiety in Karan's eyes as we came closer to the man. He looked in our direction and gave us the biggest smile, revealing his yellowish front teeth. Fearing the odd smile, Karan pulled my arm and signaled me to walk faster. I stopped. The man looked up, surprised by my action, but then forced another smile.

Awkward silence.

"What's your name, kid?" he asked quietly, almost whispering.

"Dilraj. His name is Dilraj." Karan quickly answered before I could open my mouth, uttering my name in frustration. I said hello, and then Karan hurriedly pulled me away. I looked over my shoulder and saw the man waving at me. I waved back.

I returned the next day alone. The man was still there, sitting at his usual spot. I approached him and apologized for my friend's rudeness. He smiled but said nothing. I sat down beside him and started the conversation. At first, he only nodded and answered "Yes" or "No," still feeling uncertain by my initiative. The minutes went by quickly; he finally told me his name: Roy.

As we talked, I learned that he was abandoned (discarded) by his wife and two children since his first arrest for a violent attack. The statement scared me a little. Realizing my expression, Roy assured me that he was a changed man. He then started to talk about himself. He had been involved in a gang during his teenage years; the reputation caused him to enter prison many times. He shared about the life he spent in darkness, overwhelmed by dullness and loneliness.

Roy told his story with tears in his eyes, wet eyes that had witnessed the cruelty of the world, the injustice of society, and the negativity in the people's mind: the day that he lost everything, the day he was accused for murder because he was at the wrong place and at the wrong time. The innocent man spent thirty-five years of his life in prison.

"Do you believe in God?" Roy stopped and asked.

Confused by his question, I touched the cross that was tucked away in my shirt and nodded.

“There was this boy, he volunteered for prison ministry during my serving time. Nice kid, though he was the only person that would come visit me during my last five years in prison.”

Two hours passed quickly. I was amazed at how much I could talk with a stranger I hardly knew. I never saw Roy again after that day, not until later when I found out he passed away from mental illness.

Three years later, my first college admission prompt: “Give your desired major and why.” My answer: Prison Ministry. It all started with a stranger named Roy.

# Last Goodbye

*Karen Swan*

My mother Linda was adopted into an upper class, Catholic Caucasian family when she was a baby. I have reason to believe she was a sixties scoop child, however I am still investigating this theory. My mother suffered from epilepsy her whole life and passed away in April of 1994 from a grand mal seizure. Most memories from my childhood were happy ones, however there is one memory in particular that stands out far apart from the others. This is one of the best memories I have (besides the birth of my children of course). It involves my mother (who passed away when I was 11), my little brother Ryan (who I haven't seen since my mother passed), and a Magical Kingdom located in Orlando, Florida.

As my mother and I walked down the aisles at Safeway in St. Boniface I looked at all the food and snacks that I desired but knew my mother could not afford. The feeling of disappointment and shame surrounded me and I strongly wished we were wealthy like my aunts and uncles. My father was not present in my life and my mother worked long hours as the sole provider for my little brother and I.

As we got to the checkout, my mom said, "Go call a taxi please."

As I walked to the payphone, in the corner I noticed a box for a contest to win a trip to Disney World. After the phone call I filled out a ballot entry for my mom although I never told her.

About three weeks after I filled out the ballot my little brother and I walked home from school as usual. However, when we entered the apartment suite my mother was already home. I found it concerning that she was sitting at the table crying, of course thinking the worst-case scenario. A feeling of dread and anxiety came over me with all these terrible thoughts of being in some sort of awful financial trouble beyond what we already had, or my mom only given a certain amount of time to live; however dark those feelings were they were not unusual for me and my stomach ached with butterflies. As I grew up I had to watch these seizures slowly take my mother away from me.

My mother stood up and grabbed me, pulling me close in a gentle manner as she could barely get the words out, “I don’t know how, but we won a trip to Disney World from Safeway.” By that time I had completely forgotten that I had filled out that ballot. We screamed, we laughed and we cried all at the same time. I later told my mom that I filled out the ballot and she cried even louder and embraced me yet again.

Finally, the big day came and it was mid-January and it was freezing outside. If I was to throw a hot glass of water in the air it probably would have been frozen before hitting the

*KAREN SWAN is an Aboriginal mother to six beautiful boys: one age 15, one age ten, triplets all age four, and one age two. She was born and raised in Winnipeg growing up mainly in St. Boniface and Transcona. Karen’s mother Linda was the inspiration for this story as she misses her dearly and thinks about her every day. According to Karen, “People we love leave us in this world when they pass on, but they leave us with beautiful memories and stories we will never forget.”*

ground. We got our luggage into the taxi and went to the airport. For some strange reason I do not recall the airport in Winnipeg. However, I remember the Air Canada flight because I was extremely terrified. I was shaking and grasping on the seat arm rests with all my might as the plane started ascending into the sky, all the while thinking we were going to crash.

We stepped out of the airports main doors in Orlando, Florida and everyone's eyes were on us. It was over 20 degrees and we were wearing parkas. We waited for a cab to take us to our hotel and the cab driver asked my mom where we were from; my mom responded and said "Canada." I remember this because he then said, "don't you guys live in igloos?" I will never forget how ridiculous he sounded; although it was surprisingly hilarious.

Disney World was fun, however many of the rides gave me an upset stomach. I remember being in the Disney Park waiting in line to go into the haunted mansion attraction holding a giant turkey leg I got my mom to buy me; there were no hotdog stands nearby and my stomach ached with hunger. As I was going to take a bite a seagull swooped down and robbed me of my lunch; it was funny now that I think about it. While in Orlando we ventured to many different tourist attractions. Though I enjoyed Universal Studios the most I more importantly enjoyed the final bit of time spent with my mother.

Shortly after our two week trip my mother passed away. I find myself often questioning if miracles truly exist. Was this trip generally a miracle? Till this day, Disney World is the only trip I have ever been on. Looking back, this is one of the best memories I

have of my family. I often wish I could go back in time to spend more time with her. I somehow feel that time was stolen from me on April 24<sup>th</sup>, 1994.

# A Moving Disaster

*Robert Wilson*

Standing before me in the Canadian Embassy, on that hot and muggy August day in Washington, D.C., was an officer, a Lieutenant-Commander in the Royal Canadian Navy, his wife, and their two preschool children. They had just travelled over 4,600 kilometers from Victoria, British Columbia to Washington, D.C. The Lieutenant-Commander wanted to know if his furniture had arrived yet, and if it had, when he could expect it to be delivered. As the Movements Supervisor in the Canadian Embassy, I considered the Lieutenant-Commander's request a routine enquiry. But as it turned out, it was anything but routine.

The procedure we followed when trying to locate furniture and effects was to telephone the moving company that had moved the furniture and effects. The moving company would inform me of the estimated date of arrival of the furniture or if the furniture had already arrived and when it was scheduled to be delivered to the residence. The waiting time for delivery was usually seven to fourteen days. That was what I expected to hear. But I heard something I had never heard before. I was stunned by the news. What I was told was a moving disaster. It turns out that the moving van that was transporting the Lieutenant-Commander's furniture and effects had caught on fire and their possessions had been destroyed. There was nothing left. Everything was gone. Photos, mementos, family treasures,

all destroyed. All that family had now was whatever they travelled with. How was I going to tell this family that? How do you tell someone that they have lost everything?

When I came back to the counter, the Lieutenant-Commander said to me, “Corporal, what took you so long? My wife and children are hot and tired, and we just want to know when the moving company will deliver our furniture and effects! How difficult could that be?” This was spoken in a superior tone, of a higher rank to a lower rank.

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I quickly realized that this officer thought I was either incompetent or just plain slow or perhaps both. In spite of his apparent rudeness, I replied in a level, respectful voice, “Sir, can I talk to you in my office?”

The Lieutenant-Commander replied, “No thank you, Corporal. Just tell me where my furniture and effects are.”

I paused, looked at his wife and young children, and thought this is really not going to be good. I replied in a low voice, “Sir, I would rather tell you in my office.”

This time an angry Lieutenant-Commander replied, “Corporal, whatever you have to say to me, you can say in front of my wife.”

I looked at the Lieutenant-Commander and thought, you are such a jerk, before telling him, “Sir, the moving van that was carrying your furniture and effects was on its last trip.

While waiting to board the British Columbia ferry, the moving van's brakes caught on fire. Unfortunately, everything was lost. Nothing was saved.”

The Lieutenant-Commander's wife collapsed on the spot.

While the Lieutenant-Commander tended to his family, I gathered the necessary forms required to file a claim. A few minutes later, I explained the procedure for submitting a claim of loss, and about a week later, I submitted his claim. After that, our paths never crossed again. This tragedy was hard on me at the time, but I came to realize that tragedies occur—that it is how you deal with them that can make such a difference in your life. I know that it did for me.

# What Makes a House a Home

*Chelsey Young*

What makes a house a home  
Is it the tree lined street  
Creating a ceiling of leaves  
Ever green in their shade

Lilacs blooming in the sun  
A border of fragrance  
Perfuming a pathway  
To endless mauve and purple haze

What makes a house a home  
Is it the Pepto-Bismol pink stucco  
Slowly weathered to expose its bones  
The bones of its 100-year-old frame

The steep back staircase  
Almost too steep to climb  
Reaching up like a ladder to a treehouse  
Your sanctuary nestled in the canopy

What makes a house a home  
Is it the arched doorways  
Leading you from room to room  
Inviting you to stay

Plaster walls where pictures hang  
Cracks that show the passing of time  
Yet reminds you of its character  
Never of its age

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What makes a house a home  
Is it the worn hardwood floors  
Loved by the feet of furniture  
Exposing the aged grain  
A fireplace which burns no wood  
No chimney to billow smoke  
Treasures placed atop its mantle  
Reminders of a life well lived

What makes a house a home  
Is it the moaning of the wind  
While whipping through windows  
Framed and drawn with shades

The cricks and creaks you hear at night  
A language you learn in your sleep  
Sounds that once frightened  
Now lull you into dreams

What makes a house a home  
Is it all the forgotten artifacts  
Countless photo albums  
Boxes of old things and books half-read

Tickled ivories of the upright piano  
Tucked away behind a layer of dust  
Musing for long lost melodies  
Often thought seldom played

What makes a house a home  
Is it peeling paint on the second floor  
Remnants of lingering hues  
Colours that you'll never change

Mismatched furniture perfectly placed  
Borrowed pieces from far and away  
Bygone heirlooms traced back  
To Good Will hunting days

What makes a house a home  
It is Christmas lights that hang all year  
Illuminating imagination  
Your beacon of light on the darkest of days

Vintage vinyl to lend your ear  
Velvety sounds captivating tunes  
Like old friends  
Crooning words you always knew

What makes my house a home  
It is the warmth I feel upon the doorstep  
Emanating before me  
Long before I open the door

Sentimental stories shared  
Between hurried hellos  
Midnight musings  
Promises kept secrets told

What makes my house a home  
It is lunches packed the night before  
Tucked in love notes  
Pillow forts

Lilts of laughter endless days  
Starless skies eternal nights  
Watching sunsets  
Getting up just to see the sunrise

What makes my house a home  
It is tension built to find release  
Crying smiling then crying some more  
Sleeping to wake and watch the other sleep

Silly faces to cure a frown  
Phrases only I will know  
Unspoken knowledge  
Defined by closeness

What makes my house a home  
It is how safe I feel in your arms  
Six foot hugs on tippy toes  
A hug and kiss to say hello

Polaroid's from picnics past  
Drenched in sepia  
Sun kissed and golden  
Summers spent on the lawn

What makes my house a home  
It is knowing I am never alone  
Simple Sundays spent in bed  
The memories we haven't made yet

# Soma the Enigma: Exploring the Ecstatic Origin of Religion

*Chantal Dozois*

The scientific community has neglected an entire field of research that holds massive social, spiritual and political implications. When the subject is approached with respectful curiosity it has the potential to be an extremely beneficial force in the life of every human being and the health of the planet. Unfortunately, in blatant conflict with its espoused fundamentals of knowledge and freedom as empowering forces, Western society has denied and demonized humankind's religious origins which were characterized by ecstatic experience and direct communication with the living world using visionary plants. One after the other, these mysterious plants have confronted and intimidated the "rational" mind of Western society and have thus been banished from the culture and ripped away from our conscious psyche. The mystery which is encountered under the influence of visionary plants and which lurks within every fractal of the universe is composed of innumerable facets, largely unexplored by modern society. Nevertheless, with the number of connections in the human brain far outnumbering the stars in our galaxy we are in dire need of tools to explore this inner cosmos with the same vigor with which we unravel the processes at work in outer space.

The largely ineffable depths of the *mysterium tremendum* encountered under the influence of certain substances include but are not limited to: the uncharted cosmos of the human mind, our relationship to the environment (a dismembered appendage of the human

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organism which our language has isolated from our being,) and the ancient impulse towards the divine. Following a short description of the most plausible hypotheses, for the mysterious identity of the original intoxicant represented in ancient Vedic religious tradition by the term Soma, there will be a discussion of the active chemical components at work in the given substance as they compare to the reported

pharmacological effects of Soma. I intend to demonstrate that the wild rue, *Peganum harmala* in synergy with a plant containing adequate concentrations of dimethyltryptamine (DMT) was most likely the identity of Soma, the powerful entheogen, and that this identification improves our understanding of the ecstatic origin of religion and the human mind.

Religious hierophany and the enormous range of creative expression that is observed in human beings can be attributed to our symbiotic relationship with visionary plants as doorways into a plenum of levels of perception. No history of human's complex relationship to visionary plants is complete without a thorough investigation into the botanical identity of Soma, often referred to as "the pillar of the world" (or sky), praised in India for thousands of years. The Vedas are the most ancient known texts in India and the oldest Mandalas,

composed in 1500 B.C, they are contained in the *Rig Veda* with nearly 120 hymns dedicated to Soma (the plant god). These texts were memorized and transmitted orally, only to be written down much later (Flattery and Schwartz 7-9). Throughout the ages the identity of Soma was lost or rather buried, this is in no small part due to the encounter with Western society's neurotic monotheistic, rigid and strictly hierarchical approach to spirituality and knowledge, a sickness resulting from the absence of any connection to plant teachers. This sad fact sheds light on Christianity's tradition of alienating the direct experience of the divine from the laymen, banishing any genuine strive towards religious ecstasy, the essence of the spiritual journey.

Gordon Wasson and his wife Valentina were pioneers in ethnomycology; they compiled and analyzed mycological information from a wide variety of data from otherwise isolated fields of research. They reintroduced Western society to the power of the mushroom and the reality of its hand in human evolution and the birth and development of spirituality. They were the first outsiders to be invited to take part in the midnight rites of the cult of the sacred mushroom (Brown 471) during one of their numerous remote expeditions to the Sierra Mazateca in 1955. The Mazatec Indians believe that psilocybin mushrooms transform the mind and elevate consciousness onto a higher plane. In honour of this belief the entire community is expected to participate in the ecstatic ritual of consuming the mushroom. The shamans who guide each community have an intimate relationship with psychedelic plants and fully embody their fundamental values of knowing, healing, speaking and seeing truth.

Inspired by his experiences with cultures that currently utilize psychoactive plants and fungi in 1969, after Valentina's death, Wasson published the controversial *Soma: Divine Mushroom of Immortality* in which he claimed the fly-agaric, *Amanita muscaria* mushroom as the mysterious identity of Soma.

A geographical investigation into the validity of the fly-agaric as the possible identity of Soma yields supportive evidence: it is very widespread and has an affinity for high elevation in warmer regions, which corresponds to descriptions of Soma being collected in the mountains (Somasundaram et al.) Pharmacologically speaking, *Amanita muscaria* does not appear to be an ideal substance for producing a visual and ecstatic experience as it contains ibotenic acid, a potent neurotoxin, alongside unreliable concentrations of the psychoactive substance, muscimol. Although modern day Northern Siberian shamans employ this substance and a growing amount of anecdotal evidence supports the possibility of a rapturous psychedelic experience comparable to that of Soma lying behind an adequate dose of *Amanita muscaria*, Wasson himself admitted difficulty in obtaining any kind of reliable psychedelic experience from the fly-agaric. Their extreme variability in psychopharmacological constitution depends heavily upon their environment and on genetic makeup although they may appear nearly identical. The author made it clear that he presented a hypothesis, not a final solution.

A convincing candidate for reliably producing the experience, as described by the Indo-Europeans, is *Psilocybe cubensis* (formerly *Stropharia cubensis*) with regards to its

pharmacology and ease of use for an ancient people. Unlike *Amanita muscaria*, *Psilocybe cubensis*' active compound, psilocybin which is converted into psilocin in the body is very similar to endogenous human neurotransmitters, dependably producing a paradoxically extraterrestrially powerful effect on the central nervous system while boasting zero toxicity (characteristics which seem vital to persistent, culturally accepted use spanning generations). Psilocybin containing mushrooms are orally active without any form of preparation nor combination which greatly increases the likelihood of obtaining the experience, although this seems to preclude the stress on the preparation technique of Soma which is detailed in the ancient texts.

A second objection to *Psilocybe cubensis* is that there is a certain degree of “mycophobia” in some of the texts of ancient India. The Wassons’ coined the terms ‘mycophobe’ and ‘mycophile’ to describe the differences they saw between the attitude various cultures had towards mushrooms. This ambivalence was made apparent to Gordon Wasson, and detailed with palpable curiosity and adoration in *Persephone's Quest*, when he witnessed his new Russian wife, Valentina, “in a delirium of excitement” upon finding a patch of mushrooms and contrasted this to his own quietly mycophobic attitude, cultivated in the United States (17-19). It is difficult to discern whether ancient Indians can be placed into the category of mycophobe and there appears to be a wealth of evidence indicating the contrary, such as the major motif of cattle in the Soma cult which suggests a nuanced mycological relationship. The relationship between coprophilic (dung-loving) mushrooms and cow patties

can be observed in India today. Despite this intimate connection *Psilocybe cubensis* has never been scientifically investigated as the mysterious identity of Soma nor seriously discussed by Vedic scholars. This is entirely due to the cowardice and mycophobia which permeates Western academic discourse. I propose that the obscene lack of courage on the part of the scientific community, to delve unbiasedly into the great mysteries of nature is driven by an unconscious recognition that the models we have built to describe ourselves and nature will be faced directly and likely seen at best as hilarious oversimplifications, or worse toxically utilitarian addictions, unable to survive the encounter with this mystery.

The giant Syrian rue, *Peganum harmala*, was argued persuasively by David Flattery and Martin Schwartz as the identity of the mysterious Vedic Soma. The harmine containing rue could have been used in synergy with an abundant variety of plants containing adequate concentrations of the truly psychoactive component dimethyltryptamine (found endogenously in the human pineal gland). Despite irrefutable evidence indicating that this type of mixture is capable of producing religious revelation in modern human beings, Flattery and Schwartz raise a very important point prior to launching into a pharmacological comparison of harmala to “sauma.” They stress the reality that we cannot hope to reproduce the experience as described in the ancient texts due to an absence of the precise cultural context which facilitated these experiences and unfortunately, an absence of a cultural context for deriving spiritual knowledge from plants altogether (Flattery and Schwartz 23-24). Confronting this impedimenta, they turned towards a culture which has remained in contact with the torrent of

information flowing from the Gaian mind, the South American tribes of the upper Amazon that have enshrined the use of a similar plant mixture called Ayahuasca which translates roughly to “vine of the dead” or “cord of the soul”.

Soma is sometimes described as a purgative, even to the God Brahma which is very indicative of a liquid mixture of plants with a similar pharmacopeia to South American Ayahuasca. This usually causes the body to purge its contents after a healthy dose (without harmful effects) prior to the entheogenic experience it induces. Ayahuasca is a liquid brew made from the *Banisteriopsis caapi* vine which contains harmine like the wild Syrian rue. Harmine acts as a monoamine oxidase inhibitor (MAOI) which potentiates the effect of DMT (oftentimes extracted from *Psychotria viridis* or *Mimosa hostilis* root bark in the case of ayahuasca) allowing it to be orally active when it would otherwise be destroyed by the MAOs in our stomach. The shamans who guide the use of this plant mixture appear to operate on similar plains of existence to those inhabited by the ancient Indians; their action flows from conscious meditation and they remain in constant contact with the biological information which is exclusively accessible to those who partake in the humble ritual of learning hard lessons from the spirit of Mother Nature (or Mother Ayahuasca) residing in unassuming botanicals of the jungle. The active pharmaceuticals in South American Ayahuasca and Vedic Soma would be identical if Soma is in fact a synergy of harmine from wild rue and DMT. Perhaps the most convincing evidence supporting this identity is that in the Middle East harmine containing seeds are referred to as “haoma,” an etymologically identical term for

“sauma” from the Zoroastrians. This identification holds a promising future for the democratic investigation and exploration of the ancient origins of religion. This is because after Ayahuasca’s introduction to the West it has only grown in popularity and its use continues to spread throughout the world with continued emphasis on its massive potential for emotive dialogue, with a Goddess-like Logos who seems eager to teach lessons concerning conscious, caring behaviour and concatenations of visual beauty.

Humans must be encouraged to embrace the tremendous Other on the level of the individual throughout their spiritual journey using the models elucidated by plants to the ancient people and in more recent history in the Eleusinian Mysteries. The Eleusinian Mysteries are the most influential Grecian spiritual right of passage which is inextricably linked to the molding of the early western mind. This ritual is a clear indication of religious psychedelic plant use within historical time and was likely centered around a mushroom or ergotized rye. In 1978 Wasson hypothesized the Greek’s ancient use of ergotized beer or wine alongside Albert Hofmann, the discoverer of LSD, and Carl Ruck in *The Road to Eleusis: Unveiling the Secret of the Mysteries* (Brown 472). As a society we must recapture the passion and undaunted curiosity these men and our ancestors embodied in the presence of the ineffable.

The enigma represented by Soma must be acknowledged on a societal scale by calling the entire scientific community to action. Scientists must fulfill their obligation as unbiased explorers instead of sacrificing their dignity to the position they currently hold as sycophantic

handmaidens to religious, political and economic motivation. The revival of ancient sensory input is charged with and is more than capable of correcting our toxic cultural modalities. The term “psychedelic” does some justice to the *mysterium tremendum* which lies behind a potentiated dose of DMT as it translates literally to “mind-manifest.” It is our responsibility to put the neurological networks made accessible too us by plant teachers to work, to integrate ethnobotanicals into modern culture, as psychotherapeutic and spiritual tools as well as catalysts for innovation especially with respect to environmental health. A point in dire need of further elaboration is the outrage with respect to adult sovereignty and the human rights issue of prohibiting the exploration of consciousness (not to mention restricting patients from obtaining the most effective and least harmful medications) this is intolerable after even a brief examination of the unbroken history of symbiosis between human spirituality and ecstatic intoxication. The age of metaphysical medical science will dawn or we will not survive. One cannot expect nor accept rigid, experimental proof for the identity of Soma because the nature of the enigma disallows it and all historical evidence cannot hope to reproduce the reality (an experience) of an ancient divine ritual. Acknowledging this by no means invites academics to passively ignore the challenge of providing accurate information about the nature of the human being and our entwined history with psychoactive plants, quite the opposite, it obligates the explorer of the natural world to create an entirely new perspective on the universe which may hope to accommodate the phenomena at hand.

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# Understanding Memorialized Facebook Profiles from a Lacanian Perspective

*Megan Dupas*

In Facebook's profile settings — not the aesthetic settings but the boring technical ones — there are options in case you die. You can assign a “Legacy Contact” for who will keep your profile active via post-mortem management. Or you can choose to have your profile removed forever. With the former option, someone must report your death to Facebook to have your profile “memorialized.” This is one example of how social media has changed the way we mourn. When someone is missing their loved one they do not have to call a friend or meet face-to-face with someone to work out their grief; Nor do they have to trek out to the cemetery to utter words of remembrance at their grave. With Facebook, someone can visit their loved one's memorialized profile instead and leave a personal message on their wall or post an old picture of them — and feel like they are still connected with the deceased. This paper's focus will be based on our interactions with memorialized pages on Facebook and public mourning on social media. Using Jacques Lacan's psychoanalytic theory of human identity, I will argue the different ways desire and drive motivates us to interact with the profiles of deceased people.

Erin Willis and Patrick Ferrucci studied thirty memorialized Facebook profiles and conducted a textual analysis of 122 posted comments and replies to comments left on the deceased's wall by friends and family. Their article, "Mourning and Grief on Facebook," is a summary of their research, posited within a "uses and gratification" framework, i.e. a branch

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of mass communication studies which examines the different ways individuals use media and why. This approach holds that audiences are not simply duped by the media and that people do not use the media passively but actively (Willis and Ferrucci 5). Media theorist, Denis McQuail, divides audiences' media use into four categories: 1) *information*: gaining insights about the world from the media; 2) *personal identity*: using the media to discover who

you are and reinforce your values; 3) *integration and social interaction*: seeking social connection, companionship and solidarity; and 4) *entertainment*: "escaping from problems, relaxing, filling time, emotional release and sexual arousal" (Willis and Ferrucci 5). The four reasons are not mutually exclusive and are often used in combination.

Willis' and Ferrucci's objective was to better understand why people post comments like "thinking of you" or "rest in peace" on memorialized profiles. The researchers conclude that 86 out of the 122 comments were cathartic expressions of grief and therefore fall under the entertainment category. The second-most salient category was integration and social

interaction because each commenter offers an anecdote, memory or sentiment about the deceased which forms a sense of solidarity among their network. Facebook functions as an “interactive memorial” that expands the mourning process in Western culture, from a brief funeral to a prolonged experience (Willis and Ferrucci 15). In their concluding discussion, the researchers raise two questions: why post a public message on Facebook rather than saying a private prayer about the person? What is the deeper meaning behind mourning as emotion-releasing entertainment?

The answer lays at the emotional threshold where pain and pleasure converge. Jacques Lacan’s psychoanalytic theory of desire and drive helps explain the motivation behind public mourning on Facebook. Lacan was an extraordinary French psychoanalyst of the 20<sup>th</sup> century who expanded Sigmund Freud’s insights and theories about the unconscious mind and proposed a way of understanding human identity – our subjectivity – through his triumvirate model of the Real, the Symbolic and the Imaginary. I was introduced to Lacanian psychoanalysis by Dr. Matthew Flisfeder in “Topics in Rhetoric: Social Media, Culture, and Society.” The Lacanian concepts of pleasure/jouissance, desire/drive, and the lost object/big Other, provide a critical mode for understanding Facebook and affect because social media has become an extension of our identity.

In Flisfeder’s article, “Enjoying Social Media,” he argues that desire propels our participation in social media. He explains that “desire involves the endless search for an (impossible) object that will bring satisfaction;” whereas drive means “achieving enjoyment

for the subject by *failing* to get the object” (235). The object constitutes something we perceive as lost and wish to recover. In Lacanian theory, the “prohibiting agency” that prevents us from attaining the lost object is known as the big Other (Flisfeder 234). This makes me think of the film *Walk the Line*. Even though June Carter is divorced and single, she is reluctant to date Johnny Cash because, as one woman scolds, “divorce is an abomination.” Therefore, Carter’s lost object is her marital sanctity, which is especially threatened by her love for Cash. The prohibiting agency or big other is the stigma of divorce based on the ideology that marriage is sacred and for life. As a subject in the Lacanian sense, Carter tries to present as her Symbolic Self and be the person she thinks society will respect most – a chaste and proper Christian woman. Cash, on the other hand, is stuck presenting as his Imaginary Self and he represents the way drive functions because he gets a perverse kind of pleasure from failing to win Carter’s hand in marriage.

Now here we are in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with our acceptance of divorce, our civil rights, gay marriage, feminism, plus our neoliberal, capitalist and consumerist obsession with luxuriating. There is very little left in terms of prohibiting agencies. Flisfeder opines that social media serves as the new Symbolic Order in a post-ideological world: we choose to “disavow the fact of the Other’s non-existence” and envision some sort of compensatory prohibition because we are masochistic – we like to be dominated (230). To recover the punishing desire afforded by lost objects, we must make up fantasies about some kind of oppositional force, a fictional construct of “anonymous authoritative power and/or

knowledge,” which prevents us from getting our object (*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*). Facebook is the new Symbolic Order because memorialized profiles, as interactive memorials, function on a Symbolic level by delineating life from death in the subject’s consciousness. People post on their loved one’s profile to engage with – not escape from – the trauma of death and the inability to face the Real (where there is no life/death rupture and reality is whole) (Flisfeder 236).

To use an old cliché, when someone we love dies, a piece of us dies with them. Thus, the missing piece of our identity represents the lost object. Desire stems from the belief that we can regain this lost object, and therefore, we derive enjoyment from posting on memorialized profiles because we feel we are reconnecting with the deceased. We scroll through their page, look at photos of them, like and comment, post sentiments, memes and so forth. We do this because we believe the person’s profile is a tangible incarnation of their presence. This is because memorialized profiles are representations of the person’s Symbolic Self (i.e. the individual is treated as more of an object, rather than a subject). Before Facebook existed we could only relive memories in our minds and turn to material possessions to reconnect with the dead. Whereas now, a Facebook profile transforms a person into a virtual entity and this murky distinction facilitates the belief that the person lives on. We choose to interact with/write on their page because we desire to feel re-connected with them – we fantasize that they can somehow hear us or acknowledge our interaction with them. This is a false notion and impossibility. The dead do not inhabit Facebook. Yet desire comes from the

“belief in the Other’s belief,” and so we ignore the absurdity of this idea (the dead’s profiles stand in for them) and express our grief on their profile in an attempt to regain the lost object, the missing piece of our identity tied to that person.

In her article “Affective Networks,” Jodi Dean argues that social media use, as well as the circulation and consumption of digital information, functions as a form of communicative capitalism. She argues that drive – not desire – is the primary motivation for looping ourselves into the affective networks of social media. In Dean’s words: “affect, or *jouissance* in Lacanian terms, is what accrues from reflexive communication, from communication for its own sake,” from our repetitive posts, tweets, likes, shares, etc. (21). It is not the content of the post that matters but the fact that we are posting that matters. Likewise, drive is also a motivation for posting on memorialized pages. We desire the lost object so we might post an old picture of the person onto their page with the caption “you always loved the beach,” for example. We have this belief that we are actively remembering the person by doing so, and can thus imagine they are still apart our daily life because of the positive affect that reminiscing induces. However, once we realize that our actions are futile because the lost object is totally impossible to regain, we default to the pleasure of drive – “it is desire without the hope of obtaining the object, desire that has become indifferent to its object” (Flisfeder 235).

The pleasure obtained from drive, from the repetitive posting and interaction with the memorialized page, derives from the validation we get from the dead’s network. When other

friends and family of the person like, love and share our pictures and wall posts we receive gratification because we feel as though our grief is being validated. We can never be fully satisfied by the other people's recognition of our emotional release; we have an egotistical urge to publicize our relation to the person. We disavow the other's existence (i.e. that the dead's profile stands in for them), and resort to drive for our bursts of pain-stricken enjoyment. Yet there is still that very strong, forlorn desire to reconnect with the person, the lost object, which never goes away completely. Therefore, both desire and drive motivate our interactions with the deceased's memorialized profiles.

In conclusion, Facebook functions as a new Symbolic form of public mourning. This is because we follow social conventions and rules (i.e. a constructed system), in the Lacanian sense, when we post on the dead's profile. We know to only post positive messages of the person cohesive with their Symbolic Self. Alice Marwick and Nicole Ellison studied 37 public memorial pages on Facebook. These differ from memorialized pages in that anyone can create them – friend or stranger to the deceased – and are dubbed “R.I.P.” pages. In their article “There Isn’t Wifi in Heaven!” they explain how friends and family engage in a “co-constructed social process” for dealing with the person's subjective representation after death (Marwick and Ellison 381). Friends and family delete negative “troll” comments and disapprove of contradictory depictions of the person. Thus, these kinds of rules or norms about how to mourn someone on Facebook, combined with the platform's formalized system of

language (e.g. likes, reactions, shares, etc.), along with regular language use exemplify how Facebook belongs to the Symbolic Order in Lacanian terms.

However, some people object to public mourning on social media. In their article, “#Funeral and Instagram: Death, Social Media, and Platform Vernacular,” Martin Gibbs et al. studied hundreds of public Instagram photos tagged with ‘#funeral.’ This includes selfies taken at funerals (a controversial action), and selfies of individuals on their way to a funeral and after. The authors also looked at group shots of the deceased’s family, people together in mourn, as well as #funeral images that portray aspects of the funeral experience. Gibbs et al. discuss how visible grief creates co-presence with others, similar to Marwick’s notion of “digital intimacy.” After analysis Gibbs et al. conclude that #funeral posts, while tributary to the deceased, effectively highlight the funeral experience as yet another ephemeral moment in our lives. We are using the Symbolic – vernacular modes of external expression – to try and represent our authentic subjective experience of death and mourning. For Lacan, the problem is that language can never truly express how we think and feel inside. Therefore, the motivation to mourn publicly on social media (versus in private) is the product of communicative capitalism – to post for the sake of posting our #grief just like we post about our #goals and every aspect of our identity the ego wishes to objectify. As for the deeper meaning behind mourning as emotion-releasing entertainment, this stems from a more authentic albeit subjectively confused place of desire. Facebook makes us believe we are still in contact with our lost loved ones. When we realize that we can never recover them we resign

to drive and seek emotional comfort and co-presence which is always fleeting, ephemeral and illusory.

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# Therapeutic Cloning to Save Mankind

*Kajol Garg*

While therapeutic cloning has existed for over 100 years, it is still in the experimental process, where it has not been perfected and poses much controversy around the world. Therapeutic cloning could be used to regenerate damaged organs or help couples who are infertile and wish to have children by using their genetic information and immature embryos. In Canada, over 1,600 people are added onto an organ wait list every year. On average, someone is added to a national organ transplant list every 10 minutes, while 20 people die each day waiting on a transplant list. As of November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2017, there were 116, 592 patients who required a lifesaving organ transplant and only 75,665 were actively on a waitlist in the United States (UNOS 1). The amount of organ transplants needed has surpassed the number of donors by 9 times which is why therapeutic cloning could save the lives of hundreds of thousands of people around the world.

Therapeutic cloning is done by extracting young stem cells (also known as somatic cells) out of young embryos. Embryonic cells, which are typically 2-8 weeks old, are used to grow an entire organism. A stem cell is an undifferentiated cell which can take on a specific function once the correct genetic information is placed within, which could be useful for the regeneration of organs and tissues specifically grown using an individual's DNA to prevent organ rejection. The process of cloning has been explored by scientists for over 100 years,

with each new experiment contributing to more research. Therapeutic cloning is a difficult task, as proven by the number of years each discovery has taken; however, scientists remain optimistic, as each great discovery requires time.

Therapeutic cloning was first demonstrated by Hans Adolf Edward Dreisch. In 1885, Dreisch conducted a simple experiment using sea urchins. Dreisch separated the embryos from the sea urchin, proving that it is possible to grow a replica of the same organism using the embryo cell because each cell carried a full set of genetic information that it needed to grow into a mature organism. This

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evidence opened up a new world for scientists interested in cloning. In 1902, Hans Spermann experimented on the more complicated organism of a salamander. Spermann compressed two cells of a salamander embryo, and then used a strand of a baby's hair to split the two cells apart. Once this was accomplished, similar results to Dreisch's arose, as a fully mature salamander grew from this one embryonic cell. However, Spermann attempted to take his experiment a step further and tried to separate more advanced embryos. This is when Spermann's experiment failed, as these embryos did not develop into adults. Spermann continued his work and attempted to extract the nucleus of an embryonic cell in 1928. This experiment was successful and led to more research done by Robert Briggs and Thomas King ("The History of Cloning" 1).

In 1952, Briggs and Thomas successfully performed a nuclear transfer. In their experiment, the nucleus of an early tadpole was inserted into a frog egg which contained no nucleus. The result of this experiment was that the frog grew normally. Briggs and Thomas' experiment reinforced two important conclusions. The scientists first confirmed that the nucleus was the key component to cloning, and secondly confirmed that very young embryos were better for cloning than mature embryonic cells that could cause abnormalities. However, one of these conclusions was later disproven in 1958 when John Gurdon successfully cloned a tadpole using more mature intestinal cells. Gurdon's experiment proved that nuclei from mature organisms are suitable for cloning. In 1975, J. Derek Bromhall used this information and took a chance on testing mammalian egg cells in rabbits. Mammalian egg cells are far more delicate and smaller than the other animals that have been previously tested on, however when Bromhall attempted to transfer a mammalian cells nucleus into an enucleated cell, the experiment was successful. Bromhall's experiment proved that mammalian embryos are also viable in nuclear transfer experiments. By 1984, around the time that in vitro fertilization was becoming more widely accepted, Steen Willadsen decided to conduct an experiment on a lamb embryo. Willadsen electrically shocked the embryo to fuse it to the enucleated cell which was successful. He then implanted this embryo into a mother sheep which resulted in the healthy births of three lambs ("The History of Cloning" 1).

Various other scientists conducted similar experiments until, 1996 when the iconic sheep Dolly was born. The experiment was conducted by Ian Wilmut and Keith Campbell

using a somatic cell taken from a sheep's udder, (sheep A). This cell was inserted into an enucleated egg from another sheep (sheep B) and implanted into a surrogate mother (sheep C). Out of 277 attempts, Dolly was the first successful live birth. Dolly was essentially treated as a clone of the sheep whose genetic information was obtained from sheep A. Dolly's birth was considered a scientific breakthrough, as scientists were now convinced that it was possible to clone humans. From 1996 onwards, many more experiments were conducted using primates. Primates are the closest living relative of humans so any experiment conducted on primates could typically determine the outcome in humans ("The History of Cloning" 1).

In 2013, Shoukhrat Mitalipot and his colleagues were the first to conduct an experiment using a human embryo and human skin cell. The experiment required far more intense care compared to similar experiments using animal cells with simpler genetic information. It was critical that the embryo be stimulated accordingly and the environment that the embryo grew in be similar to the internal environment of a human. However, this experiment did not gain scientific acceptance, as many researchers argued that more evidence was needed ("The History of Cloning" 1).

Currently there has been no successful attempt at growing a fully functional organ using human embryonic stem cells. When an organ from a related or unrelated recipient is transplanted into a patient, the rate of rejection increases due to many factors such as clots, acute and chronic rejection, infection and non-adherence. Non-adherence is the most common and most fatal type of rejection, as missing doses of drugs can cause the body to recognize the

newly transplanted organ as a foreign object. Once the body does this, it will begin to attack organ, ultimately leaving it unusable to the patient. According to Fatemeh Gaemi et al., the introduction of immunosuppressant drugs has increased the rate of survival and success rate (118). However, taking high doses of these immunosuppressant drugs can pose fatal long term effects on the body's immune system and can cause chronic rejection. Age and gender is also a factor of the recipient and donors (Gaemi et al. 119). By growing organs using that specific patient's cells, rejection rates could be eliminated entirely.

Therapeutic cloning could potentially provide patients with the exact organs they need. Charlotte Kfoury states that many genetic mutations and loss of function situations addressed in hospitals could be solved with therapeutic cloning (113). Kfoury explains that many types of tissues could be created to counteract conditions such as osteoporosis by creating more osteoblasts and regenerating the spinal cord after trauma (113).<sup>1</sup> Many patients who experience trauma from fires and acid attacks rarely fully recover, even after extensive plastic surgery. Providing patients with skin transplants could allow them to regain their confidence. Kfoury explains that “[t]he assembly of patient specific cardiomyocytes, blood vessels and skin pieces fixed on a scaffold holds great hope in the treatment of infarctus, atherosclerosis and severe burns...” (114).

Therapeutic cloning promises hope for the treatment of a number of distressing conditions, among them Alzheimer's disease and Parkinsonism... If the promise of

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<sup>1</sup> Osteoblasts are the basis of bone formation, as men and women increase in age, the number of osteoblasts decrease therefore leading to osteoporosis (fragility of the bones).

therapeutic cloning were fulfilled it would have a huge impact by reducing the amount of suffering in mankind... It is justifiably tempting to say that therapeutic cloning promises the greatest single advance ever made to medicine, and thus one of the greatest promises for the good of mankind. (Grayling 82)

As the demand for organs continues to increase, therapeutic cloning could provide organs at an accelerated rate and substantially decrease the risk of organ rejection. There is a critical time frame for a patient to be able to go under major organ transplant surgery. The number of organ transplants needed is increasing while the donor amount is decreasing. If a patient does not receive the appropriate organ within the critical time frame, they will no longer be eligible to undergo organ transplant surgery as their body will be too weak to withstand the procedure and will most likely reject the organ. It would be more time effective if organs were be produced as patients required them. This would decrease patient mortality as fewer people would be on an organ waiting list.

Time is of the essence when organs are failing, which can lead to families becoming desperate and placing their hopes in the black market. In 2010, a ban on the purchase and sale of human organs for transplantation from deceased or living organisms was encouraged by the World Health Organization (Capron et al. 23). Despite the ban in the place, black market trade of human organ still continues, with only those caught being prosecuted. Alexander M. Capron et al. argue three main reasons as to why black markets are unsatisfactory. Firstly, running black markets is a complex system in which increased costs are

administered upwards of \$200,000. Many people are unable to afford these organ prices, causing an unfair system (23). Many people would bid higher for an organ and the poor would be exploited. Secondly, Capron et al. discuss that although there would possibly be more organs available, the net supply of organs would not increase (23). This is due to paid donations replacing unpaid donations. Lastly, the outcome of legal black markets would be unknown as they would create a system of their own (23).

One of the largest ethical issues surrounding therapeutic cloning is the use of embryonic stem cells. This poses an issue as many believe that embryos take human life after 20 weeks. A. C. Grayling states “[r]eligiously motivated objectors regard human embryos as fully human already, and do not regard their use as sources of stem cells to be justifiable by the prospect of alleviating suffering among those who have been already born” (82). The experiment where Dolly the Sheep was created took 277 attempts; therefore a high number of embryos that would be used to execute similar experiments would result in many unsuccessful attempts, thereby imposing many “embryonic deaths”. However, many fail to realize that cells are extracted from the embryo when it is merely a blastocyst, which is a clump of cells that can take on any given niche (Grayling 82). Blastocysts are commonly formed throughout life and spontaneous degeneration of these cells occur without any symptoms. Therefore, these cells had never taken human life to begin with, and no potential life would be harmed in the process of therapeutic cloning.

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## True Reconciliation for Indigenous People? This is What to Consider Now

*Godfrey Kajuna*

The Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was tasked to find the truth about the history of residential schools across the country and the impact it had on Indigenous people. Indigenous people have been subjected to many human rights abuses in Canada since the arrival of the Europeans and the colonization of North America. The most prominent assimilation tactic was residential schools. Residential schools uprooted Indigenous children from their families and communities. These schools prevented them

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from learning about their identity, culture, language, history, and traditions. Residential schools caused great physical, emotional, and psychological abuses to Indigenous children, which affected them later in life. This led to a national apology by the Conservative government under Prime Minister Stephen Harper to the Residential School survivors followed by the formation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

(TRC) in 2008. The TRC was an opportunity for the survivors to publicly share their accounts of their dreadful experiences at the residential schools to every Canadian

nationwide. This aided Canadians to recognize the grave issues which Indigenous people are currently facing. The TRC seeks to ensure that these issues will be resolved to the best of their ability and would not occur again in the future.

After the final TRC report was submitted to the federal government, one of the 94 recommendations urged all levels of government to take part in the reconciliation process. After the Commission published its findings the Government promised to form a new relationship with Canadian's Indigenous people. Indigenous people today struggle with issues such as education, justice, child-care, health, and housing. Indigenous people of Canada have been the victims of a paternalistic, racist system embodied by residential schools. The government of Canada has committed to achieve reconciliation with the Indigenous people. They are taking steps to recognize their rights as Indigenous people, respect their culture, and to co-operate to bring changes that they see necessary. Despite these promises, Indigenous people still feel isolated from the Canadian government due to the length it is taking to resolve these issues.

For the government to ensure there is true reconciliation they must focus on reducing poverty and improving education. Poverty among Indigenous people is a main factor behind many of the problems that they experience, both on and off reserves. Poverty has a direct correlation to unemployment, low levels of health, and incompleteness of school. The Government should collaborate with the Indigenous Communities to create policies and plans which relate to all their needs. Some of them rely on support from their extended family as

well as organizations like churches and projects such as The Salvation Army or Winnipeg Harvest, to survive their day to day lives. Jerry Buckland states, “it is a situation more common among low income people who lack access to main stream banks and instead rely on fringe banks such as payday lenders, check cashers, and rent-to-own shops for their banking need, which are expensive and poorly regulated” (Buckland 15). These fringe banks are taking advantage of clientele that are at a disadvantage. Buckland pointed out that on payday loans, they pay 250 percent higher on the money they borrowed, while a bank or a line of credit, you pay 10 to 20 percent on the money borrowed (15).

The impact of poverty causes mental health issues and family struggles. Poverty is not only an issue for adults but it is passed on to their children as well. They have an inability to perform well in school and some drop out before finishing grade 12. Therefore, this makes it difficult to achieve educational goals. This results to children being on the streets and lack of education amongst Indigenous people in urban areas and on reserves, creates inequality and many problems in social issues like poverty and unemployment. As a result, the government is spending more money on the welfare system. Lack of education results in Indigenous people being under qualified for high paying jobs or mid-career jobs. Now, most jobs require post-secondary education, but the majority of the Indigenous population have not completed this level of schooling. They are missing opportunities in the labour market because they cannot be hired due to their lack of qualifications. Lack of education causes unemployment or forces people into lower income jobs. Low income and unemployment creates negative impacts on

families, especially if they have a large family or extended family who rely on an income to survive.

Poverty on reserves is often caused by lack of education, most people cannot obtain available jobs in their areas because it requires certain skills which they are unable to access. According to Statistics Canada, for the total of all occupations in Manitoba in 2017, the labour survey for Aboriginal people was 541.7 compared to non-aboriginals who were 17,864. To prove how education can eliminate poverty I will provide an example from my former aboriginal classmate. She is a single mother of three children. She started raising her kids when she was 17 and never had time to continue with school until she was in her mid 30's. She came to The University of Winnipeg to complete her undergraduate degree where she was then hired by one of the government agencies shortly after graduation. She is earning about \$5,000 monthly, before this she relied on government assistance to make ends meet. Now that she has received an education she has the skills and tools to support herself and her children. This is one example for the benefits of having a post-secondary education for Aboriginal people. Education plays an important role in determining the labour market prospects. Van der Berg et al. states, "Having left school early or having receive a low quality education, most children from poor households stand at the back of the job queue and are less likely to obtain stable and lucrative employment" (8). I believe post-secondary education and well-paying jobs are the only way to escape poverty. Governments should prioritize building schools on Indigenous land and focus on skill training and numeracy with a local focus to help people

keep their identities as well as find employment. Assistance with finding and staying in post-secondary education is important to ensure that Indigenous people are able to find secured paying jobs after they graduate. Therefore, this will help reduce welfare and increase our tax base.

Housing is a big challenge especially for the Indigenous people in the northern areas. In its 2016 census, Statistics Canada mentioned that there are a large of number of Indigenous people who live in a dwelling that needs major repairs, especially those living in reserves in Northern parts of Canada. The big challenge is for the families who have children and cannot provide them with heat. Even the people who live in government housing like Manitoba Housing complain about lack of maintenance. Evans, Wells, and Moch stated, “Poor housing quality often more hassles with maintenance and some cases dependence upon people in bureaucratic organization (e.g. Public Housing Authority) who can be difficult to interact with” (492). Housing needs maintenance, but the people who live in them cannot afford the maintenance because they are low-income which results in psychological distress and anxiety because they have children in the house, and it is dangerous for them to play in the home (i.e., if the house has a bad washroom with no running water, like on reserved areas or floor. It is very easy for children to get physical disease.). Evans, Saltzman, and Cooperman stated that “children in poor quality housing experienced more punitive parenting and performed more poorly at school respectively” (394). In this situation children must play in very restricted areas which limits their freedom, resulting in feelings of isolation. The government should

focus on housing improvements for low-income Indigenous families and do a safety assessment if children are part of an overcrowded home.

Children in homecare is another big problem. The Minister of Indigenous Services Jane Philpott said that, “This is very much reminiscent of the residential school system where children are being scooped up from their homes, taken away from their and we will pay the price for the generations to come” (Barrera). This might cause problems in the future between Indigenous people and the government. The government might be doing better in responding to children who are facing danger, but they should consider getting a permanent solution by helping those parents whose children are taken away. Housing placements for Indigenous children should assist in the education of their culture when they are living with someone whose culture may vary from their own. The Minister added that in “Manitoba there are a total of 11,000 children in care and 10,000 are Indigenous children.” This is a true crisis because the number of these children is rising, and the amount of money going to support these children is a lot. McMurtry mentioned that “each province has its own child welfare policy and its own definition of child in care, which may not include other types of out-of-home care, such as care from family relatives (kinship care) or group home.” This number is projected to increase if there is no action to be taken. The government should consider bringing children back to their parents and help them with parenting. We should deal with their parents’ problems and enroll them into parenting classes instead of putting them into home care. The Indigenous people are by-products of the Residential School system. The Indigenous people

learned their parenting skills from their parents, siblings and extended family through examples and daily directions, but the learning process was denied to several generations of Indigenous parents because of botched assimilation. We have to agree that the children being sent to live in home care is the result of the damages caused by residential schooling.

The federal government should create special policies for the ones who live in reserves to get better education and improve their health and assist them with finding a steady job. Some policies focus on pre-training opportunities, and free post-secondary education for Indigenous people because it will help them reduce education and income inequality after they graduate and create a promising future for their children's education goals. By having a proper education, it will help the majority of them receive high profile jobs at all executive, legislature and judiciary levels. This is a step forward for Indigenous people because they will be placed in a position to influence or make decisions based on Indigenous needs. Children living in home care will be living with their parents because of their financial ability. Finally, short term training for transition, especially for women who have children is something to consider because it will provide job opportunities and economic development for those who may not have access to it currently.

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# The Human Experience of Crying: A Look at the Benefits

*Jana Samolesky*

## Abstract

In this article, I investigate the value of the uniquely and universal human behaviour of crying. I discuss the cathartic benefits of crying, offering relief of stress and release of tension. Then I consider how crying is linked to mood stabilization. Thirdly, I note the ill-effects of crying suppression, and finally, I briefly investigate how the social context surrounding an episode of crying impacts the crying individual. I conclude that because weeping behaviour offers us valuable health benefits and the suppression of crying is linked to disease, we should support episodes of crying by treating the behaviour as normal and positive.

Keywords: *crying, catharsis, mood stabilization*

## Introduction

All animals, at every age, have the ability to cry -- often as a reaction to pain and/or anger or a way of signalling danger (Bellieni, 2017). It is only humans however, that can express feelings by shedding tears. This behaviour has been selected and elaborated on through our evolution as a species (Bellieni, 2017; Griffith, Hall, & Fields, 2011). Crying offers many benefits, including the release of tension through catharsis and mood stabilization, while the suppression of crying is linked to ill-health. Support during episodes of weeping is important because the social context affects people whether or not they reap the rewards associated with the behaviour.

## Catharsis

There is widespread belief across disciplines that “crying is beneficial, cathartic, cleansing, and releases pent-up emotions” (Griffith et al., 2011, p. 168; Bylsma, Vingerhoets & Rottenberg, 2008). The value of catharsis is considered the primary benefit of crying by many researchers. Bylsma et al. (2008) define catharsis as “the purging of emotions or relieving of emotional tensions” (p. 1165). Griffith et al. (2011) argue that the catharsis from shedding tears acts as a “safety valve for the relief of stress build up” (p. 171), further clarifying that an episode of crying can release surplus stress unrelated to the cause of the tears. Bylsma et al. (2008) assert that crying can allow for the release of previously blocked emotions. When people have been in a situation where they were unable to cope or unable to effectively express their emotions, crying can be a method for discharging the tension left from that experience (Bylsma et al., 2008). This access to catharsis that crying offers is used to explain why some people seek out weeping opportunities, by watching sad movies for example (Bylsma et al., 2008; Griffith et al., 2011).

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## Mood Stabilization

Weeping is also linked to stabilizing moods and regulating emotion. Bellieni (2017) describes how crying has an allostatic effect, helping to stabilize moods. Similarly, Griffith et al. (2011) argue that the catharsis from shedding tears helps people return to a state of

emotional balance. Bellieni (2017) reports that the mood stabilization following an episode of crying can be caused, in part, from the gentle massage of the cheeks by tears, triggering endorphin release. Endorphins provide a soothing sensation and are produced in response to stress, the ingestion of sweets, and/or skin massage (Bellieni, 2017). Tears that slowly and gently roll down our cheeks stimulate endorphin production and a sense of well-being (Bellieni, 2017).

Some studies, however, have shown an increase in negative mood following an episode of crying (Bylsma et al., 2008; Griffith et al., 2011; Gračanin et al., 2015). This discrepancy in study results can be explained by noting that the process of emotional regulation takes time. Becht and Vingerhoets (2002) suggest that the time it takes for the hormonal processes to manifest can explain why people may not feel the stabilizing effect immediately after an episode of tears. Griffith et al. (2011) state that the return to emotional and physical homeostasis may take hours or even days. Gračanin et. al (2015) performed a research study, looking specifically at the timing of mood improvement after crying. The study results demonstrated a clear relationship between crying and long-term mood improvement and alleviated any concern over the previously reported decrease in mood immediately following tears (Gračanin et al., 2015). They concluded that, “after the initial deterioration of mood following crying that is usually observed in laboratory studies, it takes some time for the mood, not just to recover, but also to increase above the levels that it had before the emotional event” (Gračanin et al., 2015, p. 959).

### **Suppression of Crying Unhealthy**

If crying is healthy, does that mean that *not* crying is *unhealthy*? Griffith et al. (2011) summarize studies on this topic, declaring that suppression of crying is linked to many psychosomatic or physiological disorders, ranging from acne to ulcers (p. 174). Rottenberg, Bylsma, and Vingerhouets (2008) claim that tension not released through crying may create bodily diseases. In addition, Bellieni (2017) found that people who held back tears tended to withdraw socially and had less-connected relationships.

Carlson and Hall (2011) note a gender difference related to crying suppression, stating that even though men and women feel like crying with the same frequency, men are more likely to stop themselves from doing so. They link this suppression to the stigma of male crying as part of the culturally promoted concept of manliness; crying is viewed as a sign of weakness which makes it a threat to masculine identity (Carlson & Hall, 2011). In Western countries, males learn from a very young age not to display emotion in the presence of others (Carlson & Hall, 2011; Griffith et al., 2011). Males are discouraged from allowing the flow of tears and are therefore at greater risk of experiencing the ill-health associated with crying repression.

### **Impact of Social Context**

Not all episodes of crying lead to cathartic benefits. Bylsma et al. (2008) investigated when catharsis from crying was more or less likely to occur. The results from their

international study revealed that the social context surrounding an episode of crying determined whether the crying experience yielded cathartic results (Bylsma et al., 2008). When an individual received social support during an episode of crying, they were very likely to experience the relief and stabilizing effects of catharsis, and when the individual received negative social attention in response to their tears, they were very unlikely to experience catharsis (Bylsma et al., 2008, p. 174). When the social context induced feelings of shame or embarrassment from crying, the crying episodes were not cathartic (Norton, 2011, p. 236; Rottenberg et al., 2008). The way people react to the shedding of tears effects whether or not the crying individual receives the benefits.

### **Conclusion**

Emotional expression through shedding tears is an exclusively human behaviour that has survived our long adaptive history. The ability to cry offers us the cathartic benefits of relieving stress and releasing tension. Shedding tears helps to stabilize our moods, while the suppression of crying is linked to ill-health. Males in particular are discouraged from using this behaviour and when people respond to a person's crying negatively, the crying individual is far less likely to experience the relief that crying can offer. I suggest that we consider crying not as a sign of weakness but as a "strong behavioural emotion," (Bellieni, 2017, p. 75). Further, I suggest that we support ourselves and others during episodes of weeping, regardless

of the gender of the weeper, and that we treat crying as a normal part of being human so we all may enjoy the benefits of this behavioural mechanism.

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# Social Identity Theory

*Brittany Valcourt*

Social Identity Theory is a conceptualization concerned with the psychological theories and attitudes that shape how we identify ourselves when engaging in groups. First proposed in 1979 by Henri Tajfel and John Turner, Social Identity Theory involves three cognitive processes that effect how we perceive others and ourselves (Reid 2). Our social identity is concerned with our social categorization, our social identification and social comparison when participating in group processes. We attempt to define our personal identity based on how the members of our groups perceive us, whether this perception is positive or negative. The consequences of having a poor social identity can result in group behaviour. When members of an in-group act collectively they are acting towards their common interests and group identity. Collective group behaviour can be unpredictable and can escalate quickly when individuals are behaving in interest of their “in-group.”

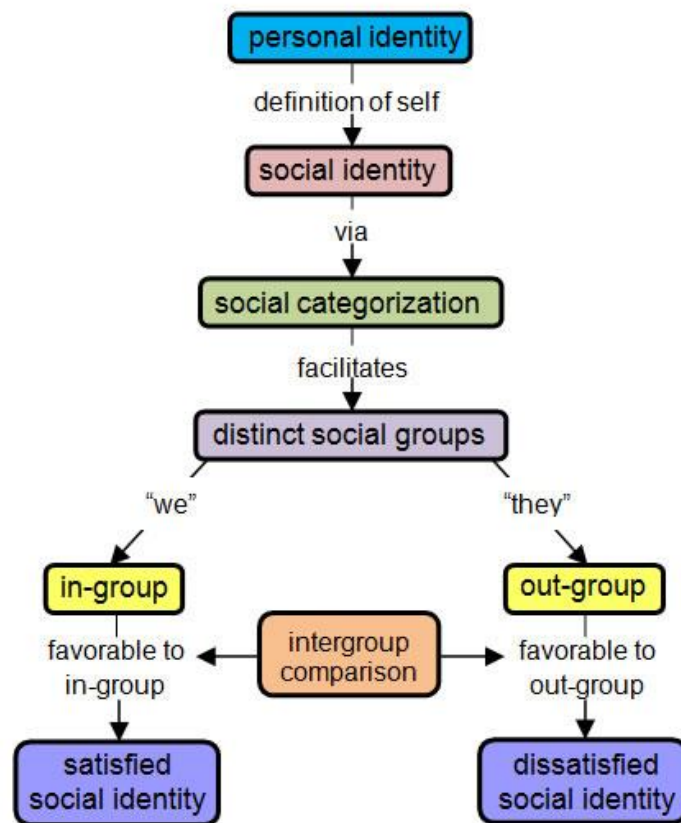
Social Identity Theory (SIT) overlaps a variety of educational fields and has proven to be a testable explanation for positive distinctiveness in group processes. Relevant in cognitive psychology, sociocultural psychology and a staple in communication theories, SIT provides researchers a valid explanation for why our personal social identity is affected when engaging and belonging to a group. The majority of the tests constructed to ensure the validity of SIT involved observational experiments. These findings proved to be unbiased towards inclusive

groups and supported the theory most when subjects were put into situational circumstances (Tam). Empirical studies carried out by Henri Tajfel and John Turner supported these claims. Since then SIT has been empirically tested by the names of Dominic Abrams and Robert Cialdini and is now considered a staple in modern communication theories.

To understand one's social identity, we have to first understand our personal identity and how it effects our self-esteem. Identity is a powerful construct. "The term "identity" has been used to refer to many different things—referents as diverse as peoples internal meaning systems, characteristics and attachments conferred through group memberships" (Vignoles and Schwartz 2). Qualities that make up our identity include but are not limited to: our personality, our heritage, our behaviours and internal beliefs. In everyday discourse, the word identity is difficult to define but easy to use in everyday speech. This is because the idea of what our identity is, is more abstract than concrete terms. Our personal identity involves distinguishing characteristics that shape who we are as a person and does not rely on the members of our group to shape it. Understanding our personal identity allows us to self-define based on our given and chosen attributes. An individual's social identity is a binary construct that focuses on the individual and the collective processes in which they are formed and maintained (Vignoles and Schwartz 3).

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Social categorization is the act of categorizing individuals into social groups to be able to collectively understand and identify them. “Groups give us a sense of social identity: a sense of belonging to the social world” (McLeod). An individual can belong to multiple groups at a time and are not limited to just one social category. A couple examples of possible social categorizations include your ethnicity, your educational background, political background, your career, and even a recreational hobby such as being a musician or an artist. This is where “in-groups” and “out-groups” start to play a part. “In order to increase our self-image we enhance the status of the group to which we belong” (McLeod). This is a crucial aspect of Social Identity Theory called positive group distinctiveness. As a collective, we seek to maintain a positive or collective image of our group, supporting our “in-group” behaviour. Social categorization organizes our “distinct social groups” to ones we find more “favorable.” Social categorization can also lead to prejudice or discrimination on groups that are not aligned with our social groups. These groups are called our “out-groups.” Out-group derogation can be dangerous when assumptions are made about groups we do not belong to; it can be viewed as a motive for why we separate ourselves from individuals who don’t match the criteria of our social category – a process known as group distinctiveness. Most of the time this act of categorizing is done sub-consciously and is influenced by our group perceptions. Social in-groups can be advantageous by encouraging positive behaviours when engaging with others with similar interests thus giving ourselves a positive social identity in return. Social categorization could also be a positive way for in-groups to practice team work.



Source:

[http://www.age-of-the-sage.org/psychology/social/Tajfel%27s\\_Theory\\_of\\_Social\\_Identity.jpg](http://www.age-of-the-sage.org/psychology/social/Tajfel%27s_Theory_of_Social_Identity.jpg)

Social identification explores the ideologies within social categorization further by identifying the distinctive self-descriptive qualities we classify ourselves with.

“A process of social identification with the groups to which we belong is an important element that connects us to groups, and that tells us both who we are and who we are not. A social identity is thus the product of a process of social categorization and of identification with the groups we belong to, which we then characterize as part of ourselves” (Spears and Schwartz 203).

We derive value from our in-groups and categorize ourselves among others we view similar to ourselves. Social identification is essential to understand the salient components that categorize us into our social groups. By doing this we are adopting the collective identity of our group and are more likely to behave in ways favourable of our perceived social group.

Social comparison is the act of adding value to a group in comparison to one's "out-groups." "Social comparison is perhaps the only way we can assess the true meaning or value of our own group" (Spears and Schwartz 2003). We do this by identifying the social qualities our group entails and contrasting with another group whose identity is different. By doing this we are comparing positive and negative behaviours and applying them to our in-groups and out-groups. This is a way of solidifying our group identity by understanding the salient qualities that make us who we are but also it is a way of understanding other groups strategic expression of their own identity to reach a place of understanding. This theory is important because it helps us understand our social identity and how it effects the private and public sectors of our lives. Understanding the functions of social identity theory can prevent "group think" and provide various explanations for why we strive for a positive social identity.

A model proposed by Hinkle and Brown in 1990 composed a hypothesis based on social identity theory. Their hypothesis stated that "when the comparison with the outgroup is perceived as salient, a positive correlation between identification with the in-group and differentiation in its favour (in-group bias) should be revealed" (Capozza 62). Hinkle and Brown had a variety of "cultures, groups and individuals" (Capozza 62) when conducting their

experiment, in order to reveal the factors that play a role in individualism and those that play a role in collectivism. Hinkle and Brown's study revealed that both of these factions had "one single underlying dimension" (Capozza 62). This variable is our self-identity, a separate position from one's social identity. This binary variable of our personality revealed further that individualists compared to collectivists reacted differently to in-group think. Individualists still strived for a positive group bias, but were more intrigued by personal gains. Hinkle and Brown's (1990) hypothesis is that the tendency to enhance one's own group in order to enhance one's own social identity is valid for the collectivistic groups and people" (Capozza 63) the majority of the time. Individualists however have a bit more dependence than collectivists. An explanation for this may be that the individualists scored higher on levels of self-esteem in comparison to collectivists. Having a high self-concept provides an individual with a higher self-identification thus making them less likely to group think. This small glimpse into this study reveals that individuals have various motives for identification and that not one simple evaluation of a group can necessarily be attributed to every member belonging to it. This study was praised for its perspective for various social identifications but also criticized for only being "valid for small groups but not for wide social categories" (Capozza 79). This application to the public sector can provide an explanation for why individuals may act radically when trying to influence intergroup behaviour or to gain a positive group identification.

Our social identity is a binary construct that describes the cognitive processes that occur when we engage with groups. The process of socially categorizing the groups we identify ourselves with is called self-identification. We are self-identifying with the collective and will strive for a positive group identity when engaging with others we view similar to us. We derive value from these interactions to an extent where we behave favourably to our groups ideologies and distinctive qualities. Group comparison occurs when we compare our social group to other groups therefore motivating an individual within a group to maintain positive group distinctiveness. Social Identity Theory is a staple in communication theories because it provides a testable explanation for predictable group behaviour and our binary social identity.

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## “Hooked on a Feeling”: Gillette’s Use of Desirability in their “Just Whistle” Advertisement

*Nicole Brownlee*

Contemporary advertising focuses on evoking emotions within an audience as a tactic to sell a product. Advertisers attempt to convince consumers that their product will incite a certain emotion or lifestyle through the careful selection of certain characteristics within the medium. In Gillette’s advertisement for women’s razors, “Just Whistle”, feelings of desire are conjured through the subject of the ad, the composition of the ad, and the use of text. The incorporation of an attractive model, logical composition, and enticing text enable Gillette to create an effective advertisement that makes their razor appealing.

By analysing the model’s pose and physical characteristics, we can explore how Gillette guides the audience to believe that both the model and razor are desirable. Also, examining the composition of the advertisement, the colour scheme, and the foreground can reveal tactics used by Gillette to enhance the model’s desirability. The text is another integral aspect of the ad, which uses convincing language that completes Gillette’s message that their product is desirable and can benefit the user’s appearance by making them look attractive. Gillette utilizes visual cues to consistently remind the consumer that their specific product will enable these positive characteristics.

Gillette released their “Just Whistle” advertisement in 1981 to promote their female razor with a “swivelling head” and accompanying, “attractive” carrying case. The ad features a tanned, blonde, attractive woman in a white bathing suit laying on a white beach towel with a man’s shadow cascading over her torso.

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Gillette’s choice to use a model to promote their new razor illustrates that they want to portray their product as something beautiful, sexy, and above average. The model’s perfect hair, flawless skin, and clean bathing suit shows that Gillette’s product is parallel to these attributes and can help women achieve this ideal image. The exclusion of an average woman who is not air brushed, does not have makeup on, or is not thin conveys to the audience that the ordinary is not enough and is not desirable. The advertisement disregards how unrealistic it is for a woman to appear immaculate at the beach and evokes a feeling of shame or guilt in the audience if they do not meet these impossible standards. The model’s pose further exemplifies her desirability. The model is posed on her side with her legs extended and overlapped, and her elbows propping herself up as she removes her sunglasses, presumably to regard the shadow that cascades over her. The pose appears effortless and relaxed, yet allows the model to resemble a long, golden goddess because it further promotes her perfection and unrelenting attractiveness. The attributes of the model, including her flawless skin, body, hair, and pose,

are deliberately accentuated to convey that Gillette's product is also flawless and beautiful, and any person can attain these attractive characteristics through its use. Gillette purposely used a model in their "Just Whistle" advertisement to connect the desirable appearance of the model to their new razor.

Furthermore, the composition of the ad, which includes the colours that are present and the foreground of the advertisement, highlights the attractiveness of the model and Gillette's product. Composition is used to enhance the model's attractiveness, which subsequently attributes beauty to whatever product is being endorsed. The colours within the ad are primarily a golden yellow and white, which are both present on the model. The only interruption between the model's golden tanned skin and the almost identical warm colour of the beach sand is her stark white bathing suit and towel that she lounges on. The homogeneity of colour implicitly conveys that the model is a natural beauty because she practically blends in with her surroundings due to her skin tone and hair colour. Despite this, the model is still able to capture the audience's attention in the midst of the effortless beauty of nature, which reinforces Gillette's message of being able to attract attention without trying. The pristine, bright white colour of the bathing suit and towel implies that the woman is clean and pure. If the bathing suit had been black it would have implied that the model had something to hide because the colour black conceals imperfections. The inclusion of white associates cleanliness with both the model and the razor because white reveals any dirt or grime, which is something that hygienic products need to avoid. Gillette's choice to include the spotless colour white in

their advertisement links hygiene to their product, which is especially desirable in beauty products because they come in close contact with some of the most sensitive areas of the body.

In addition to the desirability of cleanliness, male approval is another tactic that Gillette uses to convey attractiveness. In the foreground of the advertisement, a man’s shadow is cast over the model’s torso, leaving her legs uncovered and the primary focus of the ad. The close proximity of the man illustrates that the woman is irresistible and the lack of cover on her legs shows that the man approached her because of her legs. The decision to include a man’s shadow that crosses over the woman’s body instead of including a man’s actual presence within the ad maintains the focus on the woman and allows the appearance of the man to remain up to the audience’s imagination. Including the outline of a man without any specific physical details allows him to be a conjuring of whatever qualities an individual may find attractive, which allows Gillette’s ad to attract a range of consumer’s tastes. Gillette portrays through this indiscernible man that their razor can help women achieve these desired legs, which can attract any man of their liking easily. Gillette’s use of colour and foreground supports their message that the use of their razor can enable a woman to feel like an effortlessly desirable and clean beauty who can attract any man.

The text included in Gillette’s ad also proposes that their razor can make the user desirable by making the audience feel special and noticeable. The ad cites that Gillette’s razor is “uniquely designed for a woman,” which suggests that the razor was specifically created to help females attain the best possible shave. The consumer is led to believe that great care has

been taken to perfect the “design” of this tool, which can be desirable for the beauty conscious who are mindful of the amount of time that it takes to alter their appearance. Gillette establishes their dedication to serving their customer by stating that they have “uniquely” created something for just a portion of their client base. The company is also portrayed as being attentive to detail because the razor was created specifically for women. Furthermore, the ad also includes that if you use “Just Whistle” from Gillette, you will have a “noticeably smooth shave,” which proposes that the user can easily tell the difference between a Gillette razor and the competition’s because it is a “noticeable” change. For a consumer to actively notice the difference in the results of a few uses is a huge feat for a beauty product because these products are marketed as tools to temporarily enhance the consumer’s appearance in subtle ways; therefore, for a user to notice a distinct difference is a remarkable achievement. In addition, a distinctly “smooth shave” will not only benefit the shaver, but it will also draw the attention of anyone who may touch or see the product of a fresh shave. Gillette explains to the audience that there is a significant difference that you can only attain with their razor. The name of the product, “Just Whistle” also conveys how effortlessly this product can make the user feel desirable because it connotes that using their razor evokes the same amount of attention that whistling does. The inclusion of the word “just” changes how “whistle” can be interpreted because if the razor was named “Whistle” the product would be viewed as a command, or an action that demands to be committed to elicit a response. “Just” concretizes the simplicity of the attractiveness of Gillette’s product. By “just” using Gillette’s razor the

consumer can captivate the attention of anyone within sight or a hand’s reach because “Just Whistle” enables you to have the desirable characteristic of having a “noticeably smooth shave.” A woman merely needs to shave her legs to garner attention with Gillette’s razor. Gillette uses the connotation that their product is uniquely designed for women, is noticeably different than the competition, and allows the user to effortlessly attract attention to ensure that the audience understands their message that “Just Whistle” makes them desirable in all these aspects.

Through the analysis of Gillette’s “Just Whistle” advertisement, we can critically identify the various tactics that advertisers use to sell products. The inclusion of a model, composition of the print ad, and the text at the bottom of the ad all work to evoke a feeling of desirability, which Gillette advertises can be attained through the use of the “Just Whistle” razor. In depth analysis of the posing, colour, foreground, and diction in Gillette’s advertisement creates a more developed understanding of how companies use their ad campaigns to evoke specific emotions in their consumers, which can then be associated with their products.

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# The Perception of Women: The Past and the Present

*Giordana Curatolo*

The rhetorical critique I conducted on Norman Rockwell's *Girl at the Mirror* is significant because I analyzed the artifact using a feminist approach which has yet to be

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conducted. Feminist theory is important to society because it provides viewers with direct insight on how individuals perceived women during the time of the artifact; to use a dissimilar theory can cause patriarchal bias which can therefore limit individuals' knowledge of the world they live in.

And so, does analyzing an artifact with feminist theory allow individuals to receive a sense of understanding of women's plight in the past and the transformational progression of the present?

*Girl at the Mirror* was printed in *The Saturday Evening Post* on March 6, 1954. The painting depicts a young girl who is dressed in a long, white nightgown with her hair coiffed perfectly in braids. It is difficult to distinguish the age of the child, but she seems to be between seven and eleven years of age. The background setting of the painting looks as though she was in her home. She could potentially be in her attic due to the small amount of furniture and the darkness that surrounds the painting. The young girl is seated on a small

burgundy stool which faces a long brown and framed mirror. She seems to be contemplating her looks due to the perplexed look on her face and the placement of her hands on her cheeks. On her lap is a fashion magazine flipped to a page which shows a beautiful young model. Finally, across from the barefooted girl is a doll pictured in a long blue dress with black dress shoes. The placement of the doll is rather interesting because it looks like she has been tossed away and forgotten.

Feminist theory is an effective approach to analyze Rockwell's *Girl at the Mirror*. The rise of feminist theories emerged in the 1700s and has strongly developed. Feminist theory encompasses gender equality, the importance of women's rights, their welfare and interests along with diminishing a patriarchal society. Men and women are the same and should be treated based on their qualities and not their gender. Women make up more than half of our human population and hold the same value as men but were not (and are still not) treated with the same dignity and respect. Since men and women are often treated unequally, viewing the artifact using a feminist theory approach will aid the audience in addressing whether gender equality was present during the time of the artifact, which will also allow the audience to compare the differences between past and present lifestyles. The many features examined in an artifact are gender roles, images of women, colours, and the gender of the addresser. By focusing on these topics, this provides viewers with a clear picture on the representation of women.

In the early 1950s, there were various gender roles which young girls and women were required to follow. They were taught to be submissive and to always keep up with ongoing beauty trends. For years, magazines have presented women with unrealistic forms of beauty. Therefore, magazines caused young girls to question themselves and their appearance. The young girl in Rockwell's painting idolizes a model in the magazine while she contemplates her own looks. This



*Figure 1. Magazine in the 1950s*

demonstrates the loss of innocence in the young girl because she is already concerned with conforming to the ideal beauty trends of her society. It is interesting to acknowledge the difference between portrayals of women in magazines in the 1950s and how they have changed today. In the past, women portrayed in magazines imitated the ideal woman of society: attractive, slim, and Caucasian (see Figure 1). Today, society is noticing a development in the magazine industry because many magazines now represent all women no matter age, size, or race (see Figures 2 & 3).



Figure 3. Magazine in the present day

overshadowed by men, who received the most recognition for the success. Though the movement was established to gain equality for all individuals, women were still pushed aside due to “bias, since being a women [*sic*] of [colour] meant facing both racism and sexism” (“Women Had Key Roles”). Women “experienced gender discrimination and sexual harassment” (“Women in the Civil Rights Movement”) before, during, and after the movement.



Figure 2. Magazine in the present day

Women of colour were not acknowledged for their tireless efforts. These women often worked long and vigorous hours as domestic servants for upper class Caucasian women. African

American women were not treated with the same value and respect, and though Caucasian women struggled with equality as well, African American women were completely disregarded as members of society and had virtually no purpose. The information above clarifies why Rockwell chose to illustrate a young Caucasian child rather than a child of colour. Rockwell did not object nor challenge the societal norms but chose to comply with them instead.

Colour is an integral aspect of Rockwell's painting. The use of white does not solely represent the prominent race of women in the 1950s but also typifies how women were viewed. The young girl is seen in a white nightgown, white being the colour most chosen to symbolize innocence, purity, and youthful femininity. This characterises how young women were not portrayed as strong and independent individuals but instead were solely recognised as beautiful beings and homemakers. Instead of being able to further their education, they had walked down the aisle and began to bear children because they were told it would be their sole purpose in life. The choice of makeup shown in the painting must also be noted. For example, she had used red lipstick that was ubiquitous during the fifties and was a staple amongst all women. In American culture, red often symbolizes femininity and sexuality, and "men find women who wear red more attractive" (Burkley). Women through all time periods have been pressured to perform beauty as an integral part of womanhood, and this is shown to be especially true for women in the 1950s.

In the past, society portrayed women as attractive beings and disregarded their intellectual intelligence. Society had stereotypically categorised women as individuals who were solely concerned with their appearance even though it does not necessarily apply to all women. Women were constantly being judged by their appearance, causing them to contemplate their style, complexion, and figure. Rockwell's image of the mirror strongly emphasises the image and labels placed on women in the 1950s. Rockwell describes to viewers that the young girl is purely concerned with how she presents herself to society. Feminist theory highlights the importance of removing stereotypes, and despite progress made towards gender stereotyping, development must still continue. Society is currently seeing many female leaders in a variety of fields such as business, technology, and media who are not solely concerned about their appearance but instead are viewed for their intellect and contribution to society rather than what their bodies have to offer.<sup>1</sup> To have the young girl face the mirror shows viewers that women were only looked upon by society (particularly by men) based on their outer appearance. In other words, some men viewed women as sexual objects and merely thought about them in a sexual manner. Feminist theorists have worked effortlessly to end the stigma placed on women and through actions, such as the Me Too movement and Halsey's powerful speech at the 2018 Women's March. Change has begun, but Norman Rockwell's depiction of women shows the struggles of the past.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Forbes Magazine*, "The 2017 World's 100 Most Powerful Women," for a knowledgeable read. Available: <https://www.forbes.com/power-women/#1582c31f5e25>

In the 1950s, it is clear that masculine views of women were seen in a contrasting way from how women viewed themselves. Norman Rockwell, the addresser, is a male who symbolizes his view of women at the time.

Powerful societal individuals were mainly upper class white men who held complete control over all aspects of a woman's life, whether it was how she should have looked, thought, or behaved. As an upper class white male,

Rockwell's portrayal of the young girl could only reflect his personal views on how women were acknowledged. *Girl at the Mirror* and *A Scout is Helpful* (see Figure 4) were both produced during the same period which shows Rockwell's compliance to the strict gender roles of the time. *A Scout is Helpful* depicts a scout rescuing a young girl from the water. The male shows strong similarities to the typical male characteristics in the 1950s. Rockwell illustrates that males are dependable, and all women should respect, embrace, and be in awe of masculinity, as shown by the young girl in the painting. By comparing these two pieces, it strongly clarifies the importance Rockwell placed on societal and gender norms in his paintings. Evaluating the gender of the addresser is essential when using a feminist theory approach because certain questions come to mind: Would the painting have appeared differently if it was created by a female artist?



Figure 4. *A Scout is Helpful*

To conclude, feminist theory strives to remove barriers and biases placed on women. They tirelessly aim to end social norms and challenge the meaning of femininity. Feminist theory is highly important today because it allows their audience to understand the importance of women's past experiences along with their newly found improvements. For years, women were submissive to men and had to follow societal norms that ultimately gave them no sense of identity or individuality. Through historic victories, feminist movements, and knowledge about individuals' hardships; feminist theory has shown the world that women have overcome countless obstacles, and they are still willing to share their voice to empower our society to help all women live equally.

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## Remembering the Man Called Intrepid: The Non-Descript Statue of Sir William Stephenson

*Denise Fajardo*

On July 24, 1999, Princess Anne unveiled a 2.4-metre bronze statue created by the world-renowned sculptor Leo Mol. This statue located at the busy downtown intersection of Memorial Boulevard and York Avenue commemorates Sir William Stephenson, “one of WWII’s most infamous intelligence officers,” also known by his codename ‘The Intrepid’ (“The Intrepid Life”). Paul Duval, a biographer of Leo Mol, writes, “[l]acking the bright

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colours which are an immediate attraction for almost everyone, the sculpture probably demands a more searching attention than painting,” and so it is unsurprising if people who may walk or drive past this statue do not notice it at all (Duval, Ch. 9).

Interestingly, some people may not even know about

Sir William Stephenson and his lengthy list of international endeavours and achievements.

Although this may seem ironic, Sir William Stephenson is a remarkable man commemorated in an unremarkable, non-descript statue situated along a major thoroughfare. Stephenson’s non-descript statue functions rhetorically in commemorating his covert character.

### **Biography of Sir William Stephenson**

Stephenson was born as William Samuel Clouston Stanger on July 24, 1897 in Winnipeg's Point Douglas neighbourhood. At four, he was adopted by an Icelandic couple because, after his father died, his mother could no longer support him. During World War I, he served as an ace pilot believed to have taken down 12 to 26 enemy planes. For this reason, he was awarded the Military Cross and Distinguished Flying Cross. During World War II, Stephenson was a spy hero as he played a major role in tracking down Nazi evidence and plans while he worked as an undercover passport agent in New York City, the headquarters of the British Security Coordination. He was directly appointed by Prime Minister Winston Churchill to run the organization and served as the liaison officer between Churchill and President Franklin Roosevelt. Aside from his major contributions during the two World Wars, Stephenson was also an amateur lightweight world champion, an industrialist, and a businessman in-between the wars. In 1922, he invented a wireless photo transmitter and, following its success, he also got involved in the film industry and real estate industry which made him a successful wealthy businessman by the age of 30 (Hyde 13-15). In the long run, his business connections served him well while running his undercover operations.

### **Perceiving Stephenson's Character Through Enthymemes**

Cara Finnegan calls the naturalistic enthymeme as “a process [in which] we assume photographs to be ‘true’ or ‘real’ until we are given reason to doubt them” (135). This process

may apply well to visitors of Memorial Park especially when they do not know who Stephenson is. Stephenson's monument is one of six monuments found in Memorial Park. There are two possible assumptions the public may make when they pass by this statue based on the surrounding environment and the statue's lack of intricate details. First, if the public happens to come across the Memorial Park plaque near the fountains, they will find the plaque signed by Premier Duff Roblin in 1962 with the following dedication: "To the honoured dead. This park was dedicated in memory of their sacrifice in war and peace to create this province and preserve this nation." After reading this plaque, the truncated syllogism might be: 'This is a statue of William Stephenson in Memorial Park which is dedicated to the memory of those who sacrificed their lives during the war. Stephenson's statue depicts him in an aviator uniform. Therefore, his most important contribution to the war was being an aviator.' Most of the surrounding monuments are dedicated to people who served or died during either or both World Wars. It is correct that Stephenson served during both World Wars. It is also correct that he was an aviator during World War I, but he did not die for neither wars which the public might think when they try to figure out who he is by surveying the surrounding monuments.

The public might make another truncated syllogism when it comes to the statue's non-descriptness. Most monuments in Memorial Park have plaques dedicated to them except Stephenson's. Interestingly, the base of his statue only bears his name and his alias, specifically saying, "Sir William S. STEPHENSON. 1897-1989. The man called

‘INTREPID’.” The statue seems to imply to the public that all they have to know is his name and alias, search him up on Google, and they will learn more about him.

These public perceptions through enthymemes suggest to be useful yet prone to contestations. To portray Stephenson in an aviator uniform is both limiting and fitting. It is fitting because it is true that he was an aviator, and maybe Leo Mol originally intended him to fit with the other monuments in Memorial Park, with most of them having plaques indicating that they are peacekeepers. While it is understood and acceptable that there is only so much that can be depicted in a sculpture, portraying Stephenson in his aviator uniform is still limiting because he is more internationally known for his work as a spy.

### **Conclusion**

William Stephenson’s non-descript statue located at a downtown intersection commemorates his major achievement as an ace pilot during World War I. The non-descriptness of the statue gives the public a mixed message about Stephenson’s character because, while being an ace pilot during World War I is one of his major achievements, he is more internationally known as a spy who worked for Churchill and Roosevelt. Other scholars may want to examine other art pieces through which Sir William Stephenson is remembered, such as the mini bronze statue by Erin Senko and a mural in the West End by Dave Carty. Located at Sargent Avenue and McGee Street, the mural encompasses numerous elements of Stephenson’s life in contrast to the non-descript statue of Stephenson in Memorial Park. Both

pieces of art are rather less non-descript than Leo Mol's statue. Overall, Winnipeg's unsung hero Sir William Stephenson is commemorated in a non-descript way which, for the most part, still speaks to his secret identity as a spy, always appearing unidentifiable and neutral.

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## *The Road Analysis*

*Jeremy Lennon-Gibson*

The purpose of this paper is to analyze Cormac McCarthy's writing style, language, and characters as a way to convey feelings of discomfort in his novel, *The Road*. I will explain how McCarthy wants the reader to feel emotionally drained by both the narrative and the mechanics of the book, and how McCarthy aims to punish the reader just as much as the characters within the novel.

McCarthy intentionally uses a lack of punctuation to create run on sentences to add an additional layer of discomfort to the reader. In my experience, the lack of punctuation often made me re-read sections of the page, creating the feeling that I had to push forward to read, just as the characters in novel were forced to push forward and walk. McCarthy's use of poor punctuation also made me weary for every line read; I would think to myself as I read onward "will I have to re-read this section too?" This weariness created by the mechanics added to the already palpable stress and uneasiness instilled by the grim nature of the narrative. McCarthy uses the word 'and' frequently, sometimes up to four times in a sentence. This creates a feeling of confusion and discomfort in a situation that wouldn't warrant such emotions if the sentence was written in a typical style.

McCarthy has created his career by being a master of descriptive language. He describes every detail of every environment as if he were painting a picture. McCarthy's

JEREMY LENNON-GIBSON *is a Rhetoric and Communications student at the University of Winnipeg. All his life, Jeremy has loved looking at media through a critical lens. Lately, he has been focusing his attention on literary artifacts. This assignment allowed Jeremy to apply that lens to his favorite author, Cormac McCarthy.*

ability to describe environments allows him to subject the reader to horrible sights and situations in clear perspective. This descriptive language also comes into play in describing emotions. McCarthy follows the

“less is more” school of description when it comes to emotions; he says only what’s necessary. This allows the reader to project even more of themselves onto the characters, creating more discomfort in the process. McCarthy doesn’t include a lot of dialogue between the characters, but when dialogue is used, it is written similar to that of a screen-play. In doing so, McCarthy gave me a claustrophobic feeling, due to the short, snappy feeling of the formatting. The conversations between the characters, especially between the Man and the Boy, are never drawn out; there are no wasted words. Despite the short conversations, I found that McCarthy manages to fill every word with emotion; this is due in part to his description and voice outside of the conversation. McCarthy has written the characters so well, I almost knew what they were thinking when the dialogue was taking place. This once again provides merit to his less is more approach. I started to fill in the dialogue with my own ideas of the characters thoughts and feelings. This personalization was a large reason I was able to relate and associate with the characters; after all I had my own voice and thoughts associated with theirs. The connection also made the gut wrenching moments even more uncomfortable; not only

was I exposed to the situations themselves, I also had to deal with the effect it had on the Man, and even more upsetting, the Boy.

The protagonists in *The Road* are referred to as the Boy and the Man. They are never given proper names. This allows the reader to better project an image of themselves or others onto the characters. The lack of proper names, combined with the voice I gave the Man and the Boy, created a closeness with the two characters that I wouldn't have had if it weren't for those decisions by McCarthy. The awful things affect the reader on a deeper level when they have a deeper association with the characters. McCarthy portrays the Man as good hearted, yet grizzled and tough. This treatment of the protagonists makes the readers, myself included, want to identify with him, as he has traits that I would like to see in myself if I was in a situation like his. His kindness and likability only adds to the feeling of unfairness and dread I experienced when McCarthy made something awful happen to him and the Boy. I was under the impression near the end of the novel that McCarthy was punishing the Man for his good nature as well as punishing me, the reader, for allowing myself to like the characters as much as I did. McCarthy found ways to punish me for trusting the Man near the end, when he changed the nature of the Man, creating distrust in the one part of the narrative that I thought I could rely on. Even when the characters had a brief moment of happiness, it was veiled in a grim distrust that they would be thrown into yet another soul wrenching situation. These shaky highs are created so that McCarthy has something more to break down.

McCarthy uses the Boy as a point of purity, a white cloth laying upon a pool of mud. As the novel goes on the Boy's innocence fades, and traumatizing encounters begin to affect him less and less. The Boy's attitude began to reflect my own as I read further. Encounters and situations that would have me putting down the book became ordinary. That being said, McCarthy still found ways to break down my jaded senses using the peaceful moments mentioned before. What kept bringing me back to the novel after these moments is the strength of the narrative itself. McCarthy wouldn't be successful in this writing style if he wasn't a master of creating page turners. McCarthy used the Boy as the main piece that keeps the story moving. Everything the Man does is for the survival of the Boy. The Boy's innocence and strive for good become the one thing the reader could count on. While this one consistency was not always a positive, McCarthy managed to create discomfort and stress from the Boy's good nature as it created unnecessary problems for the pair.

*The Road* is not the only novel McCarthy has written that tests the reader's spirit; in fact, he's made a career of it. His novel *Blood Meridian* is even more graphically violent than *The Road*, yet the violence in *Blood Meridian* doesn't hold the same weight as it does in *The Road*. Yes, it is masterfully written and is a key part of the narrative, but in *The Road*, the violence itself seems secondary to the emotional totality that results from it. The violence in *Blood Meridian* almost becomes par for the course; it numbs you, *The Road* doesn't allow the reader to get used to it. In *Blood Meridian*, the violence is almost celebrated, while in *The Road* it is used as a means of discomfort for the reader; it is never seen as a positive action.

McCarthy wanted the reader to feel uncomfortable while reading *The Road*. He succeeded. In doing so, he also created an amazing narrative on the power of love and the subjective nature of good. Deep down in its core, *The Road* is a love story between a father and a son. McCarthy blankets that meaning under the environments and the trauma induced by the ways mentioned above. Never have I read a novel where the author has tried to affect the readers on so many separate levels, whether it be for the better or worse. It's that attention to detail to both the narrative, environment, and the reader's perception of those elements that will stick with me over the years, not the feelings of discomfort, or shock. *The Road* is truly a generational novel from a man who is used to making generational novels.

#### Works Cited

McCarthy, Cormac. *The Road*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2006.

McCarthy, Cormac. *Blood Meridian*. Random House, 1985.

## Artwork

by *Brittany Valcourt*

*The exploration of nature through art is a constant adventure for  
BRITTANY VALCOURT. Inseparable from our being, it is  
what surrounds us and what encompasses us.*





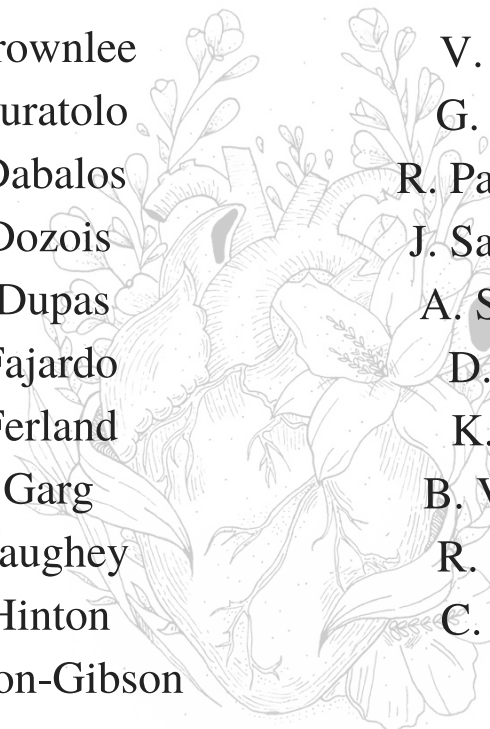
*Preference in photorealism, the subject is displayed with delicacy.*

*Valcourt is a third year Rhetoric and Communications student looking to further her idea of what it means to be a creative.*



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## *Rooted in Rhetoric* *Connections*



N. Brownlee	V. Kainth
G. Curatolo	G. Kajuna
M. Dabalos	R. Panganiban
C. Dozois	J. Samolesky
M. Dupas	A. Saseniuk
D. Fajardo	D. Singh
A. Ferland	K. Swan
K. Garg	B. Valcourt
R. Haughey	R. Wilson
C. Hinton	C. Young
J. Lennon-Gibson	

