

# *Rooted in Rhetoric*

*Introspection*

*Outrospection*



*Volume*  
*4*

*Spring*  
*2019*

*Writing and artwork by students of the University of Winnipeg  
Department of Rhetoric, Writing, and Communications*

# *Rooted in Rhetoric*

INTROSPECTION OUTROSPECTION



Writing by students of the University of Winnipeg.

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Volume 4 - Spring 2019

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## *Foreword*

Who am I? What makes me an individual? How do my emotions affect not only myself, but those around me? How can an understanding of others help me define myself? While these questions may seem understandably daunting at first, introspection and outrospection can help make them more approachable.

Introspection and outrospection, the twin themes for this year's edition of *Rooted in Rhetoric*, are two connected methods of analysis that seek to understand the thoughts and feelings of an individual. Introspection focuses on self-reflection in order to understand interior thoughts and feelings. Outrospection, on the other hand, relies on empathetic thinking and exterior perspectives in order to guide the individual looking out. While the two methodologies vary in their approach, the goal remains the same: a more developed understanding of one's thoughts and feelings. Put into practice, Intro and Outrospection can take many different forms, whether that be an introspective personal reflection, an outrospective analysis of a work or study space, or any of the various other approaches used by this year's writers. Whatever the form of inquiry, intro and outrospection are invaluable tools of reflection since they maintain a critical eye on the ways in which an individual functions both on their own and amongst others.

While reading through the various writing pieces gathered in this collection, we hope that you too begin thinking about the ideas of intro and outrospection. Whether you choose to

look inwards or outwards, we are confident that you will learn something about yourself and the way you fit into this world. Who knows? Maybe you'll even be able to answer some of those intimidating questions we started with!

*Blake Carter, BA Hons.*

## *Introduction*

“Introspection Outrospection” is the fourth volume of *Rooted in Rhetoric*, an academic journal published by the Rhetoric, Writing, and Communications department at the University of Winnipeg. “Introspection Outrospection” 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 “Introspection Outrospection” because it highlights our desire to understand our environment. Reflecting and engaging in introspection can be an extremely valuable attribute when trying to understand our own emotions and strengths. Applying these thought processes through outrospection allows us to progress our relationships through empathetic thinking. We can approach humanity with a new-found perceptive empathy when we look outside ourselves and towards the lives of others.

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.

# Learning To Drive

*Colleen Coulter*

As long as I can remember I dreamed of freedom and control. I longed for the power to pull my own strings and to go and do things when and where I wanted. Told to enjoy my childhood while I could, it did not help, as I still pined for the coveted state of adulthood. To my way of thinking, driving represented adulthood.

*COLLEEN is a sixty-six-year old student at the university. She is contemplating a double major in Rhetoric and Creative Writing as she remains passionate about the Walls to Bridges program, which takes credited university classes into prisons. She hopes to make positive and lasting contributions to today's world through her writing.*

While still a relatively small child, somewhere between six and nine, I actually lucked on a chance to drive a motorized vehicle all by myself. My grandfather and my uncle had built a go-cart. I still recall the pride I felt for the opportunity of driving my uncle's go-cart when they offered me the privilege. I jumped at the chance, wasting no time, climbing into the seat, grabbing the steering wheel, depressing the gas pedal with my foot, and taking off like a shot before anyone could change their mind. I can't begin to describe the joy which overwhelmed me while weaving in and out of the large blue spruce trees scattered through the yard and around the pathway that our racetrack wound; continuing on around the house, passing the apple orchard, and arriving back at the start in the front yard, the whole

route within the confines of the hedge. Around I went again, laughing with glee, knowing only one speed, full out, pedal to the metal. Every time I circled the house, ending up near the start, I waived at my grandfather and my uncle. As I rounded the house for the third or fourth time, I noticed that my mother now stood with the others. She did not look happy; she appeared frightened and as if trying to get my grandfather to make me stop. However, as I flew by, I could only hear my grandfather yelling, “Let her go, Ruthie!” A few more rounds of our improvised track, and my turn had come to an end. Forced to stop, I regretfully relinquished my uncle’s go-cart to his care, saddened that the exhilarating experience had ended, but proud as punch of my driving skill.

At twelve or thirteen years old, my Dad gave me my first actual driving lessons at the lake on two, bendy, twisty, tire tracks, full of hidden rocks, overgrown with wild grasses and daisies, and enclosed by the forest which ran from the cabin to the government Block Road. The trunks of the birch, the poplar, and the jack pine crowding the edges of the rugged trail acted as the obstacles necessary to miss, and the branches of the spruce with their prickly, blue-green pine needles, would brush the sides of the vehicle with a sort of soft, scratchy, sound that indicated a warning of no room to spare. Would you believe it? My father actually started by asking me to back up to the road. I climbed into the driver’s seat, carefully adjusting the rear-view mirror, both hands gripping the steering wheel, my body tense and filled with nervous anticipation. I eased out slowly with my father closely watching my every move, but soon I backed out with ease, and driving forward, well, that presented no problem at all. Soon,

my parents going out in the car meant I could pull it out to the road and have it sitting out there waiting for them.

At the age of fourteen, my best girlfriend had taken us to St. Vital Park to some kind of a picnic affair that mainly involved students from Kelvin High School. I attended River East Collegiate but I had tagged along with my best friend. The law insisted on sixteen years of age for a legal driver's license, but she had somehow forged her birth certificate and because her parents refused to admit it, she now held a legal authorization to drive. The picnic ended up as a typical high school party: it included some sports, some drinking, and some making out. Finally, not finding this particular party to our liking, we had gathered our group, preparing to leave, soon discovering our so-called legal driver inebriated and in absolutely no condition to drive. As it turned out, no one else knew how to drive, with the exception of, "you guessed it,"- me. I realized that I did not possess a license, but I trusted in my capability and rose to the challenge. I fearlessly set about travelling across town from St. Vital to River Heights. I successfully managed the trip, negotiating traffic and switching lanes while shoulder checking, signaling, and turning either left or right as needed, dropping off the passengers, and delivering my best friend and her parents' car home. I cannot recall coming home, so I must have slept over at her place. My go-cart experience and early lessons had instilled me with the confidence necessary to pull it off. I had committed a criminal offence, but I thought myself a hero. The experience had actually thrilled me to my very core.

A year and a half later, I grew old enough to legally drive. At long last, I could now operate a motorcycle, a car, or a truck without breaking the law. How I had wished for this day! I had tired of hiding the fact that I had already learned how to city-drive before my actual city-driving lessons. I could finally relax. I had won my means to freedom.

# The Fall Guy

*Colleen Coulter*

Tall and slim, her blonde hair in a bun, she wore deep red lips in a shy smile. With a dress to match, as her hips swayed she waltzed in through the door of two-two-two Hunt Street. I stood to greet her and showed her to a chair. I sat back down and heard her tell me that her name was Rose Bloom as she smoothed the skirt of her dress and crossed her long legs. I had to drag my eyes, up from her legs with their red, six-inch-high heels, back up to her face. She seemed to be lost in thought and just sat still for a bit, but then she asked if she could smoke. As soon as I said she could, she pulled a pack from her purse and with a long red nail tapped one smoke out of the box. I grabbed a match and lit it, and I stared some more as she dragged in the smoke and then blew it out in a long, slow, stream. She took a deep breath, sighed, and then told me why she had come. I kept my eyes on her face the whole time she spoke. Where else would I look? She was such a doll!

I am not as nice as you might think. I can be a bit of a hard-assed dick and I call it like I see it. I had been floored by her looks. She was a doll for sure, but there was more to her and her tale than seen at first glance. She claimed she ran a lounge down by the docks, and that the man who ran the bar had failed to show up for work for two days in a row, and, to top that off, last week's cash was gone from the safe. I knew her lounge was down by the docks, all right,

but it was a strip club, and she might have run the joint, but it was owned by the mob. Her bar man served more shots in the head than shots in a glass, and he was known to bounce all sorts of tough guys right out the door. As she talked on, I saw the tight lines by her eyes, the stiff way she held her back, the deep breaths she took, and the sighs that slipped out. These signs showed her fear. She was scared. It made sense; she was in charge, she would be blamed.

She played on her fear and begged me to take her home. I did, or so I thought, and things soon changed. Rose closed and locked the door as soon as we got there. I moved from the hall to the front room and saw a trail of blood which led to a dead guy on the rug by the couch, a cash bag, and a few loose bills near his cold hands. I yelled for her to call the cops while I checked out the scene some more. Too late, I smelled a rat. I turned and faced a strange Rose. Miss Bloom now looked cold and hard, and she held a gun on me as she used her cell phone to call the gang boss for help. She forced me to trade guns with her, but by then the one she threw at my feet was cleaned and had no shells. It was a clear set up which got worse as she tucked a pack of bills in my coat. What a chump I had been! The stage had been set. Two of the mob's crew soon showed up, and when she called out for help, they kicked in the door and viewed the staged scene. To the thugs, it was clear who was to blame. She claimed to have come here to check on the hired help who had phoned in sick, and found me, the dead guy, and some cash. They told her they would take it from here and would see her the next day at the club. The babe had turned out to be a gun moll who killed her friend. She got to go to her real home and the rest of the cash. I was left to be her fall guy.

## I Tutor, Therefore I am?

*Emma Porter*

What can I say about the Writing Center that other, more experienced people can't say for themselves? The Writing Center is one of those incomprehensible things that you either know exists and are intimately familiar with, or is that corner hidden beside the offices of those faculty members who seem to disappear down a dead-end hallway and are never seen again until the following day. If by chance you find us, it is most likely because an English professor sent you our way for a tour (or perhaps for a first-year grammar lesson), but if you don't, I can't blame you. I only ventured this way because it was necessary for the tutor training course.

*PORTER is a third year Rhetoric student who has recently been employed as a tutor at The University of Winnipeg's writing centre. Porter reads and writes voraciously, both for pleasure and necessity. Her favourite genres include fantasy-fiction, creative non-fiction and graphic novels. It may sound cliché, but Porter stands by the testament that if something isn't worth reading, it's certainly not worth your time writing about.*

When I first walked through the doors of the Writing Center, everything seemed quite standard; computers, tables, an unnecessarily hard to work printer in the corner, the palpable stress and heat of students hard at work and the sound of deadlines whooshing by were all present. Nothing here seemed particularly new or exciting. I entered the course with a shred of arrogance created by the fact that I had been a high school



English tutor for three years prior. I was curious to see if there were any variations in tutoring methods for me to discover, and was also looking to build fundamental skills for my intended career in writing and teaching. I was - and still am - immediately floored by the amount of time outside our regularly scheduled, hour-long classes that was required of us. I stared at our course assignment outline in abject horror, knowing that with my recently acquired full-time job I couldn't possibly finish everything. What had I gotten myself into? I'd never once thought that tutoring could be so complicated; what was the purpose of taking more precious time from us? In that short moment, all the wind was knocked out of my sails. *There goes any prospect of me seeing the Saturday afternoon sun until the winter months.*

My frustrations only grew as all the alternative project options our professor graciously supplied did not compute with a twelve in the afternoon to eight at night, five days a week schedule. Many people suggested I drop the course and save some face since it took up the majority of my lunch break and left me only fifteen to thirty minutes to wolf down a bagel or frozen box lunch before jumping straight into a room filled with sixty to eighty thirteen-year olds at a time. I refused to quit, however, since I'd already committed to ordering the textbook. Neither did I want to lose a fair chunk of much-needed student aid funding or the elusive Rhetoric credit that the course provided. So I kept on, and as I continued, I inevitably came to an appalling realization—according to all the literature of being a tutor, I was doing something drastically wrong. The literature we read stressed a non-directive approach to peer tutoring in which the tutor steps back from an editorial position focused on correcting

grammatical mistakes and instead offers suggestions and guidance centered on the writing process as a whole. The long-held myth of the writing center as a “fix your paper workshop” must therefore be banished and replaced by a model that encourages the writer to be the active agent of their paper. The cardinal sin of this non-directive approach littered throughout our training was “never touch the writer’s paper” in any capacity, but most especially physically. I am ashamed to admit it now, but I had committed this sin many times in the past . I felt an unbearable urge to call all those I had led astray and apologize; the As or Bs that they had received on their papers ultimately meant nothing in the way of them actually learning. These students may have been satisfied with the help they had received at that moment, but when faced with the same problem without me by their side, they would likely lack the necessary skill to handle the situation on their own. A good tutor is one that strives for their own obsolescence.

By the time I was thrust into my first real experience at our university’s Writing Center, my brain was full of so much contradictory knowledge and experiences (and the ceaseless cry for an enchilada and a London fog for some reason) that when that first unlucky student sat next to me, laptop and assignment outline in hand, I was sure that nothing made sense anymore; all the literature read and re-read took flight from a head that desperately needed it at that moment. Yet, in a hilarious bout of irony, I found success in having an empty mind and simply focusing on the present moment, the present task, what felt right and what didn’t. I focused on asking the writer questions that I am at least fifty-percent sure their

professors might ask them. My student and I initially clashed heads; the writer had come in wanting structural help for a research essay in which no research had been done! To compound this fact, the essay itself was an incredibly personal that centered on the health risks and benefits for a career field my writer intended to pursue following their studies. If I were a religious person, I would've prayed to be struck down right then and there. Despite my misgivings, at the end of the hour long session my writer requested to see me again. Nor was she the only one to do so: my next three students also requested to come back and work with me again.

After reflecting on my tutoring experience, I'm left with the following thought: Whatever entity ends up reading this, if you so happen to witness a session where the tutor looks a clueless fop with their thumb in their mouth and a hastily put together bun that somehow leaves her clientele both baffled and smiling, I'd like you to know two things. First: you are definitely sober while witnessing this, and second: go easy on me!

## With Sugar

*Fallon McIver*

MCIVOR wrote this piece for his Academic Writing course. His instructor encouraged him to narrate something creative and he was inclined to stand out. When this piece was written he was struggling to accept his father's alcoholism and witnessed the effects it took on his mother and siblings. Initially, McIvor was going to write a non-fiction piece on how to address and deal with an alcoholic's denial, but as he was writing, he decided to have fun with the plot. The events portrayed in the story are fictional, however, similar topics are often a result of alcoholism and addiction. McIvor's heart goes out to those who are affected by and/or struggling with substance abuse.

The first time it happened, I was eight years old. My mother and I slept in her bedroom that night. Betrayed and defeated, she sought the comfort of no one other than me, I felt special. My mother and I had never been that close, I much preferred the company of my father because of his charismatic, entertaining personality. My mother was much more refined, tranquil if you will. I often wondered why my parents were together, her muted beige didn't seem compatible with his vibrant vermillion personality. Over time, I noted the tame behaviour elicited by my mother was quite literally that - tamed behaviour.

My mother was seldom underwhelming prior to meeting him. She was in fact, an outgoing, intelligent, liberated woman belittled to a pulp by him for his own ego. My father conditioned her to be an individual of little enthusiasm, as to not outshine him. He was manipulative like that.

the one person I felt understood my growing unhappiness.

As time progressed, he began to seek pleasure in my unwavering desire to protect my mother. He drew power from my pleas and longed to hear me cry. An almost erotic smirk crept over his lips when I'd grab his hands from my mother's quivering wrists, and place his tightly held fists to my face. The relationship my mother and I shared was one he couldn't break; unlike the capillaries that intertwined beneath my aching skin. It was agonizing for his ego.

What some may feel as anger, I felt as bereavement. I grieved the innocence that was my childhood before I was forced to recognize the reality that was abuse. I used to think the labyrinth of black and blue that covered my mother's complexion was the most intricate shade of beauty, if only it weren't for the connotations that laid beneath the surface, like her broken blood vessels below her skin. I believed that that's how love was supposed to be portrayed because, after every apology, those three words were the ones that followed.

I never understood why love had to be painful. Real love was nothing like the love I saw on TV; where the man would gently caress the woman's face, gaze softly into her eyes and whisper sweet-nothings until she couldn't bare but to taste his lips and smile a wide, genuine grin. Real love was cold, rough hands wrapped around my wrists and a harsh raspy voice demanding I not tell a soul. Real love was being told I wasn't good enough, to encourage me to be my best self. Real love wasn't lips pressed softly against another's. I wanted to be loved unconditionally, even if I spoke too loudly or regardless of manners. I wanted to feel special

like the night my father first laid his hands upon my mother and then me. I wanted to feel needed.

At the age of 13, I began self-harming for the same reasons I didn't mind being bruised, I wanted to be loved. I thought that if I couldn't elicit any love from my father, perhaps I could learn to love myself because, after all, love was painful. Despite what I hypothesized, the feeling of a cold, dull blade that tugged upon my skin didn't satisfy the feeling of love I craved. However, it did create a sense of autonomy as it was my secret and only mine, not a shared secret I had to withhold from one of my parents at my expense.

I lust for the day I come to find it was him, and not her. I replayed the thought of her bruises fading, and with them, her sense of entrapment too. I ached to see the liberated, intelligent woman I had always conceived of meeting. I so dearly wanted to watch her transform into an outgoing extrovert, who, would often share her opinions without hesitation or fear. I wanted time with her. I wanted to evoke bliss and positivity from our relationship, not share the same level of fear that he evoked within us. I wanted to feel satisfied with all that we had gone through to get to that point. I wanted to feel like, in its purest form, love conquered all instead of leaving me bruised and disheveled.

This scenario crossed my mind so often, I had sometimes forgotten she was gone. Those moments were the ones that sustained me. But alas, reality is a brutal hand shoving its anguish down your throat until you asphyxiate on your own fears, much like what my father did to her. His strong rough hands wrapped around her neck until her body fell limp and the

light in her eyes, the one that I depended upon for my resilience and strength, diminished and clouded over with eternal demise.

I was left without the tender embrace I had always dreamt of receiving. Her soft, caring hands never cradled by bruised, fatigued skin that ached with remorse. Her complexion never blushed with relief when she realized her unwavering strength had saved our lives. She was gone from me, taken by the hands of addiction and rage by the man who swore eternal happiness and unconditional love. She was taken from me, and left me to face the crippling bereavement alone. My courage was not enough to sustain me in this life.

It was my first day of high school. I wore layers upon layers of makeup to conceal the marks he left on my neck and arms the night prior. Though the dark, blistering pigments weren't visible, that day was the most transparent I had ever felt. I felt her piercing eyes on the surface of my skin, her stare radiated into my soul, caressing my sorrows. It felt as though I was a book, begging and pleading to have my cover peeled back and my lengthy chapters read aloud - and with her deepest capacity of empathy - she would expose my innermost fears and pleasures. It pained me almost erotically to endure her gaze. That was the day love no longer hurt me but rather, it enticed me.

I knew not her name, nor her story. She had similar scars to mine on her wrist, however, hers looked new, as mine were old. It was difficult to avoid staring at the glistening red lines that sat symmetrically, one above the other, on her left arm. Before that moment, I wondered what it was about her that drew me so blindly to her gaze. She was in pain, too.

Perhaps her father touched her too. Perhaps her father bruised her too. Perhaps her mother was gone too, or perhaps she craved love, too.

She had the most beautiful complexion with rosy cheeks and glowing skin, not a single blue hue taunted her alabaster sheathing. I was jealous, to say the least. Her soothing ambient voice flowed smoother than her dark, tousled hair which sat just above her delicate shoulders. She had the lips of the women from those movies about love: The ones that were naturally pouty, dark and crept upwards into a smile as she spoke passionately about whatever crossed her mind. Gazing into her alluring, enticing eyes, I felt safe. I felt as if time stood still when our eyes met and our souls adhered to one another's. I didn't recognize the feeling of sheer bliss and warmth; I certainly could not have assumed I had fallen in love with another girl, nonetheless.

I began feeling less inclined to protect my father. I wore less makeup and resisted his defense when justifying his actions. It was evident his shame continued to grow at an almost exponential rate in direct proportion to the amount he drank. His face seemed to droop lower than usual and his complexion adopted a yellowish hue, like the month-old bruises on my thighs. His skin appeared rough and weathered to the touch. The thick coat of oil that swept over his sickly, pale-toned face gave the illusion of health by mimicking a natural glow, but I knew what he had done began to weigh on him.

I was not a killer. The thought of harming someone in the same light or way done unto me or my mother thickened my blood into a hot, viscous fluid that burned my chest. But when



the thought of murdering him crossed my mind, the bitter hatred engulfed every inch of my sanity. I wanted him dead. I wanted him hindered from the forgiveness he would manipulate me into granting him. Every waking moment I lived, I was in pain. A reaching, relentless, dull pain that could only be satisfied by honoring the memory of her. I knew I could never bring her back, but perhaps I could bring myself back.

I knew if I proceeded with my desires, I would lose the girl I fell so blindly in love with. She resolved my pain in ways I could never have imagined. Her wounds diminished as our relationship flourished and the marks on her wrists became nothing more than just marks. I would have never thought that one day I would have built enough courage to share with anyone the nature of my upbringing, but as she pulled me close and caressed my face, her soft voice flowed like her dark brown, tousled hair as she spoke those three words without an apology. For the first time ever, in that moment, I felt special. I was finally needed. My most relishing desire had been granted to me by the woman I loved, what more could I want? Surely I could not maintain being spontaneous and in love while plotting the murder of my father. I ached for the day he perished, the day I could be free.

I distanced myself from my reality and focused on all the positive things that the girl I loved brought me. Whether it was her enticing smile, beautiful green eyes or the way her lips felt against mine; I felt safe in her arms, a luxury I never took for granted. I often wondered if, before my father bruised my mother, they shared moments like that. If they were ever overcome with happiness and lust they forgot what agony and hardship were. Perhaps they too

had the opportunity to love so freely, so carelessly that they didn't understand why love was so painful sometimes.

I felt as though I was leading a double life. My most innate desire to be with the woman I loved merely overpowered the devious urges to hurt the man who single handedly took away what I was destined to be, happy. He, much like most widowers or hubbies of 'missing women', fit the role of a man suffering in pure anguish by being left by my mother. He claimed my mother was miserable, that she left because she was unhappy with him. No one second-guessed his story, he certainly adhered to the depressed alcoholic image most divorcee men possessed. Undoubtedly, I considered telling someone what I had witnessed, but I knew what would come from that. Even if he couldn't lay another finger on my face, the regret would consume me. He was an awful man with cruel intentions, but I was his kin, and with our blood relationship came guilty complications.

His drinking eventually began to erode his mind. He didn't recognize what he had become, denial or senile, he was gone. He didn't touch me anymore, he was afraid of giving me a reason to leave, knowing I only stayed for my mother. He depended on me. The feeling of being loved was one I sought for years, I grew restless seeking validation. However, I felt pathetic enabling such an immoral soul. He broke me without even gracing my skin.

One of my favourite novels throughout high school was *Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoyevsky. I imagined that the guilt Raskolnikov felt after committing the appalling crime depicted is what my father felt, or at least I hoped. I grew to appreciate that he was

never convicted of his crimes, the trepidation seemed punishment enough. He was paralyzed by paranoia and couldn't bare to stand witness to the world passing him by, like a monk sworn by oath, his silence sustained him.

Following the weeks of his passing, I felt lousy. Not because he was gone, but because he deserved to live with his emotional consequence for as long as I had. The woman who I had only shown my most empathetic self to seemed concerned, for I had shown an inappropriate lack of remorse by his death. I had never told her the things he had done to my mother, only that they had built their relationship on fear and mistrust. She knew marginally of the things he had done to me growing up, but never to the extent that she would exercise apprehension in building a relationship with him. She believed my mother had actually left us, for at that time she did not know them, and my father played the victim affluently. Unfortunately, protecting my father's integrity remained a priority, even after his most heinous stunt that marked the end of my mother's life.

The day she came to us, our hearts were filled with warmth and love. Her eyes were a dark hazel hue and her skin a creamy ochre brown. Her hair sat softly in coiled ringlets against her round, delicate face and her small, structured smile lay effortlessly between her rouged, dimpled cheeks. She was a happy baby – she laughed contagiously and was rarely distressed. She was docile in nature, much like my wife, in fact age was the only factor that set them apart. I couldn't help but feel remorse that my mother couldn't experience the type of love I chose to surround myself with; my loving wife, my untarnished, angelic daughter, and my

ease with life. It saddened me to know her experience finding pure love was cut short, but I felt as though her soul could live through that of my daughter's. My daughter's strength as she matured proved unwavering, like that of my mother. It was no coincidence her name was Eleanor, the same as my mother.

# The Reason You Should Clean Your Yard: Mould! Not The Fungi You Want Around.

*Jason Dilka*

I have a pile of leaves in my front yard, and it is the same pile that has been there since the spring. It is now the fall, and this pile needs to be cleaned. I mentioned this to a friend, and he said “watch out for the mould!” I have a concern in regards to mould, and would like to share it with you. Our health is determined by how we look after ourselves. The food we eat, the amount of sleep we get, and how much we exercise are all factors in our overall health, and the air we breathe is just as important as everything else. My friend made me aware of the mould by warning me about the pile of leaves. Now, I would like to tell you why mould is becoming a prevalent issue in society.

*Born and raised in Winnipeg, JASON had never finished regular high school. In 2017, he completed his grade 12 mature student diploma, and in 2018 he started school at the University of Winnipeg; his first course being Academic Writing. Jason says: “I love learning and I am happy to be here.”*

In my essay, I intend to describe how mould affects our lives. I will first introduce mould in an outdoor environment, and present it in a process known as decomposition. Although this process is essential and beneficial for the health of the planet, it also poses a danger to humans and animals. I intend to share information from the webpage article “Fungi And Mould, The Great Decomposers” (Sackett), to help in my explanation of decomposition. I

will then move on to discuss how mould travels indoors, and how an indoor environment could sustain mould. I will use information from an online fact sheet provided by The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, (CCOHS), that details indoor air quality and mould growth.

Furthermore, I intend to explain some of the by-products created by mould. I will look at the effect mould has on organic surfaces like wood and drywall, and the damage it can cause. I will access a case study that was done in Finland (Petri), to help elaborate on this. Then there is also the question of smell; I will mention how mould and the decomposition of organic matter can create certain odors and gasses that could be dangerous to humans in the confines of a home or business (Kuhn).

To conclude, I will discuss the effects of mould on the human body. I will first present the physical aspect by examining how mould correlates with mycosis (Szanişzlo 407). I will use information from the book *Molecular Principles of Fungal Pathogenesis* to help emphasize this thought. I will also refer to an online, database article, about detecting mould quantities inside buildings and how this information could help research directed towards mould induced asthma (Ragnar). This information will be followed by the issue of mycotoxins and mental health. I will close my essay on the mental health concerns of toxic mould and how it could be related to a number of different issues, but is suspected in: depression, anxiety, brain fog, and insomnia (Tsafrir). I feel this is an important issue which needs to be addressed.

The information I will be providing could help the individual develop a better understanding of mould, and the impact mould has on their environment. Throughout my essay I will also be stressing the importance of protecting both yourself and your home from mould.

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# Why You Should Join the Writing Centre as a Peer Tutor

*Kathryn Douglas*

It is sad but true that I chose to become a writing tutor because I needed three more credits to complete my degree in Rhetoric, Writing, and Communications. Little did I know that I would find my home away from home in the Writing Centre (WC). I enjoyed this past year so much that I have decided to share my top reasons why someone should consider taking the Tutoring Writing class and become a writing tutor.

*DOUGLAS is a Political Science and Rhetoric, Writing, and Communication major. Although Douglas is not normally comfortable writing for a public audience, she found her passion in The University of Winnipeg's Writing Centre. The enjoyment and satisfaction gained by helping students improve their writing has encouraged her to continue her education with the EAL Teacher Certificate Program.*

First and foremost, the position of writing tutor is a paid position and you can select the hours you want to work. Very few other places of employment offer that flexibility. This is perfect for any poor, struggling student. We can all use a little extra cash on a regular basis and because you know your schedule, you provide your hours. Another bonus? You do not need to be a Rhetoric, Writing, and Communications major to take the class.

Second, the WC staff are very accommodating, supportive and understanding. Everyone experiences unexpected events in their life and you can count on the WC staff to



help you out if they can. I appreciate the WC as a space of inclusiveness and comradery between staff, peer tutors and writers. It is not only a space where I went to work but also a space where I went to study, and at times, just hang out. The comradery developed among the tutors is bar none. Our shared experiences foster a support and learning community that I posit is very difficult to find in any other workplace. And this is key; the learning community that is fostered not only helps the writers attending the WC but also enhances a tutor's personal and academic life and provides transferrable skills.

While the Writing Centre is the perfect place for a person to contribute to their university community, it is also useful in expanding and diversifying their own social circle. Tutoring is an invaluable opportunity to meet, to work and to become friends with other students from different programs, levels of study, languages, countries and ages. It is fun to meet people from all over the world, get to know them, learn about their country and culture and exchange experiences of living in, versus being born in, Canada.

There is no better confidence boost than having a writer request you as a peer tutor. It is exciting to reconnect with writers and witness their progress with their writing. It is interesting to learn about what other people are learning. As a Rhetoric and Poli-Sci major, learning about topics or events from a historical or psychological perspective broadens my perspective. In addition to the opportunity of learning from other disciplines, a writing tutor will hone their own writing skills. The kicker to being a writer tutor is the diversity of writers

seeking to improve their writing, which in turn provides a peer tutor with awareness to potential shortcomings in their own writing.

Would you believe that tutoring writing can help you relax? No kidding! You are busy with your own papers, stressed, not sleeping enough and you need to go to the WC for an hour or two. The thought does cross your mind that you would rather continue with your work, but believe me, taking a break from your work and focusing on someone else's thesis statement for an hour is important. The feeling of accomplishment you get from the collaboration on a great thesis statement not only leaves you with a sense of satisfaction of a job well done, but also a feeling of a mind rest. You can return to your own paper feeling refreshed.

My final reason for recommending becoming a writing tutor is all the great words you can include on your resume by way of transferrable skills. Words like communicate, collaborate and innovate to achieve the goals of both the writer and WC. Describing the communication skills you develop as a peer tutor can also use words like advised, critiqued, discussed and listened. When you describe your collaboration techniques as a peer tutor you can use words like adapted, contributed, supported, and mentored. You can also describe yourself as passionate, responsible, patient, a good listener and intuitive. Joining the WC as a peer tutor will demonstrate all the ways you can use these words in a resume.

In conclusion, what are the main reasons to become a peer tutor in the WC? Tutoring writing provides a pay cheque and flexible hours! Tutoring writing provides a respectful, and collaborative workplace! Tutoring writing directly exposes you to the cultural diversity of the

university community! Tutoring writing provides enormous job satisfaction with the side benefits of providing a diversion from your own papers and awareness to potential shortcomings in your own writing! And last, but not least, tutoring writing provides legitimate work-place skill development, with a lot of resume-appropriate words to describe those skills. Maybe I will see you in the WC this September!

## A Bumpy Road into Tutoring

*Khalida Benedictson*

When I was growing up, I always thrived in English courses. They were my favourite, and they were almost effortless. When I wrote, it flowed like water from a faucet. I require very little instruction to understand literary concepts and rules. I graduated from a small-town high school in rural Manitoba and wandered aimlessly until I was in my early 20's when I decided it was time to do something with my life. I didn't realize what a challenge academic writing would be until I started university. I was thrown into a world with all new rules and expectations that I was, quite frankly, unprepared for. I floundered instead of flourished, and it took me a long time and a lot of trial and error to find my way in this environment – but I did eventually find it. Over the summer I heard about the opportunity to tutor academic writing, and I pursued it. I thought that it would be a good fit for me and that I could maybe help other students who were in the same spot I had been in. Over time, however, being a tutor in the writing centre has helped me more than I realized it would. It's probably even helped me more than I've helped other students.

I think it's important to note that I'm prone to anxiety, which is what tutoring has helped me with the most. I learned that remaining relaxed and flexible even when you do not feel sufficiently confident goes a long way in keeping a session running smoothly. My

expectations were most likely what caused me to be uncomfortable. I tend to be an awkward person until I get comfortable, so I came into tutoring expecting the worst. At the time, I did not realize that this was going on in my subconscious. All I knew was I was uncomfortable and nervous, which I likely communicated to my writers through my body language. I also tend to over-talk or babble when I am nervous (which I did a lot of while I was learning to tutor). I struggled to get comfortable with tutoring. I felt like everyone else. I started tutoring with a group who had settled into their roles much faster and easier than I, which caused me to almost 'shrivel up' and hide from it. I put a lot of unnecessary pressure on myself, and once I actually got into it, I realized that while it is important to do well, no tutor is perfect. We learn from our writers, and one another, all the time. We are constantly learning and growing.

Although tutoring wasn't smooth, or perfect, I survived. There were bumps in the road, and some sessions were more difficult than others - but shifting my perspective from tutoring being intimidating and out of my depth to a challenge I could overcome has relieved a significant portion of my anxiety. I grew, not only as a tutor but as a person. I gained more than academic experience. I gained life experience. I learned how to push my boundaries and how to get out of my comfort zone. Tutoring was so much more to me than an academic or work opportunity. It was an opportunity to get to know myself and to grow. Perhaps if I keep pushing myself and using what I learned through this experience I will one day thrive.

# Ideological Criticism and Social Psychology

*Jamie Vallotton*

In his book, *Literary Theory*, Terry Eagleton claims that all criticism is political (Eagleton, 2011, p. 169). In other words, all criticism is ideologically based. Ideological criticism is important because it can help us understand what motivates others, and it can also give us insight into our own biases. Sonja Foss provides the steps to construct an ideological critique properly. However, one problem with ideological criticism is that it relies on stereotypes. Stereotypes can have both accuracy and bias, which makes

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ideological criticism precarious to use. The Google Memo and the experiment by Wendy Williams and Stephen Ceci demonstrate how bias can create problems within ideological criticism. Stereotypes are ideological elements of ideological criticism; however, using stereotypes can be problematic.

A potential weakness of ideological criticism is that critics rely on stereotypes to construct an artifact analysis. In rhetoric, artifacts can be considered anything created by a human that is used to communicate a message. This can include but is not limited to

advertisements, speeches, or written text. Since critics use stereotypes to construct an ideological analysis, stereotypes directly affect their conclusions. To reach a conclusion, there are four steps in the ideological analysis process. Sonja Foss presents the four steps to analyzing an artifact with ideological criticism in her text, *Rhetorical Criticism* (Foss, 2009, p.218). The four steps are (1) selecting an artifact, (2) analyzing an artifact, (3) formulating a research question, and (4) writing the essay (Foss, 2009, p.218). While all four steps could potentially be affected by stereotypes or stereotyping, step two is the most relevant because critics explicitly use stereotypes in this point of their analysis. Step two subsequently breaks down into four subsections: (1) identifying the presented elements, (2) identifying the suggested elements, (3) formulating an ideology, and (4) identifying the functions serving by the ideology. The third subsection is the point at which critics are required to use stereotypes for their artifact analysis. When critics formulate an ideology, they examine several aspects about the ideology's members such as who the members are, what activities they participate in, and what their goals are (Foss, 2009, p.218). Foss writes that it is crucial to view aspects from within an ideology and to avoid using outside knowledge about a group or its members (Foss, 2009, p.218). However, it seems implausible that a critic would be able to completely forget what they know about a group, including stereotypes, before analyzing a group's artifacts. Forgetting stereotypes during an analysis is implausible. The question becomes whether or not stereotypes are accurate.

Ryan Carey conducted a psychological study to examine whether or not racial stereotypes were accurate (Carey, 1996, p. 1114); he examined both positive and negative stereotypes for African-American and Caucasian students at the University of Colorado. While it is common for students enrolled in an introductory psychology class to participate in experiments for course credit, the students in Carey's experiment were instead compensated with \$10 for their participation. There were a total of 50 African-American and 50 Caucasian students participating in Carey's experiment, and they were each asked several questions over the telephone. Students were asked to guess what percentage of African-American and Caucasian students fit into specific positive and negative stereotypes. An example of a positive stereotype was that students dance well, while an example of a negative stereotype was that students grew up in a home in which their father was absent. Students were then asked to self-report on the various measures including dance ability and whether or not they grew up with a father in their home. The key to the experiment was that students would guess what percentage of students from their ethnic group (either African-American or Caucasian) fell into the stereotype, and what percentage of the other ethnic groups (either Caucasian or African-American) fell into the stereotype. The purpose of the self-report was to provide statistics to determine the accuracy of the guesses. Carey found that both positive and negative stereotypes were both accurate and biased (Carey, 1996, p. 1119). For the positive stereotype, Caucasian students guessed African-American students were great dancers, but African-American students self-identified as being better dancers than the Caucasian students guessed. For the



negative stereotype, Caucasian students guessed that more African-American students grew up in a home in which their father was absent. Caucasian guesses demonstrate that they were accurate in guessing because they were correct that African-American students were good dancers and were more likely to grow up without a father in their home. However, the Caucasians were also biased because they guessed too low for African-American dance-skill and too high for African-American students growing up without a father at home. Carey's experiment demonstrates that people are both accurate and biased with stereotypes.

Since stereotypes are both accurate and biased, ideological criticism is precarious. When critics use ideological criticism, they rely on stereotypes to formulate an ideology for their criticism. While it can be helpful when the stereotypes critics use are accurate, a problem arises when the stereotypes are biased. The stereotype biases in Carey's experiment were always in the direction that negatively impacted the group being stereotyped; African-American students were better dancers than they were given credit for, and they were more likely to grow up in a home in which their father was present than other students guessed. The space between stereotype accuracy and stereotype bias is a gap in reality. When it comes to ideology, gaps, in reality, can easily expand and quickly widen. For example, conversations about ideologies such as religion or politics can quickly become heated and socially divisive. While it is important to be critical of ideologies, especially when ideologies affect institutions such as workplaces or universities, it is also important to be aware that our criticisms are not just based in reality, they are also biased.

James Damore wrote Google's Ideological Echo Chamber, which is an example of how ideological criticism can negatively impact people because of the bias involved in stereotyping. In July of 2017, Damore released an internal memo in which he expressed concern about how bias is negatively affecting diversity and inclusion (Damore, 2017, p.1). He wrote a well-structured argument for ideological diversity within the workplace, and each point he made included links to empirically based studies or other helpful information to support his points. Despite his well-structured and empirically supported argument, Damore was not successful in persuading Google to be open to ideological diversity. Consequently, he was fired for violating Google's code of conduct because Google found his memo offensive; Google proved Damore's point that it is intolerant of non-liberal ideology. Nothing Damore wrote included any hate speech or invective, but it did include controversial topics such as there being biological differences between males and females that could potentially account for some differences in vocational preference (Damore, 2017, p. 4-5). Damore made it clear with both graphs and text in the memo that an individual cannot be reduced to their group identity or assumed to be representative of their group identity (Damore, 2017, p. 4). He finished the memo by restating his point that people have an intolerance for ideas and evidence that do not fit into their ideology. He also clarified his arguments that people should not be restricted to roles based on their group identity, and then he offered suggestions on how to improve diversity at Google without using discrimination. Google fired Damore because of

his ideological criticism and how they misinterpreted his argument as discrimination because of their ideological bias.

The Google Memo is important for several reasons. First, it demonstrates that ideological criticism has bias, and that bias can lead to misinterpretation regardless of evidence. Google's misinterpretation and subsequent ideological criticism of Damore's memo was rooted in bias and focused entirely on Damore being sexist despite him explicitly demonstrating the opposite. Secondly, it demonstrates that even though stereotypes can be accurate, people should never assume a member of a group fits into their group's stereotypes. Damore demonstrated this throughout the memo, and he best demonstrated it with the bell curve figure (Damore, 2017, p. 4). Bell curves show us that the majority of people (68.2%) fall close to average; this is also known as regression towards the mean. Some people (31.8%) also fall outside the average, so it can never be assumed with certainty that one individual represents the average on any bell curve. Even if a stereotype is accurate, it may not be accurate for every member of a group. Finally, the Google Memo shows that ideological bias is strong. Damore was fired because he was representing ideologically different ideas that conflicted with Google's bias.

Ideological bias is not only found in business but can be found in academia as well. Wendy Williams and Stephen Ceci ran an experiment in 2015 to see if there was a gender bias in hiring at universities (Williams, Ceci, 2015, para. 2). In one of their experiments, they sent fake curriculum vitae (CVs) summaries to professors across the United States to rate.

Professors would rate the fake CVs to determine which potential candidate would be the best to hire as a professor. There were three types of candidates: high-value male, high-value female, and a low value. The key to the study is that the high-value male and female candidates were identical except in their gender. Williams and Ceci found that professors were at least two times as likely to hire a female professor candidate over a male professor candidate despite them both being identical in their qualifications (Williams, Ceci, 2015, para. 14). Despite the strong preference for hiring female professors, there is still a focus in academia on getting more female representation in STEM fields like engineering (University of Waterloo, Women In Engineering Scholarships). It makes sense that liberal ideas persist in universities because universities are overwhelmingly ideologically liberal (Duarte et al. 2015, p. 3). However, when ideas like hiring biases against females persist despite contradictory evidence, it demonstrates an ideological bias. Carey demonstrated that stereotypes can be both accurate and biased. While there was certainly a point when females were underrepresented in STEM fields, there is now evidence to suggest that it may no longer be true (Williams, Ceci, 2015, para. 14). At the very least, stereotypes like hiring bias need to be continually re-examined, especially when any systematic policies are in place to compensate for those stereotypes. Stereotypes are persistent, and Williams and Ceci provide evidence that bias is also persistent in an ideology despite any contradictory evidence.

In conclusion, ideological criticism is problematic because it relies on stereotypes to form a critique. Sonja Foss cautions against using stereotypes when forming an ideological

critique, but it seems implausible that stereotypes can be easily discarded. Stereotypes can be both accurate and biased. One problem with using stereotypes is that the bias is typically to the detriment of the group being stereotyped. The Google Memo demonstrates that misinterpretation can result from ideological bias. Another problem with stereotypes is that contradictory evidence does not always convince people that their biases are erroneous. Both the Google Memo and the female hiring bias demonstrate that biases do not change in face of contradictory evidence. A final problem with ideological criticism is that dissent is typically treated with retaliation. Damore wrote the Google Memo with an ideological view that opposed Google's. He presented an argument with evidence to demonstrate why Google's homogeneous approach ideology was a weakness. He then provided suggestions to strengthen the company which all avoided any form of discrimination. Damore was fired. A typical liberal view of liberal ideology is that it is inclusive, but inclusion may depend on whether or not one adheres to the ideology and its biases. A typical conservative view of liberal ideology is that it silences dissent. Damore certainly provides evidence to support the conservative view on liberal ideology. Even though ideological criticism is precarious because it relies on stereotypes, it cannot possibly serve any function if it is met with retaliation. As long as the bias in stereotypes does not overshadow the accuracy, ideological criticism can be valuable.

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# Pepsi Controversy Using Narrative Criticisim

*Jean-Luc Speliers*

Police brutality towards African-Americans and more specifically towards African-American men was a high-profile issue in 2017. The past few years had seen the deaths of many young African-American men in America. In 2017, Pepsi aired a television advertisement attempting to project unity and subtly attempt to resolve the conflict that was

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happening in America (Kendall and Kylie, 2017). Despite the good intentions that Pepsi held with airing the ad, the backlash and criticism concerning the ad resulted in it being pulled from the air after 24 hours. By focusing on its narrative, this paper analyzes the objective of the ad, the features of the ad, and why Pepsi did not achieve its intended objective.

The objective of the ad was to help resolve conflict. Pepsi presented this objective through the individuals who encountered the police at the end of the advertisements. A group of activists parading the street with signs showing peace and love are marching and end up at a barricade made up of police officers. Kendall Jenner, who was seemingly empowered by the movement enough to join in, emerges from the protest with a can of Pepsi, being

congratulated as she passes by activists. She walks up to one of the police officers and hands him the can. The officer takes a sip and the crowd cheers the event, as the officer seems to be moved by the gesture. This act of kindness from Jenner resulted in resolving the conflict between the activists and the police barricade. The features the ad possesses include the setting and scenes of the ad, the characters involved, the events of the ad, and the themes of the ad. The identification of these aspects will help in the production of the critique.

Firstly, most of the advertisement takes place in the clean streets of a developed city, with the protest ending up at what seems to be the entrance of a city park. The ad frequently changes scenes between the march, Jenner's photoshoot, a celloist playing, a photographer in her study, and finally the ad ends with a portion of the activists walking towards the camera from a high-class building. The change in setting is used to tie different characters' stories together and have them join in on the march. It unifies the story so that there is a sense of completion at the end of the ad, where everyone is together cheering.

The characters of the ad include the peaceful demonstration parading through the streets of the city. These activists are all smiling and holding signs displaying the peace sign, "love," and "join the conversation." The activists are diverse in race, age, gender, and sex. The activists all have attractive faces and physiques, as do the officers. One important character in the ad is a celloist who appears at the beginning on top of a high-rise building playing his instrument, although his cello is not heard in the background music. The celloist is also responsible for bringing Jenner into the demonstration. Jenner is the celebrity feature to



the advertisement who resolves the interaction at the end. Another important character to the protest is the photographer who seems, when first introduced, to be struggling to get the perfect photo. She then hears the protest outside her studio window, picks up her camera, and heads outside to follow the people and photograph them and the interaction between Jenner and the officer. The final character, in the ad, is the police officer who takes the can of Pepsi from Jenner. His role in the ad is to be a part of the “intimidating” police barricade, and then take the can as a peace offering.

The main events of the ad are as follows: the first time we see the activists marching; the first time Jenner appears and notices the crowd; the celloist hears the crowd and joins; the photographer joins the crowd; the celloist encounters Jenner; Jenner takes off her outfit and joins the protest ending at the police barricade; Jenner takes a Pepsi can and brings it over to the officer: the officer drinks from the can and the crowd cheers, and a portion of the activists (including Jenner) walk towards the camera with the words, “Live Bolder,” “Live Louder,” “Live for Now” flashed across the screen. The minor events that transpired are to provide backstory on the main characters before they join in on the protest. They show the celloist practicing on top of a roof and in a room, the photographer looking at photos she has taken and being frustrated, and Jenner modeling in a doorway. The only main character whose backstory was not shown was of the officer who takes the Pepsi can from Jenner.

Finally, the themes found in the advertisement are unity, peace, revolution, law and order. The activists project a message of peace with their signage and the non-violent nature of

their march. With activism comes some need for change or else there would be no need to march in the first place. This need for change signifies revolution which is also shown in the signage, such as the “join the conversation” message, which could attest to the conversation surrounding police brutality. Unity is shown by itself with the congregation of all the different people who are in solidarity for the same cause (i.e. peace and love). Unity between the activists and the police officers, who represent law and order, is also shown in the ad. This displays the true meaning of the ad which is to resolve conflict between peace activists and police officers.

Now that the objective of the ad has been decided and the features have been pointed out, they must be analyzed to determine if they achieved their purpose. Beginning with the objective, the advertisement does not achieve the objective in the way that I believe Pepsi thought it would. It does not do justice to the struggle of protesting for what you believe in (Crimmins, 2017). It is misrepresenting the message it is trying to send through an imitated demonstration resembling that of the civil rights movements, but not encountering the same struggles that they constantly face when parading through the streets (Meyerson, 2017). Pepsi simplifies the encounter between the activists and officers by displaying how the gifted Pepsi can resolve the encounter and results in positive change (Crimmins, 2017). The people of the Black Lives Matter movement have faced opposition with people in their communities and with the police. This action of giving a Pepsi can simply would not work if hypothetically a member of Black Lives Matter did the same confrontation as Jenner. Therefore, the whole

oversimplicity of the gift from Jenner to the officer minimizes the actions of activists who put their lives on the line to fight for peace.

I feel as though Pepsi must have had a slight thought that this advertisement would create controversy, but obviously not in the way they intended. The similarities between the Black Lives Matter movement marches in the streets of big cities and this ad are very noticeable. Despite the diversity found in Pepsi's crowd, the lack of African-American representation is striking. I understand the reasoning of unity of all people, however when an ad wants to try and be political with issues happening in the country they are airing, they must be wary of all that they put forth. They had positive intentions with the ad, being the unity of everyone through peace and love, however it simply was not handled properly.

The use of Jenner for the ad was not the best choice for what the ad was trying to accomplish. Jenner has no African ancestry (ETHNIC, 2011), and her involvement in the advertisement begins with her modeling in front of a building, and once the protest comes her way she feels suddenly motivated to join once the celloist gives her a nod. She then takes off her wig and hands it to an African-American woman who does not seem thrilled to acquire the item, while she storms off towards the camera, not acknowledging her assistant. To add, whether Pepsi knew or not, the fact that Jenner is a white American woman giving a wig to her African-American assistant does not come across as well thought through given the history of African-Americans in the United States. As Sullivan (2006) points out, the non-stereotypical portrayal of African-Americans is scarce in the white climate of television

commercial production. The use of Jenner as the “leader” during the encounter between the activists and the police was not the smartest move by Pepsi. Pepsi did not attempt to make the advertisement related to civil rights issues happening at the time (BBC, 2017). Activist movements, such as Black Lives Matter, are mostly caused by an oppression to a minority who feels threatened and demands change. Jenner’s presence does not display minority oppression.

Moving on to the encounter between the activists and the police barricade, there is many parallels to activist movements, however this too was trivialized. Many have said that the part of the ad where Jenner confronts the officer with the can is in reference to Leshia Evans, who faced a more aggressive confrontation with police than Kendall did (Crimmins, 2017). I understand that it is possible that armed officers (or officers in riot gear) may have been very controversial for the Pepsi creative team, however civil rights groups, especially Black Lives Matter activists, have faced very aggressive confrontations with police (Meyerson, 2017), which was not properly represented in this commercial.

In conclusion, despite Pepsi’s good intentions with the ad, the objective being to resolve conflict (that between civil rights activists and police), they missed an opportunity. The narrative of the ad was planned to project a message of unity, but it fumbled in its execution. The use of Kendall Jenner as their celebrity actress downplayed the seriousness of the situation that they were unknowingly mirroring. The imitation of civil rights movements that were being held at the time being led by a wealthy, white woman was inappropriate for

the social climate in the country, which the confrontation between protestors and the police was also mishandled. Hopefully in the future Pepsi will take more consideration in the way they use narrative to achieve their objective.

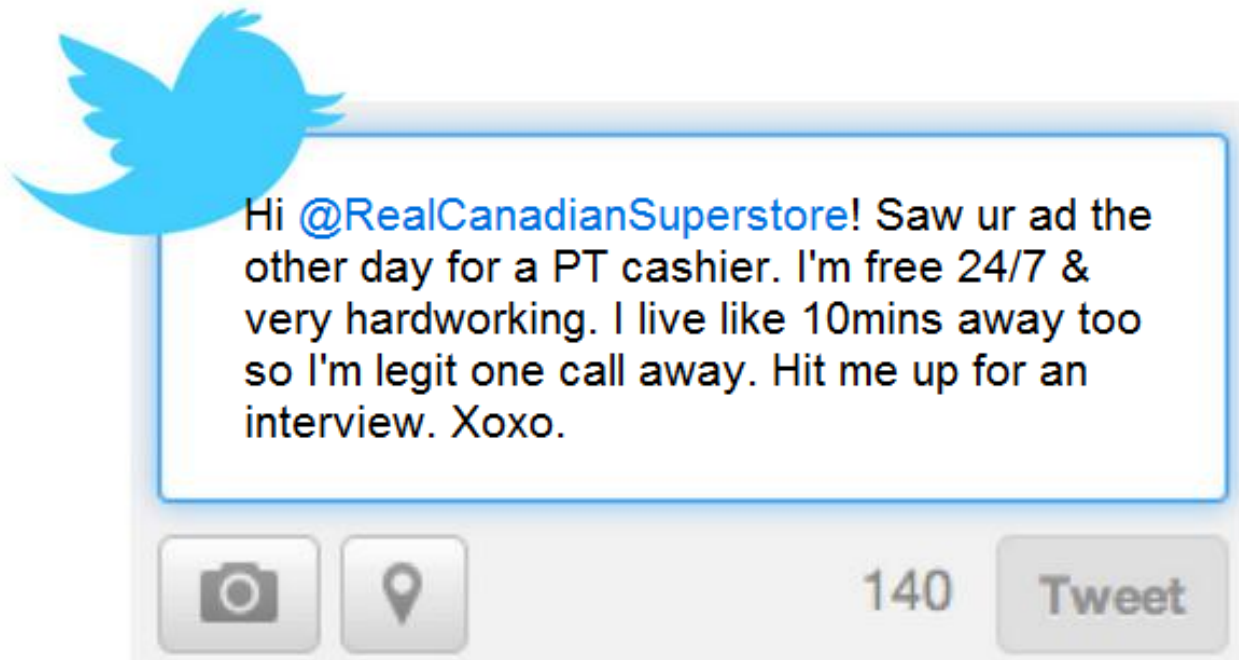
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## Cross-Voicing

*Lorena Angela Dilim*

### Applying for a job on Twitter



### A National Geographic script of a man getting rejected:

In Garbonzo's wide and empty pub, you will see different methods of seduction.

*LORENA completed this assignment for a Professional Style and Editing class. The goal of this assignment is to show how the wrong form of style and voice can affect the purpose of our work. Lorena used colloquial, mid-range, and formal voices to demonstrate how an atypical style can limit someone's message.*

In the left booth beside the bar, you will see a superb male from Winnipeg. His paleness is from the sun barely touching his skin. If you look closely, this male is tidying up his display area. Everything must be spick-and-span. Look at him; all is ready. Very impressive, but no one is watching. The superb male takes out his phone to call a female. This male is engaging in an act only found in humankind.

With some luck, a female is free and available to join him for a short period of time. Unfortunately, this particular female is not ready to mate yet; you can see it by her lack of interest in his seduction. The male needs to put in a lot of work to impress her.

Time to begin the seduction ritual. Firstly, the male is pulling back his shoulders—his way of appearing bigger than his normal size. If you listen closely, you can hear him clearing his throat to deepen his voice. He is preparing to ask the female about her day, but it takes him a while to get his voice out. It is an oddly mesmerizing display. His main objective at this moment is to find an opening and make eye contact. The female, however, is looking down at her phone – a clear sign of indifference.

Now it is time for his grand performance: he waves his arm to show off the gold around his wrist. She appears to be captivated. This is certainly eye-catching, but he needs to do more. Generously, the female drops him a hint: she makes eye contact. He takes this as a positive sign and initiates physical contact by bumping his foot into the female's foot. His final flourish to cap the whole night's effort. All seems to be going well, but suddenly, something is amiss.

Behind the young male's booth is a rival – an older Winnipeg male that has just returned from his seasonal migration – and he is approaching the display area. Unfortunately for the young male, the moment has gone. The female is now slowly retreating with the elder male, leaving the younger male in his display area all by himself. His youth and inexperience have once again played against him.

**A student asking for a higher grade:**

I know how precious your time is, and I know how crucial it is for future research and knowledge. I – whose ancestors were life-long learners – have the drive to move forward fully embedded in my genes. Because of this background I appreciate the value of time, and therefore understand the right rewards for different levels of effort.

Every University of Winnipeg student prizes the time and hard work you put in for our future. This is why you are admired and appreciated. Your accomplishments have pushed me to become a competent human being. They have given me the strength to put my best foot forward and try my hardest the few times I was present in your class. It is truly a dream to follow in your footsteps, and this dream reminds me to be open-minded and excited, to stay hungry and curious.

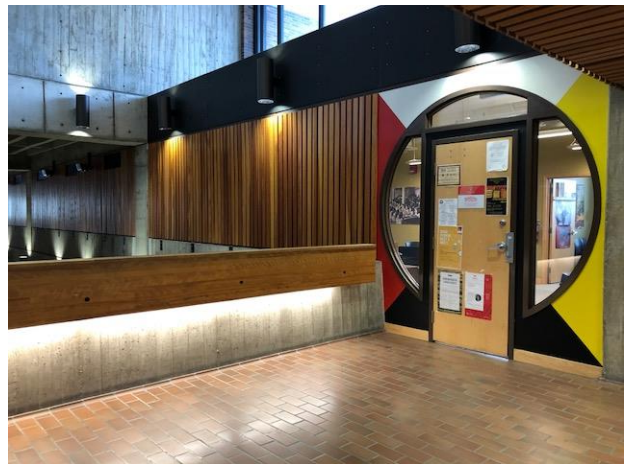
I hope this very dream reminds you of those times when you were once open-minded and excited, hungry and curious. I hope this dream reminds you of that warm feeling in your heart when all your efforts were rewarded. I hope this dream leads you to give me the same gift of that warm feeling.



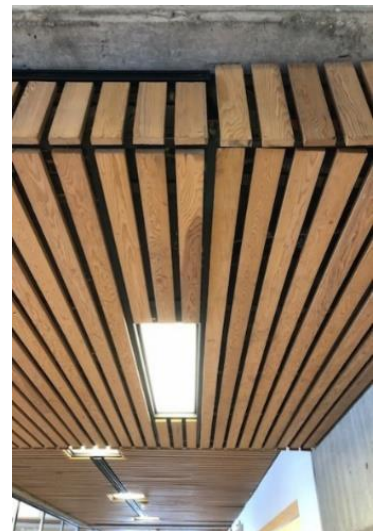
# Representations of Indigeneity at The University of Winnipeg

*Megan D. Lindell*

*The University of Winnipeg is located on the original lands of Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples, and in the heart of the Métis Nation.*



I am very proud to attend the University of Winnipeg, however, I do strongly believe the university needs to increase its representations of Indigeneity throughout their buildings.



## The Aboriginal Student Centre



Isolated location (yet Indigenous traditions are inclusive).

Who belongs 'there'?

What goes on 'there'?

- I have been coming to the Aboriginal Student Centre since I started school five years ago.
- Although I greatly appreciate what the centre has to offer I truly wish more students were aware of the services available.
- The community feel when I walk in the door and the help from staff and elders has helped greatly.
- I truly believe if more individuals were aware of traditional Indigenous ways of knowing, living, and healing, we would have a much easier time dispelling racism as well as living our best lives.
- For me, the traditional ways always make life simpler. It makes everything feel light and easy to handle. It is peaceful in the way our teachings consider everyone involved.
- The location of the centre is far away from everything else in the building. There are no signs sharing that everyone is welcome. I do not place blame on the centre, I believe the university should want to share the existence of the centre and all of the possibilities within, with all students, faculty, and staff of the University of Winnipeg.
- Everyone should know about the services offered and take part in traditional ways of knowing.



**Richardson College for the Environment and Science**  
*Where the Faculty of Indigenous Studies 'lives'*



- The Richardson College is a beautiful state-of-the-art building. The wood on the back of the wall is from the building that used to stand in its place.
- As beautiful as the building is, and it does not make my heart feel good saying this, I do not see it as the 'right' place for the Faculty of Indigenous Studies. The Faculty is tucked away in the corner on the top floor and is not easily accessible.
- Where should the Faculty of Indigenous Studies be? In my opinion, it should be in a space where many people will see it in their everyday university life. It should be situated in a way that represents traditional ways of knowing and shares them with folks who walk through.
- The Faculty should be accessible to all (while sharing Indigenous traditions).



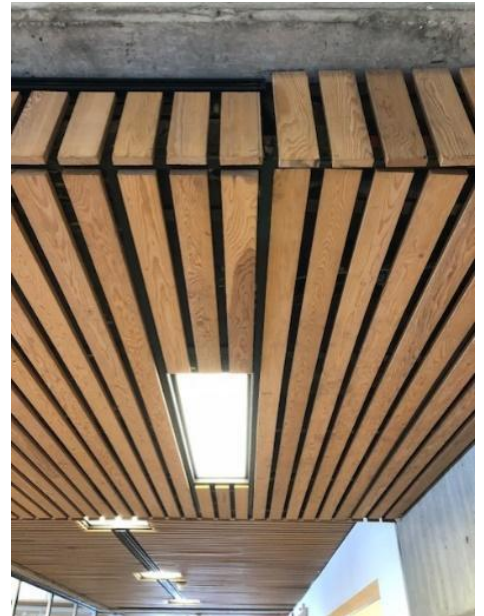
## Blank Hallways



- It is nice to walk down the hallways and have a daydreaming session, however, it is even better to be inspired. The walls are blank. Some are brick. Some are painted one colour (some have multiple colours). But the walls don't speak to the folks walking down the hallways. They don't guide us into better ways of being, seeing, or thinking. Their only guidance is the defined path that is separate from the outside and from other spaces. Could it do more?

## A Bit of Natural (Better Than Blank Hallways?)

- Finally, something fresh! Something with life that can take the students to another place.
- Maybe this is a solution? Filling the school with as much natural material as possible. Materials that would otherwise be thrown away? Materials from across our home and native land that easily brings students back to their home with a simple glance.



## Advertising



- There are different boards for different information. Why can't we have one for Indigeneity? Away from the student center and in sight for everyone to see. Something bright and beautiful.
- There would be a lot of information to share. History, future goals, events, recipes, resilience, communities, and more (This project may be creating more work for me to do...).
- When it comes to these boards, there are stamps on the outside items that state they have been approved by the UWSA. Are their guidelines open? Are they inclusive? How do they decide?
- Does the UWSA want more representations of Indigeneity at the University of Winnipeg?

## Other Representation of Indigeneity

- Weweni Lecture series
- Events sharing Indigenous knowledge or history
- Indigenous Graduation Pow-Wow
- In the beginning stages of Indigenizing the library
- Indigenous artwork
- Gallery 1C03 has had many Indigenous art exhibits



You have to be in the ‘right’ place to find the pieces around the school. But, why is it hidden so well? Why is the university not showing it off loud and proud? This reminds me of colonization and settlers ‘enjoying’ artwork by not sharing it.

### **Is the University of Winnipeg Representing Indigeneity?**

Walking down the hallways, there is a lot of space that is not used. Although it costs money to fill space with art and design, I can imagine there being many ideas and sponsors to make our school more beautiful and full of Indigeneity.

We need to take down the virtual fences and instead of making this a topic one chooses to learn about, make the information accessible that allows people to wonder and learn.

I think it would be absolutely terrific to have a board on Indigenous ways. A board that would change monthly and have different events throughout the school, city, and province be shared. The sharing of successes, facts, dreams, and identity. Make it relatable to all individuals.

The main thing is that we stay positive and not only push for change but share why change is important. We may be further along than other universities, however, that does not mean we can quit or be ok with how it is.

We must find our power and share ways of living and being that will make everyone at our university thrive.

Thank you! Meegwetch!

*LINDELL is a proud Métis woman completing 3 majors at the University of Winnipeg, business, environment and Indigenous studies. Although she enjoys learning in the classroom, she finds she learns the most through traditional ceremony and on the land. She has goals of dispelling racism and knows the key to Indigenization is that everyone belongs.*

## Third Floor Manitoba Hall

*Nicole Brownlee*

I chose to sit in Manitoba Hall on the third floor on the exact same bench for both days of observation. I chose this particular spot because I have spent a lot of time waiting for classes in this specific hallway and therefore, I did not expect to notice anything new or to be surprised by any details when writing about what I felt, saw, or heard. However, just as hypothesized by Marshall McLuhan, I undoubtedly realized that I was focusing primarily on the figures of the hallway and completely overlooking the ground.

BROWNLEE is a third-year student at The University of Winnipeg. She is currently enrolled in the joint Creative Communications program at Red River College and has plans to start at Red River College next year.

“Figure,” as defined by McLuhan, is what we are trained to see as the important features in a place, whereas “ground” is everything else within a place. Though ground is often unnoticed, it greatly influences how a particular point in space is perceived and how we understand the assemblage, or a collection of things within a place. The interaction and alteration of focus between figure and ground within a place has a very important impact on how a place is perceived by an individual. What helped me to understand the importance of focusing on either figure or ground was McLuhan’s point in his chapter on “Training Perception” about how caricaturists always

“exaggerate one feature of a situation’s ground in order to bring it to our attention as figure, because normally we don’t ‘see’ what is ground” (19 McLuhan).

On my first day of observation I was surprised by how much activity there was in the hallway that I had never noticed before. I realized that I would often focus on the sound of footsteps, but by doing this I was completely ignoring the sound of lectures in the classrooms around me as well as the sound of the fans circulating the air through the air ducts right above me. I had previously tuned out all three of these sounds prior to focusing on figure versus ground, which therefore places each of these sounds as the unnoticed characteristics of the assemblage. However, with further observation I found that the footsteps as well as the lectures going on in nearby classrooms were sound figures within the hallway and the sound of the hallway’s fans within the air ducts was the ground. McLuhan explains my process of noticing different sounds within the hallway when he mentions that “when the noise of the ground, or surround, itself becomes noticeable, the figures of sound tend to be obliterated” (13).

Furthermore, on the second day of observation, I was surprised that I had not noticed all of the light sources within the hallway. I had briefly noted on the first day of observation that there was natural light emanating from the windows within the doors of the classrooms on the West side of the hallway, however, I had never noticed that the fluorescent lights that were affixed to the ceiling in Manitoba Hall were enclosed on all sides except one. I also noticed that because the boxes of lights are placed about nine feet apart on the ceiling, they create an



arch of light on the brick wall in between each fixture, which changes the colouring of the bricks. This connects to Dr. McLeod-Rogers' article, "Self and the city: Teaching sensory perception and integration in *City as Classroom*" where she tasks individuals to think of "ground as composed of networks, both organic and built" and to not assume that ground is "simply comprised of discrete, formerly hidden things" but is rather interactive and influences "other things and beings". Therefore, we cannot consider the artificial lights as just something that we have been trained to overlook because they are so common, we need to attribute our perception of our surroundings to the ground. I never would have noticed that the bricks were different colours because of the shadows created by the enclosed light fixtures without considering how the light fixtures, which is the ground, influences the figure, which is the brick wall.

By focusing on the relationship between figure and ground my sense of place and how we belong to place assemblage has altered. I thought that figure was mere details that are easy to see, however, some figures, such as sounds of lectures as well as the light within a hallway are not always easily noticed, yet they are the obvious figures within an assemblage. My interpretation of my surroundings has expanded because I now realize that whatever I am paying attention to and noticing does not compare to the details and very obvious aspects of a place that I am unknowingly ignoring and remain hidden due to my learned behavior of easily disregarding the "big picture" or assemblage. I need to learn to balance my senses to "attain a fuller reach of [my] perceptual abilities" (McLeod-Rogers)

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## What's in A Name?

*Allana Entrada*

I've always felt lucky that my parents named me an American name. Not something too foreign or exotic that sticks in your mouth like a bad aftertaste. Not something that is so different that it forces me to show others how to pronounce it; hesitantly providing them with a map on how to tangle their tongues as they mimic mangled pieces of a crossword puzzle to navigate over the rigid corners of my name.

*ALLANA is a student at the University of Winnipeg. She's grateful and excited to be part of this edition of Rooted in Rhetoric. She is currently studying Pre-Law in hopes to attend law school at the University of Manitoba where she plans to pursue Criminal Law.*

Never having to endure the ever-awkward conversation after introducing myself. Facing the scrutiny of the wide-eyed, small-smirked, bewilderment at how my name is “too much” to handle. I don't have to play the ping-pong of yesreallynonotlikethatiguessokaysure. I don't have to play a game of ethnic Jeopardy when the inevitable questions about my race are asked.

Even better, I'm not forced to explain how to soften a jaw like water. Using metaphors to make it easy enough to swallow the difficult trickle of a complicated name-- one that is too different to pronounce and too complex to assimilate into a new culture. I'm not forced to cut

my name and butcher it into smaller pieces to make it easier to digest; smiling reluctantly afterwards, having come to an agreement that made my name “easier” to swallow.

I don’t have to sweeten the bitter smile that creeps its way onto my lips. I don’t have to answer to the bastardization of a name that once meant royalty, beauty, precious jewels, or abundant.

Yeah. I’m lucky my parents named me an American name.

# Jesse Dreams

*Candace Neumann*

Jesse opened her eyes and all of a sudden, the room seemed smaller. Moments before, she was exhausted and on her way to sleep. The honest memories and thoughts that rush in the mind at that most relaxed time before falling jarred her wide awake.

She thought of the upcoming visit of a friend in a couple weeks. How she wanted to lose some weight before he arrived so that when he hugged her he wouldn't feel the bulge underneath her bra strap. She thought of the light of swans gliding on a lake, their white feathers boldly exposing them in their quiet ritual. She thought of the dark feathers of the crow she found her first summer back. How she had dreamed of a man-sized crow with long red hair in a tall hat, a small boy of about five or six beside him. The feathers started appearing the next day and she started to collect them. She had felt like she had no choice: if she walked by a feather, moments later there was another one a few feet away.

*CANDACE is a first-year student at the University of Winnipeg, an Indigenous doula trainer, a sun dancer, and a co-facilitator at a healing program for Indigenous women who have experienced sexual assault.*

She recognized the pattern forming and picked up that feather and every feather after that.

A month or so later she had collected about thirty feathers and the dream made sense. She had met the crow, a red-headed man who had a young son of six, and ended a brief and

terrifying relationship with him by throwing all the feathers in the river, as an elder had advised her to do. That was after he had asked to play her a song that he had written.

They had been sitting in his car, in a dark back lane, behind a busy bar. She had asked him to take her home after a horrible dinner, but instead he had driven her there. He said he wanted to buy her a drink, and to play her a song he wrote.

Not waiting for consent, he hit play on the stereo.

A man's voice spoke out of the speaker beside her. In a British accent it said, "I want to murder you."

Jesse froze, "Why are you playing this to me?" Her hand was on the door.

"Oh my god," he had said. "I'm sorry." He had silenced the stereo.

She remembered telling him a combination of words expressing fear and leave-me-alones. She had left the car and walked around to the bright side of the busy street where the bar was situated. Even though she had been afraid she crossed the well-lit street, and walked home alone along darkened roads, through an underlit park, over the Maryland bridge, past the hospital, down Wolesley to her apartment where she walked up four flights of stairs and unlocked her door to be welcomed by a sleepy black cat. After she locked the door behind her she fell onto the floor shaking and sobbing. The memory of it still sickened her.

Over a year later, in a new house and season, Jesse was rubbing her hand up her arm and felt something sharp sticking out. At first, she thought it was a sliver, but it didn't hurt.

Maybe it was a piece of dry skin, but her arms were well-moisturized. When she couldn't think of a convincing idea of what it could be, she went to the bathroom mirror to look.

She pulled the neck of her sweater down over her shoulder and saw the smallest, palest, blue feather she had ever seen. In a panic, she pulled it out immediately and turned on the tap to drown it down the sink. In her mind, the feather turned into a coarse, silver hair. She had several of these on her head, and had once found one in her pubic area, so this was a realistic idea. She accepted the hair and went back to her spot on the couch next to her partner and cats, downplaying the anxious unease she had just smothered with a lie.

That night, she dreamed of her basement. In her dream, she went into the basement because she heard a bird flying around down there. She remembered that her grandma had told her that it was bad luck to have a bird flying in your house. This memory bled into her dream, and as the dream Jesse walked through the basement, a small sense of fear fluttered through her. The sleeping Jesse sensed this, and the smallness of her fear transformed to a worrisome size. With a new, larger fear, Jesse continued looking for the bird in the basement of her dreams.

She noticed three piles of sawdust on the floor, each beneath three holes in the ceiling which looked like the burrowing holes of a small animal. Then she saw the animal, a pale, pale blue budgie. It flew past her head behind her. Somehow in that moment, Jesse knew the budgie was a mother and that one or more of those burrowed holes held little babies. When Jesse turned around to find the mama budgie she found a woman standing there, in a pale,

blue, denim blouse and a pair of faded, blue jeans. Her hair was dark brown, and held the fullness of a perm.

Jesse remembered her mother having a perm like that once when she was little. Jesse had gone for a nap. Her mother, with the silkiest, long brown hair, had carried her to her bed. Jesse had awoken a couple hours later when she had heard her mother talking to her, but when she had opened her eyes, a stranger with curly dark hair was speaking her mother's voice, asking her if she wanted a hotdog for lunch. Jesse had screamed.

There was a curious comfort Jesse felt with the woman in her dream. In the next few seconds, or hour of her dream, Jesse held an intimate and violent conversation with that pale blue woman, using only their eyes and energies to communicate. It wouldn't be until she was in the few muddy moments between sleep and wake when she could interpret what was said.

"My gramma said it's bad for you to be inside. I'm supposed to kill you, I think? Or put you outside. It's cold; you'll freeze to death, which is a Canadian way to die."

The woman communicated too, without words. Jesse felt a certain way because of what the woman communicated. She couldn't fully remember, but whatever it was, good or bad, Jesse wanted to know it again.

Throughout that day, Jesse thought of the pale blue woman. She held her, gently in her mind, like a fragile bird in a hand. Just like the pulsing heartbeat of the bird holding back its winged flight, Jesse would feel a tremor of trapped and frightened excitement with each thought of the woman.



Jesse remembered her from when she was a little. She was a friend of her mother's from childhood, and the mother of her cousins Ben and Kaycee. She went missing the winter that Jesse was nine, Ben was two and Kaycee was six. Her body was found in the spring. Jesse couldn't remember where, but she remembered her mom was different after that. Her whole family was different after that.

That night, Jesse was able to allow the city streets to carry her home while she thought about the things in her heart and mind. It was cold out, and the snow on the sidewalks squeaked under her boots. The streets she stepped on were empty, so the sound of her own feet was all she heard.

Jesse had sat in a women's circle earlier that evening. When Jesse had walked into the room where the elder had been laying out her bundle, her heart had skipped over its beat, leaving Jesse alone without senses for the longest second. The woman who had been carefully placing medicines, and sacred items on a blue, patterned, cloth was her grandma's sister, June. Since Jesse had not seen her Aunty June since she was a young teenager, she had been worried that the old lady would either not recognize her, or that she would - she wasn't sure which. Aunty June had looked up and had smiled at Jesse when she had seen her.

“Help me up, my girl.”

She had raised her hand up for Jesse to take while she stepped herself up off the buffalo robe on the ground.

Jesse remembered June being tall, like her Gramma once was. Now she was the same height as Jesse. When June had been standing in her full height in front of Jesse, she had pulled her in for a hug, and had said, “It’s good to see you, my girl.”

Jesse held onto June. She inhaled and remembered how her Gramma smelled the same way - Noxema and sweet maple. She had remembered how soft her Gramma’s hair was, as June’s hair brushed her cheek. She had remembered lots of things about her Gramma. The memories had filled a moon that fit inside her and pressed all the places that made her sad and happy at the same time.

Jesse pulled herself out of her memories into her walking self and heard the squeaky snow. It was cold out, and she felt the sharp chill through her scarf, leaving her to taste the dry air in the back of her throat. Jesse looked up as she walked and wondered at the orange globe lights of the legislative grounds that exposed the bare tree branches to the sky above and snow beneath. As Jesse approached the Osborne bridge, she smelled the familiarly distinct smell of sage burning. It was so strong it was as if she was carrying a smoking smudge bowl in her own hands.

Jesse looked around, thinking that there must be a vigil or a ceremony near the river. With a sliver of fear in her stride, she walked toward the bush and trees along the river to look for the source of the smudge.

There was no one around. Jesse wondered how that smell could travel through this cold that crushed everything with its sharp, icy dryness, even air.

With unanswered questions dragging her step, Jesse walked back toward the bridge and crossed over. As soon as she was midway over the bridge the smell of sage was gone, and Jesse started seeing people walking, huddled together and laughing as they made their ways to the restaurants and bars in Osborne Village.

That night Jesse dreamed. In her dream she was walking in a strange basement looking for someone or something. Soon she was in a forest, walking down a rocky but smooth path. There was a quality to the quiet of the forest, which was filled with strange plants and animals that didn't exist in the world where Jesse lived. As Jesse continued walking she noticed the plants moving with a liquid grace. She noticed some birds overhead, but strangely there were no bird calls to be heard. She looked closer to identify the winged ones and saw that they were fish. She was underwater.

Jesse woke up sweating and thirsty. Her heart pounded as her lungs grasped for the air around her. She quietly rolled out of bed and grabbed a sweater and her phone on her way out of the room, relieved that the sleeping figure beside her did not change his breathing. She turned on the bathroom light after the door was closed, and quickly drank several gulps of cold water straight from the faucet. She splashed her face with cold water and patted it dry. She headed into the kitchen and made herself a cup of nettle tea.

Settled on the couch with a blanket and tea, Jesse opened her phone and began her routine check-in of her usual apps. As soon as she saw the message from her cousin Ben, time

stamped at 4 am, her heart stopped. “Jesse call me. Kaycee not doing too good.” It was 5:30 now.

Jesse called right away. “What happened?”

“Kaycee hanged herself in her closet,” he whispered. The silent, underwater feeling from her dream filled the space around her.

“Oh my God! Are you serious?”

“We’re at the hospital. She doesn’t have long to go.”

On the cab ride to the hospital, her partner at her side, Jesse looked out the window. Jesse breathed in her feelings and felt her partner’s warm hand holding her smaller one. At the other side of the cab ride, Jesse’s family waited for an inevitably painful outcome. Within the cab, Jesse’s memories and dreams floated into the wind and exhaust of the taxi as it moved her closer to her destination, and a family that filled all the places that made her sad and happy at the same time.

# The World on the Brink of Destruction: An Analysis of the Factors and Causes of the Cuban Missile Crisis and its Impact on Canada

*Autumn Sfatcos*

It was the moment when the world stood on the abyss of nuclear destruction. The Cuban Missile Crisis is one of the most studied historical events and is often assumed to have had a significant impact on America's allies. The crisis was a confrontation between the two giant atomic powers of the world, the U.S and the U.S.S.R. The Cuban Missile Crisis took place between October 16<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, 1962. Even though Canada was not directly involved, the crisis affected Canada economically and socially and therefore was an important step in our development as a country. The causes and factors of the crisis were: the decisions of John F. Kennedy and his administration, America's relationship with the U.S.S.R., the effects of the ongoing Cold War and Fidel Castro's communist hold on Cuba. All of these factors explain how the Cuban Missile Crisis started, and more specifically showcase the impact Canada's role had on their country.

In my essay, I intend to break down the causes and factors of the Cuban Missile Crisis and relate them to how they affected Canada. The factors and causes that I will focus on in my essay are, President John F. Kennedy and his administration's role, the Cold War's connection to the crisis, as well as Fidel Castro's communist reign over Cuba. I will focus on connecting

these factors and causes to the role that they played in the historical crisis alongside Canada's involvement. In the final paragraphs of my essay, I will provide information on Canada's role in the crisis and how the factors and causes listed beforehand affected Canada.

To date, the world has witnessed and suffered through many historical crises. During each major world event, someone has been responsible for the country being attacked, the attacking country, and the allies. John F.

*SFATCOS is a first-year university student in the Creative Communications Joint Program with Red River College. Autumn has wanted to pursue Journalism since the beginning of high-school. Her goal upon graduation is to build a career in Investigative Journalism.*

Kennedy was the man who bore the burden during the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis. The novel *Thirteen Days*, written by Kennedy's brother Robert, a man who also bore a great amount of the burden during the Crisis, gives us a sense of how the debacle affected them personally and emotionally, "Inexplicably, I thought of when he was ill and almost died; when he lost his child; when we learned that our oldest brother had been killed; of personal times of strain and hurt" (Kennedy 70). Also, alongside the president through the intense and crucial thirteen-day crisis was a board of men and women dedicated to helping Kennedy make all the final decisions. Kennedy and his administration frequently met throughout the crisis to share opinions and ideas, as well as discuss what further action they would need to take. "Throughout all the pressures, internal and external, to which he was subjected, President Kennedy remained calm and firm" (Kennedy 18). The situation was a chess game between the two political leaders; who would make the first move. Would the United States demand the

removal of missiles from Cuba or would they demand the removal of missiles surrounding the Soviet Union?

During the suspenseful early days of the Crisis, President Kennedy was quick to inform other allies such as Paris, Rome and Bonn about the ongoing dilemma, but he was reluctant to immediately inform Canada's Prime Minister of the pertinent information, even though the missiles were, "a pistol pointed at America and Canada" (Ghent,163), we were a country that would suffer firsthand from the attack if it were to happen. Kennedy and his administration's strong relationship with the Soviet Union may have been the deterring cause in the outcome of the Crisis, but their antagonistic relationship with Cuba and their controlling relationship with Canada were factors that caused the debacle to happen in the first place.

The Cuban Missile Crisis was one of the direct consequences of the Cold War. The crisis of October 1962 was an intense confrontation between the two giant atomic nations, the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War which lasted from 1947 to 1991. It was the most serious obstacle of the Cold War because it was a point where the two countries were the closest to an extreme nuclear conflict that could have ended the world. Joseph Stalin was in power when the Cold War started, but later died in 1953 and Nikita Khrushchev took over the presidency as well as the motives of the Soviet Union. The Crisis started when the United States found out about the Soviet Union's building of missile sites in San Cristobal, Cuba which immediately caused a huge scare for America. "In July 1962 Soviet

premier Nikita Khrushchev reached a secret agreement with Cuban premier Fidel Castro to place Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba to deter any future invasion attempt” (United States Department of State). Khrushchev’s deal was simply another building block in the events of the Cold War and would cause further retaliation and conflict between the United States and Cuba.

Fidel Castro was the former communist dictator who reigned over Cuba from 1959 to 2008 and was a leading factor in how the Cuban Missile Crisis came about. Castro would not rest until he saw his country come out as number one, and in turn, this caused many hardships for Cuba. Castro stood for many things that the United States did not, and this immediately put them at odds and in the corner during the crisis. “He wanted the Soviet missiles, as he wanted all other kinds of Soviet involvement in the island, thus making him more secure against American intervention, tying down the Soviets more on his side” (Griffith, 77-78). Ultimately, Castro's Cuba had a hostile relationship with the United States, resulting in the Bay of Pigs invasion of 1961 and of course the Cuban Missile Crisis. Finally, in 2015, the two countries reconciled, “ending a trade embargo that had been in place since 1960, when the U.S. owned businesses in Cuba were nationalized without compensation” (History.com Editors). The United States failed to overthrow Castro during The Bay of Pigs invasion, and the Cuban Missile Crisis was Castro's next attempt at having a hold over America. Overall, Fidel Castro’s dictatorship over Cuba withholding all of his communist ideals, influenced the country in a negative way and almost caused a nuclear war.



Although Canada is not widely considered when the Cuban Missile Crisis is mentioned, they were also a country involved in The Crisis. The prime minister of Canada at the time, John Diefenbaker and President Kennedy did not get along very well or share common ground on what action to take against the possibility of a nuclear explosion. This flaw in their relationship would cause further miscommunication and problems further along regarding the crisis for Canada, as well as America. Robert F. Kennedy states in the novel *Thirteen Days* that, “John Diefenbaker, Prime Minister of Canada, was greatly concerned with how to convince the rest of the world” (52) of their hold on the crisis. Diefenbaker was reluctant to provide military assistance to the United States and, “American officials were irritated at the lack of cooperation from Canada” (Ghent 161) during this critical time. The United States expected the cooperation of Canada with assistance in what was happening in Cuba. This was the case not only because they were a part of the Western Hemisphere, but also because they shared an alliance system that was meant to contain communism in Russia. Ultimately, Diefenbaker complied to Kennedy’s demands and decided to provide military and professional assistance to the United States during the crisis.

The Cuban Missile Crisis had a remarkable impact on Canada even though we did not have a substantial amount of direct involvement. Canada first formed diplomatic relations with Cuba in 1945 and continued to keep consistent amicable relations with them throughout the Crisis, despite the United States pressuring them to do otherwise. Even after the Cuban Revolution, from 1953 to 1959, Canada kept in good standing with Cuba. Due to our amicable

relations with them, we have held an embassy in Havana since 1945. During the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis, Canada received a direct hit economically. Between the years of 1962 to 1963, Canadian trade sales dropped significantly. “Americans were especially bitter at continued Canadian trade with Cuba” (Ghent 161) while the crisis was going on.

In consequence, President Kennedy declared a trade embargo by cutting off Cuba's foreign exchange with Canada. Even though Canada has shared cordial relations with Cuba for almost seventy-five years, recently Canada is facing a social problem in our relation with the country, possibly due to the trade embargo of 1962 to 1963. Recently, Canadian diplomats stationed at the embassy in Havana have been falling mysteriously ill out of nowhere. Canada is presently investigating and reviewing their current presence in Cuba and if to continue relations in the future. If Canada didn't keep amicable relations with Cuba even though the time of the debacle, a nuclear war could have been the ultimate outcome of the Crisis. Even though the United States was pushing Canada to abandon our cordial relations with Cuba, we disregarded them and stood firm, remaining amicable in our relations. This could have made all the difference in the historical outcome of the situation. Ultimately, if Canada hadn't continued to hold a consistent and friendly relationship with Cuba, then the outcome of the situation could have resulted in the launching of their missiles on not only the Western Hemisphere but the entire world.

I believe that former president of the United States, John F. Kennedy, played a pivotal role in ensuring that the missiles were not launched on Cuba, but that Canada had a huge impact keeping the peace between Cuba and the Western Hemisphere. In addition, the ongoing Cold War, as well as Fidel Castro's dictatorship are direct factors that are linked to the Cuban Missile Crisis. These causes lead to my point that Canada was greatly affected by the Cuban Missile Crisis and that the focus should not solely be on America. Even though Canada was not as directly involved as the others who were front and center, Canada assured protection for its country. At the time, Canada was directly situated between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., so if a nuclear bomb were to be activated, Canada would be in danger as well. In response to this, Canada kept peace with Cuba and prevented the diffusion of the crisis, ultimately preventing the world from a possible fatal end.

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# “No good. No evil. Only pain.” Representations of Mad Scientist Narratives in *The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt*

*Blake Carter*

One of the most recent and exciting forms of media that has emerged in the field of adaptation is that of video games. The 2015 roleplaying video game *The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt* by CD Projekt Red (CDPR) is an excellent example of a video game that offers players Mad

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Scientist narratives that can be both unique and evocative of other representation from Western Literature. In this paper, I will examine the representation of Mad Scientist narratives in a variety of main and side quests from the base game that involve the more scientific aspect of alchemy, the more supernatural aspect of magic, and the blending of these two categories into a hybrid Mad Scientist narrative. I will also highlight the importance of the form of the video game in the presentation and interaction of these narratives, specifically in terms of the choices that are made by the player-character so that the story told is unique to each player and how that affects their reception of the story.

Within the base game of *The Witcher 3*, there are variety of instances where the Mad Scientist narrative appears. This paper will categorize these moments into three types: scientific, supernatural, and hybrid narratives. The first type of Mad Scientist narrative, the scientific, revolves around empirical and practical applications and is usually represented through alchemy. The profession of a witcher, a mutated monster hunter for-hire, embodies the scientific elements of Mad Scientist narratives and is aptly summarized in a quote from Geralt himself, who succinctly states that: “This world doesn’t need a hero; it needs a professional” (“*The Witcher 3*: Wild Hunt TV Spot”). Within *The Witcher 3*, scientific elements are often manifested in alchemy. Roslynn D. Haynes comments on the appearance of alchemy in Mad Scientist narratives, saying that “The origins and trappings of this potent story lie in the precursor of chemistry, alchemy. Although dismissed by scientists as outmoded and irrelevant to their practice, alchemy continues to provide a potent source of myth-making for the critique of modern science” (6). Alchemy is an integral part of a witcher’s identity, as it is both responsible for the creation of the mutated monster hunters and a tool in their continued practice. One of the most prominent examples of this scientific aspect of the Mad Scientist narrative can be seen when the exploring Kaer Morhen, the home of the School of the Wolf witchers. While exploring, players can find a book in Kaer Morhen titled “Witcher: Not Quite the Devils You Thought” which reveals the following information to the player:

Of course, it is an indisputable fact that the mutations witchers undergo influence their temperament, immune system, strength and endurance, yet one cannot consider them

unthinking beings forged only for killing as a result . . . They know an incredible amount about the effects of ingesting various organic and inorganic substances, and also a small amount, but nevertheless something, about the fundamentals of magic (by which I mean the simple spells they call "Signs") (*The Witcher 3*). This book reveals to the player that mutations instigated through alchemy are responsible for the witcher's enhanced abilities, but the explanation is not as detailed as some players might hope.

The player is presented with an opportunity to see the scientific yet horrifying work of creating a witcher firsthand by exploring a cave in the woods nearby Kaer Morhen. When Geralt first approaches the cave, he remarks that the site is the location where "They held the first Trials of the Grasses . . . before they built the fortress..." (*Witcher 3*). As the player explores the cave, Geralt frequently comments on the various items highlighted by his witcher senses. These personal anecdotes provide more information on the process of creating a witcher and help to firmly establish the event as rooted in science and horror. When examining a table used to strap down young witchers, for example, Geralt says "Table for mutations...Like our Sad Albert, except even sadder." If the player heads further into the cave Geralt will see dozens of skeletons littering the floor, further enhancing the atmosphere of horror. At the back of the cave the player encounters scientific instruments and equipment used to prepare ingredients for the transformative trials that were conducted, such as vats, beakers, vials, and multiple bookshelves. Geralt reveals that this is "The lab...Where they brewed the potions. Poisons, more like." Throughout the player's investigation, two common

themes emerge: the witcher's transformation was heavily linked to alchemy and ingesting a variety of different herbs and ingredients (often with menacing names like nightshade and wolfsbane), and the process is not remembered fondly by Geralt. The cave is dripping with an atmosphere of death, demonstrating that the process to create a witcher was more often than not lethal. Despite the sinister tone of this process, however, the Trial of the Grasses remains wholly on the scientific side of the Mad Scientist narrative. While the witchers undoubtedly possess supernatural qualities, the process by which they acquire them is firmly rooted in the science of alchemy, as demonstrated by the artifacts in the cave. It is not magic spells or rituals that give the young boys their enhanced abilities, but instead a combination of physical training and the ingestion of various herbs, teas, mutagens, and alchemical compounds. The creation of witchers is therefore an example of a Mad Scientist narrative that evokes scientific tones instead of supernatural ones.

The Trials of Grasses as a scientific approach to the Mad Scientist narrative is very reminiscent of the work done by Dr. Moreau in H. G. Wells *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, one of the most famous Mad Scientist narratives in Western Literature. Like Dr. Moreau, an intellectual obsessed with vivisection and the transformation of living creatures, the creators of the witchers likewise experimented on living creatures, often in ways that caused great pain and suffering to the subject. In his explanation to Mr. Prendick, Dr. Moreau reveals that he has discovered a way to alter not only the physical attributes of his subjects, but also their chemical composition:



It's not simply the outward form of an animal I can change. The physiology, the chemical rhythm of the creature may also be made to undergo an enduring modification . . . You began to see that it is a possible thing to transplant tissue from one animal to another, to alter its chemical reactions and methods of growth, to modify the articulations of its limbs, and indeed to change its most intimate structure? (53)

Like the animal-human hybrids that Dr. Moreau created on his isolated island that were relegated to a non-human status and treated with disdain by Prendick, the witchers that were produced by the Trials of Grasses in the remote wilderness and caves of Kaer Morhen were no longer considered strictly human, relegated instead to a non-human status and often targeted by the racist inhabitants of Sapkowski's fictional universe.

In addition to the representations of both the scientific and the supernatural Mad Scientist, *The Witcher 3* offers a third option which combines elements of both types: the hybrid. The hybrid scientist combines the magical elements and powers of the supernatural Mad Scientist but applies them in the stricter, more empirical method characteristic of the scientific Mad Scientist. One of the most striking examples of the hybrid Mad Scientist occurs when Geralt encounters the mad witcher Kiyan trapped beneath Temple Isle in Novigrad, a major city of the game. While freely exploring the city, the player can discover a path that leads Geralt to an illusory wall that hides a hidden passage within a cave. After solving multiple puzzles and fighting various enemies in the cave, Geralt is able to gain access to a secret laboratory. At the far end of the dark room there is a pentagram circle drawn on the

floor, and within the pentagram a mysterious red figure kneels motionless on the ground. As the player approaches, however, the figure stands up, utters the phrase “No good. No evil. Only pain.” and begins to attack the player using a sword and magic signs that will be instantly recognizable to the player as those of a witcher. After defeating the mysterious witcher in a challenging battle, the player is provided with the opportunity to more closely examine the slain enemy. The player’s inspection reveals that this witcher is far from ordinary: all of his skin has been mysteriously removed leaving the creature with a disturbing appearance of muscles over bone. By investigating the bookshelves and chests in the laboratory the player can find notes that shed more light on the creature’s twisted state. A journal on the witcher’s body reveals that the creature was a witcher named Kiyan who was abducted and experimented on by the mage Ireneus var Steingard, whose experience is recorded in frightening detail:

Day 26.

The subject has been tortured, poisoned, burnt, frozen, starved and dehydrated, and despite it all his body continues to function. He eats and drinks by himself, moves about his cell on his own and is able to articulate simple words ("please", "drink", "don't hurt", "stop").

Conclusion: as I suspected, the witcher is a superb energumen! A demon trapped in such an excellently prepared body will become death incarnate, vengeful wrath made

flesh – and placed at my command. No one has succeeded in creating a being of such power since the times of Malaspin and Alzur.

This is a great day for science!

Time to begin the incantations. (*Laboratory Notebook, The Witcher 3*) Steingard's laboratory notebook highlights how his experimentation on Kiyan can be categorized as the actions of a hybrid Mad Scientist that combines elements of both the scientific and the supernatural. Steingard combined his knowledge of alchemy and the scientific method with his arcane knowledge of magic and demons to gain results when science failed him. After a series of grueling experiments and physical and mental torture, the mage deemed the witcher unsuitable for his desired project and attempted to kill the witcher by administering a lethal dose of cowbane and hemlock. The mage was unsuccessful, however, due to the witcher's mutated body. The mage then decided to take advantage of this unexpected situation and conduct another experiment, this one more magical in nature. Steingard summoned a demon and trapped it in the witcher's body in order to create "death incarnate, vengeful wrath made flesh" (*Laboratory Notebook*). While the mage is obviously more aligned with the supernatural due to his magical abilities, the journal entry reveals his methods to be quite scientific, often relying on alchemical ingredients instead of magic to achieve a desired result. Steingard's treatment of Kiyan is therefore an excellent example of a Mad Scientist that combines elements of the scientific and the supernatural into one character. Steingard's second last entry in his laboratory notebook, "This is a great day for science!" reveals the mages

dedication to science despite his status as a mage, cementing the figure as an excellent example of the hybrid Mad Scientist.

While examining instances of Mad Scientist narratives in *The Witcher*, it is important to think about its form as a video game. Video games are, by their definition, interactive mediums, and this allows them to give the player an opportunity to engage directly with the narrative in a unique way. Grant Tavinor discusses the interactivity that video games offer in his article “What's My Motivation? Video Games and Interpretative Performance” where he defines an interactive video game narrative as “one where the player performs actions that partially determine the features of the narrative content of a game” (25). *The Witcher 3*, with its branching storylines and multiple endings, clearly meets this categorization. Tavinor goes on to state that:

The most interesting part of a video game playing, from an artistic perspective, is the ‘interpretative performance’ . . . Game players often go beyond what is necessary to produce an instance of the game, exploring and experimenting with the game to tease out content that might cast further light on the meaning of the work or its interactive structure . . . it is now common for games to hide plot elements to reward motivated players with richer experiences of the game and its narrative” (27).

*The Witcher 3* is an excellent example of a video game that uses its interactive nature to deliver additional information to the player. This can be seen in-game when additional exploration leads to the discovery of the cave at Kaer Morhen and the cave under Temple Isle,

which both contain Mad Scientist narratives. While neither locations are the site of a main quest, and therefore do not need to be visited to complete the main narrative of the game, both caves are marked as locations to visit under the treasure hunt category of the players quest log since they contain witcher gear, powerful equipment which significantly boosts the players abilities. The Kiyan encounter is particularly interesting in this context, as the player is presented with an image of what a witcher looks like if they possess too much power. The player's choice to try and increase the power of Geralt by tracking down rare equipment is mirrored by the mage Steingard's actions, an individual who also sought to increase the power of his own witcher, though the method he chose was more magical and sinister. Christopher Toumey discusses the ability of Mad Scientist stories to "mine the raw material of these anxieties and then shape them into moral narratives that purport to explain whence comes evil in the guise of science and how to repel it . . . mad scientist stories embody the opposite message, that science threatens our well-being" (411-412). By presenting Geralt with a haunting example of a witcher that has achieved immense power at the cost of their humanity, the game cautions both Geralt and the player against pursuing power too closely, thereby functioning as a Mad Scientist narrative that shows "which kinds of depraved people use science for amoral purposes and what becomes of them" (Toumey 411). By linking this message to the gameplay mechanic of exploration – only revealing this message after the player has already sought out power on their own – CDPR are able to engage with the theme on a deeper level. By pursuing side quests to increase Geralt's power, the players act as Mad

Scientist themselves, deepening their connection to the theme. CDPR also draws attention to the negatives associated with the Mad Scientist narrative by presenting the player with a hyperbolic example of their actions in the form of Kiyan and Steingard, encouraging the player to think twice about the consequences of their actions.

The figure of the Mad Scientist is one of the most enduring images in all Western Literature (*Faust to Strangelove* 1). Due to the highly flexible and adaptive nature of the Mad Scientist, the character type has been depicted in a variety of media forms new and old, including video games. *The Witcher 3* is an example of a video game that includes multiple Mad Scientist narratives which can be broken up into three different types (the scientific, the supernatural, and the hybrid Mad Scientist), each relating to a classic Mad Scientist representation from Western Literature. The scientific Mad Scientist is depicted in the game when the player explores the caves near Kaer Morhen and learns about the creation of the witcher through the Trials of Grasses, a procedure equal parts scientific and horrifying. Contrasting the scientific version, the supernatural Mad Scientist relies more on magic that does not rely on the scientific method or any semblance of natural explanation. The third type of narrative combines the scientific frame and features with supernatural elements to create a hybrid Mad Scientist, which is demonstrated by the mage Steingard and his experiments on the witcher Kiyan. Finally, the video game form of *The Witcher 3* plays a role in the presentation of Mad Scientist narratives. Through the interactivity inherent to roleplaying games like *The Witcher 3*, the player is encouraged to step into the narrative and take on the

role of a Mad Scientist themselves, allowing them to more closely experience the consequences resulting from their mad meddling.

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# Death in Ancient Rome and Parents' Love for Their Deceased Children

*Elysse Paterson*

In Ancient Rome the likelihood of survival past childbirth was extremely low. Infant mortality was so common in society that there is debate on whether parents cared when their young children died<sup>1</sup>. It is important to think about how common death was. How the public dealt with the dead and how parents dealt with the loss of their young children, specifically in the case of infants and children (who were Roman citizens) under the age of five during 753 BC - 476 AD. Rome is known for their societal ideas and concepts. It is important to look at the reality of what Roman society did versus what the Romans thought. In Roman antiquity we see that it was shameful to mourn for the loss of young children because they have not been alive long enough to form proper connections with their parents. It was also frowned upon to give children proper burials as to not waste resources<sup>2</sup>. When it came to loss it was clear that parents did mourn for their lost children despite the ideological concepts of Rome, however we do see in antiquity that sons were favored more than daughters were and that mothers were often more open to the public about

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<sup>1</sup> This essay is inspired by a previously written assignment "The Love for Deceased Children Within Antiquity."

<sup>2</sup> Plutarch 11



their grief than fathers were. Though young boys were favored more, it did not give parents' permission to mourn for them.

Archeological evidence allows the public to understand how vast the death toll was in Ancient Rome. When examining John Bodel's work, *Dealing with the Dead. Undertakers, Executioners and Potter's Fields in Ancient Rome*, we are able to not only understand the death toll and why death was so common but also how contradictory the Romans were within their ideologies. In the Augustan period the urban population was roughly 750,000 people and it is believed that 30,000 people died every year<sup>3</sup>. There is debate, however, on roughly how many people died per day when there was an outbreak of a plague. For instance, "Cassius Dio's figure of 2,000 a day succumbing during the outbreak of AD 189 sounds plausible<sup>4</sup>," which allows the reader to understand that death was very common during these times and even more so when there was an outbreak of disease. This topic allows for the question of whether parents cared when their young children died when death was so common in Ancient Rome and to what extent did parents mourn when young children have not been alive long enough to form proper connections<sup>5</sup>.

The question of whether parents cared when their young children died is something that seems like common knowledge; however, Ancient Rome is often contradictory within

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<sup>3</sup> John Bodels Article, *Dealing with the Dead. Undertakers, Executioners and Potter's Fields in Ancient Rome* pp. 128-129

<sup>4</sup> John Bodels Article, *Dealing with the Dead. Undertakers, Executioners and Potter's Fields in Ancient Rome* (73.114) pp. 129

<sup>5</sup> Seneca *Letters* 99.2, to his friend Marullus (translation from the Loeb Classical Library)

their societal beliefs. Plutarch states, “For our people do not bring offerings to any children who die in infancy.<sup>6</sup>” Plutarch goes on to explain that deceased children have not been alive long enough to have the proper rights that people of senior status have. As well, deceased infants are not to be buried, celebrated, or cremated “for the laws forbid us to mourn for infants.<sup>7</sup>” This passage from ancient text allows the current public to understand the clear ideology that the Romans had against child mourning, however this is contradictory. Many texts and inscriptions from Ancient Rome show that parents did in fact mourn for their children’s death despite this strong belief.

This is not the only topic in which Rome contradicts their beliefs versus their actions. When looking at John Bodels article, section *Executioners*<sup>8</sup>, we can see that there was a desire to watch gladiators fight to the death, the people loved the bloodshed and often put their money into building elaborate stadiums for the entertainment of the public, however being a gladiator was less than desired. The Roman people ostracized gladiators, seeing them as being dirty and polluted for their murder. According to the Roman people, dead bodies held pollution and therefore if someone touched the bodies or was the cause of their death, then those people were polluted too<sup>9</sup>. While this is shocking, the contradictions within Roman society do not end here.

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<sup>6</sup> (Pliny 7.72)

<sup>7</sup> (Pliny 7.72)

<sup>8</sup> John Bodels Article, *Dealing with the Dead. Undertakers, Executioners and Potter’s Fields in Ancient Rome* pp. 144-148

<sup>9</sup> John Bodels Article, *Dealing with the Dead. Undertakers, Executioners and Potter’s Fields in Ancient Rome*

There is not a lot of evidence within Roman studies that indicate how women were viewed or treated due to the fact most of our findings come from elite men and not the women themselves. It is possible to analyze the written works provided by men to understand what was common, desired and implemented. When it came to mourning the loss of the adolescence it seems as though women were often more public with their loss in contrast to men who, if they did mourn, would hide it behind closed doors. Seneca's letter<sup>10</sup>, written to his friend Marullus is a great example of this, he says:

Is it solace that you look for? Let me give you a scolding instead! You are like a woman in the way you take your son's death; what would you do if you had lost an intimate friend? A son, a little child of unknown promise, is dead; a fragment of time has been lost.

This passage is important because it helps scholars understand that women were depicted as crying often to the death of their children and while yes, men did mourn, they were often scolded for it. However, it does seem that women weren't as chastised for mourning the loss because of the assumption that they were more frequent in mourning within the public space compared to men.

In contrast, according to ancient works, it would appear sons were mourned for more than daughters were. This is not to say however that daughters were not mourned for, on the

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pp. 144-148

<sup>10</sup> Seneca *Letters* 99.2, to his friend Marullus (translation from the Loeb Classical Library)

contrary, there are some cases where daughters were mourned tremendously. For example, there is an article titled, *Paternal Grief and The Public Eye: Cicero AD Familiares 4.6* written by Amanda Wilcox which states “In the months after Cicero’s daughter Tullia died in late January or early February of 45, his prolonged grief for her was judged by his contemporaries to be excessive and suspect<sup>11</sup>.” This statement allows scholars to understand that even famous members of the Roman people did publicly mourn for their daughters, however it was not socially acceptable to be open to the public about mourning and if someone did, they would be scolded and judged for it by their peers. It is important to note that while there are signs of mourning for daughters the majority of evidence provided shows that sons were discussed the most when it came to parental mourning. One great example of this is a letter from Hilarion to his wife Alis which says,

I send you many greetings. I want you to know that we are still in Alexandria and please do not worry if all the others return but I stay in Alexandria. I beg you and call upon you to take care of the child and, if I receive my money soon, I will send it up to you. If you give birth before I return, if it is a boy, let it live; if it is a girl, expose it. You sent a message with Aphrodisias, ‘Don’t forget me’. How can I forget you? I beg you then, not to worry<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> Wilcox, Amanda. “Paternal Grief and the Public Eye: Cicero ‘Ad Familiares’ 4.6.” *Phoenix*, vol. 59, no. 3/4, 2005, pp. 267

<sup>12</sup> Oxyrhynchus Papyri (P.Oxy.) 744, 1<sup>st</sup> C CE, a letter from Hilarion to his wife Alis (translated by V. Hope)

This letter allows for scholars to hypothesize that the gender, when it comes to exposure, is not necessarily misogynistic in nature. Hilarion clearly loves his wife and wishes her the best, however when it comes to their child, if it is a daughter, he wishes her to be exposed. While Hilarion is willing to expose his child if it is a daughter, the thoughts of Alis on whether or not she will be upset by this are unknown. It is clear as to why the Roman people thought this when one looks at what men could provide compared to women. A son has the potential to become the paterfamilias and manage the entire estate after their father had passed. He can gain honour, respect and become a high member of the elite. A man can continue on with the family name with his sons after him and so on. A woman on the other hand has to be provided a dowry which not all families could pay for.

Artemidorus wrote about the interpretation of dreams as he believed that he spoke for the God Apollo as a prophet. He mentions that dreaming about children was bad whether it be man or woman, however he goes on to explain the difference between a daughter and a son by saying:

Male children prophesy good results, but female children indicate an end worse than the beginning and they also foretell loss. For Whereas boys take nothing from their parents after they have been raised, girls require a dowry. I know of a man who dreamt that a little daughter was born to him. He borrowed money at interest. Another

man, moreover, dreamt that his daughter had died and that he buried her. This resulted in his paying off a debt<sup>13</sup>.

This quote while biased, because of who Artemidorus was, a rich male with citizenship in ancient Rome, explains not the facts of what the Romans actually did in everyday life but how they thought and what they believed in; that daughters could be a burden in the home whereas a son could contribute to the families and the societal beliefs of the people help to represent the ideals of Rome, even if they weren't acted upon.

It is important to understand Roman contradictions because of the way it can help scholars today understand how to go about analyzing ancient literature. There are many accounts where contemporary historians neglect information in order to enforce their claims. For example, there is an article written by Branko Van Oppen De Ruiter<sup>14</sup> who criticizes a few historians who have neglected important information when coming to the conclusion of the wedding date of Ptolemy I and Berenice I. While this is set in Ancient Greece, the context is still important. When looking at how the ancients wrote about their lives and thoughts it is important to take their words with a grain of salt and read between the lines of what they are trying to say in order to get a more accurate picture.

In conclusion, what the Romans thought and tried to implement versus what they actually did is both contradictory and not necessarily true. While we know that the Romans

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<sup>13</sup> Artemidorus *On the Interpretation of Dreams* 1.15 (translated by R.J. White)

<sup>14</sup> Van Oppen De Ruiter, Branko. "The Marriage of Ptolemy I and Berenice I." *Ancient Society*, vol. 41, 2011,

frowned upon mourning for the loss of deceased children it was clear that many parents still did. It was mothers who were more open about their loss, however men mourned as well. It was believed that if fathers were to mourn it would be behind closed doors, otherwise they would be scrutinized by their peers. It is important to note the favourability of sons compared to daughters when it came to loss because of ideologies within Ancient Rome. Men had more to offer than women did because they could provide for the family, whereas daughters required a dowry. Learning about this topic is important to understand because when one learns about the contradictions of Ancient Rome, then one can understand how to go about analyzing written works in ancient literature in a way that is both scholarly and correct, avoiding as much bias as possible.

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# Terrorism in Our World

*Emmanuel Oladele*

Terrorism has been a major issue in the world for over a century. But this issue has not been effectively dealt with due to the high intelligence of the terrorists and the political dilemmas behind it. Also, terrorism has affected the way countries (leaders and citizens) interact with each other; preferential treatment by industrialized countries to other countries because of terrorism has been the order of the day. There are even disputes on whether a certain religion's ideology (Islam) or a sect of that religion is behind modern day terrorism or whether it is another mischief by the ruling class of the different societies. My main question on the issue, terrorism, is who or what is responsible for terrorism? I believe that if this question is well answered, there will be adequate solutions to terrorism. In this writing, I will be discussing the correlation between Islam and terrorism, views of industrialized nations on terrorism, and then what measures have been put in place to counter terrorism.

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## **Islam and Terrorism**

Having lived in a country that is suppressed by terrorism (Boko Haram), I discovered that scholars have linked their erroneous acts with Islam. So, I will be examining different



views on the relationship between Islam and terrorism. An interesting point made by Deborah Evans in her article was that: “Islam is a political religion” (Evans 2017, p. 100). This suggests that Islam is a religion that is politically motivated. So, in analysing the correlation between Islam and terrorism, we will have to take note of the fact that politics is a deriving force in Islam. In the Islamic world there are two categories of Muslims: Sunnis and Jihadists. Sunnis are said to be the conservatives (they are not violent and they are totally against violence), while Jihadists are said to be radical (they are violent and they use violence to oppress people). The Jihadists are the ones thought to be the perpetrators of terrorism. They seek to impose their will on others and to also enforce Sharia laws on some nations. Meanwhile, the Sunnis disagree with Jihadists’ acts and say it is against the Islamic principles. These categories of Muslims have brought divisions in the global Muslim communities. But the question that baffles many people is: Who is telling the truth about Islam?

### **The West and Terrorism**

Since 9/11, the West has been making all efforts to stop terrorism. The United States (the supposed leader of the West) during “the Bush administration defined global war on terrorism as a struggle against international terrorism broadly defined” (Rabasa, 2011, p. 61). The US persuaded the international community to join her in fight against terrorism. Terrorism is now seen as a global war. The US went further to narrow the fight against Jihadists (radical Muslims). She succeeded in doing so during the Obama administration in May 2, 2011 when Osama Bin Laden (former leader Al-Qaeda) was finally killed in Pakistan. However, many

still believe that the US is not dealing with the issue of terrorism effectively. The US law enforcement agencies tactics to counter terrorism have been seen as: “controversial and sometimes ineffective responses to the threat” (Fenton 2016). This suggests that there is a high possibility of some forms of compromise by the US and even other countries in the fight against terrorism. Which means that the US’s fight against the Jihadists could be seen as a form of hypocrisy since there has been some form of compromise along the way. The 9/11 attacks on the United States’ soil has been the driving force in the way the West see terrorism. The West has made it seem as though there is just one way to solve terrorism. Is the West right in its approach in analysing terrorism?

### **Measures Put in Place by countries to Stop Terrorism**

The solutions to terrorism have become so debatable that each country prefers to solve the problem on her own rather than doing a collaborative work. The United States, through their National Security Strategy, in 2001, came up with the phrase “wage a war of ideas” (Rabasa, 2011, p. 63). This phrase has been seen by many countries as a vital element in the fight against terrorism. The most interesting fact about this phrase is that the “ideas” were pointing towards the ideologies of the Jihadists.

In the USA, “perception of the threat is primarily one of radicalization as a stage in the progression toward terrorism” (Rabasa, 2011, p. 66). This suggests that the USA sees the ideologies of terrorists as just a stage that leads to the acts of terrorism. As a result of this, they have decided to fight these ideologies either by killing their leaders (like in the case of Osama

Bin Laden) or by intervening in terrorists' native countries' cultural practices. However, the European countries have a different view on this issue. They view "radicalization in the context of a broader social problem of integrating the continent's Muslim communities into the majority societies" (Rabasa, 2011, p. 66). This suggests that European countries have begun to view the sociological impact of these ill ideologies on the lives of European countries. It's no wonder the "British authorities have distanced themselves from Islamist groups" (Rabasa, 2011, pp. 65–66).

From my research it seems as though it is only the Western countries that have been making efforts to fight terrorism. But it is not so. The supposedly native countries (Arab countries) of terrorists are also fighting terrorism: "We certainly see evidence of this in the mass uprisings of the Arab Spring (2011)" (Evans, 2017, p. 104). This uprising was caused by the masses in order to counter the ideologies of their leaders in order to gain their freedom. This uprising has suggested that the Arab countries "have reached a level of development where autocracies are no longer acceptable to broad sectors of the population" (Rabasa, 2011, p. 69). Citizens of those countries now want to embrace democracy.

I would like to make a quick comparison between Angel Rabasa's and Deborah Evan's approaches in analysing terrorism. Rabasa is a senior political scientist while Evans is a scholar on sociological issues. It is almost certain they will have different approaches to analysing terrorism. Rabasa pointed out that the US is fighting terrorism by targeting a sect of the world's population, Jihadists. To support this claim, Rabasa included an authoritative

statement by the US National Security Strategy and also reports from RAND Corporation. However, Evans was more focused on the “deceptions” of Islam and how it is deeply affected by certain mindsets. Evans alludes to historic events and uses quotes from scholars to support her argument. I appreciate how both authors approach terrorism, especially when they both analysed different countries’ approaches to it. However, I did not like the fact that they both failed to recognize the various forms of terrorism around the world.

In conclusion, terrorism has been one of the major issues facing the world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The rise of dangerous Jihadist groups such as Al-Qaeda, Al-Shabaab, Boko Haram and ISIS has brought lots of confusion into the minds of world leaders. Many countries have decided to tackle these groups by killing their leaders and destroying their camps. They feel by doing these things, terrorism will be reduced. Many of the world powers tend to be strict on immigration policies for those people who come from the same country as the terrorist groups. I think that is not fair because they are indirectly counting other citizens of those countries as terrorists. Coming from a country faced with political tensions and terrorism, I think terrorism is beyond the acts of the Jihadists. Also, I think the reason for terrorism differs from one continent to another. For example, the reason for terrorism in North America and Europe is because the terrorist groups do not like the fact that both continents have too much power over so many resources. On the other hand, in Africa most of the terrorist acts are caused by politicians drunk with power, and also by the strife between people of different religions. So, to effectively combat terrorism, each country has to critically analyse the reasons for terrorism

in their country and find a lasting solution to it. Also, governments should stop deceiving their citizens with false information of their plans and progress in the fight against terrorism.

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# Mass Producing Pseudo Narratives in Music

*Martina Romualdo*

Robert Prey, who writes a study on algorithmic individuation in music streaming platforms such as Spotify, argues that there are no individuals truly present on platforms like Spotify; there are merely ways of seeing the masses as individuals through algorithms bestowed to us by the advances of technology (Prey 1087). Prey suggests humans as a communicating species are dynamic and never inanimate. A

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human's ability to change and develop within their varying environments portrays a complex individual that is often conscious of themselves and cannot be mimicked by any algorithm or artificially intelligent robot. Technology can merely copy an instance of a person's individual persona, but it is only valid for an instance; as Prey explains, a person can be an avid fan of 'smooth jazz' music until they decide they are not. A person can become a subscriber of 'Delta blues' until they decide they are not.

Spotify mimics the instance a person may be into blues or into jazz on the promise that this mega music streaming platform can construct an identity—*your identity*—that you can relate to and deeply understand (Prey 1095). However, that algorithm breaks when a

person's tastes change to a different genre and thus restarts the process of digging into your data. Spotify promises to create individuals through individuation (or rather pseudo-individuation, since Prey claims platforms only see masses and not individuals). Genres of music Spotify constructs are contextual, based on data we provide. Spotify in turn portrays lifestyles, not traditional music genres. "Brain Food" denotes music meant to improve focus, "Travel" denotes tracks to listen to when travelling, "Morning Commute" for tracks to listen to when going to work and "Workout" for tracks to listen to when exercising. Everyday routines are outlined and thus Spotify dictates what music people should listen to when in their everyday customs. These genres integrate into cultures to convince listeners that Spotify can represent the parts of their lives that are meaningful. The creation of an individual through Spotify is never apparent to the consumer, however, and therefore does not allow them to develop their own identifiable tastes and to think for themselves. At that moment, the consumer is no longer an individual, but a product of a mass identity.

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# The War on Iraq

*Tessa Adamski*

Since the attack on 9/11, propaganda has been utilized by the U.S. Government as a technique of war. To prove this point, I have incorporated a brief history of the events leading to the 2003 U.S. invasion on Iraq. First, Walter Lippmann establishes the idea of manufacturing consent to differentiate between the specialized class (those of higher authority) and the bewildered herd (the majority population). Noam Chomsky uses manufacture consent to show how the U.S. Government advances their power interests through propaganda as a technology of control. Secondly, the U.S. authoritative figures instill fear on society claiming

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that Iraq is a dangerous country in attempt to excuse the horrific acts of war and collateral damage. Furthermore, representation within the movie industry among other artistic media forms glorifies war and serves as a perfect source in the distribution of propaganda. Lastly, Edward Herman and Chomsky's propaganda model depicts how media manipulates its audience to believe in an 'us versus them' disposition. Overall, these points illustrate how the U.S. Government uses



propaganda to control the western civilization's view of Iraq in order to serve their power interests.

In July 1988, following the ceasefire between Iran and Iraq, the U.S. wanted Saddam Hussein to replace his 'troublesome tactics' with peaceful resolutions (Hahn, 2012). Instead, Hussein wanted to seek territorial and economic gains by invading Kuwait from 1989-1990 (Hahn, 2012). He had a strong desire to profit from oil in an attempt to relieve the financial burden of the Iran-Iraq war; he wanted to gain support from neighbouring leaders and to attain the misappropriated land that was given to Kuwait (Hahn, 2012). During the Iran-Iraq war, President George H.W. Bush despised the expansionism of Iran and supported Iraq by providing economic aid, restoring diplomatic relations and sharing information about the Iranian forces (Hahn, 2012). It was not until Hussein's Iraqi regime threatened to invade Kuwait, that Bush made the aggressive decision to place American soldiers in Saudi Arabia, near the border of Kuwait and Iraq, in order to deter the Iraqi military (Hahn, 2012). However, on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, Iraq offered to withdraw from Kuwait "in return for consideration by the Security Council of the Arab- Israeli conflict and the problem of weapons of mass destruction (WMD)" (Chomsky, 2002, p.59). Nobody knew this was a peace offering and that it was well supported by the Iraqi democratic opposition and two-thirds of Americans (Chomsky, 2002, p.58). Presumably, when Hussein refused to withdraw from Kuwait, the U.S. proceeded with its Operation Desert Storm: five weeks of aerial assaults and ground invasions against Iraq for the liberation of Kuwait (Hahn, 2012). The U.S. prompted leaders of the U.N. to assess Iraq's

WMD in hopes of eliminating their usage (Hahn, 2012). When the regime failed to adhere to the U.N.'s restrictions, the U.S. military punished Iraq with another series of military airstrikes (Hahn, 2012).

In 1998, Osama bin Laden used Bush's assaults on Iraq to declare war on the U.S. (Hahn, 2012). This later formulated the attack in 2001 on September 11<sup>th</sup> (Hahn, 2012). This provoked Bush to not only invade Iraq in attempt to overthrow Hussein, but he frightened the nation by claiming that the U.S. was in moral danger because of the WMD held in Iraq (Hahn, 2012). Although U.N officials had eventually cleared Iraq of WMD, Bush proceeded to continue persuading the nation using his personal security interests and further rebuffed the advice given from allied countries France and Germany to avoid unnecessary conflict (Hahn, 2012). Hussein was given 48 hours to leave Iraq and when he refused, Bush ordered the Pentagon to invade on March 19, 2003 (Hahn, 2012). With the implementation of 125,000 U.S. troops, 20,000 British troops and 500 Australian troops, it was a fast victory needing only 500 hours to overtake the country (Hahn, 2012). Iraqi detainees and citizens were abused, the U.S. discovered that Hussein lacked the capability to use WMD, and 51 billion U.S. dollars were wasted (Hahn, 2012). Months later, violence from three armed oppositions wanted revenge: The Sunnis, who were tied to Hussein, the Shiite Militia, who wanted to attain political influence in a post-Hussein era, and non-Iraqi Islamists (Hahn, 2012). By December of 2003, an outrage of violence between the U.S. and Iraq escalated, devoting the years to come to be known through the U.S. perspective as the 'war on terrorism' (Hahn, 2012). It is

also important to note that before the ‘war on terrorism’ began, Iraq had been fighting Iran for eight uninterrupted years. Their military was greatly weakened and even then, Iraq needed support from the Soviet Union, Europe, the Arab countries and the U.S. to fight Iran (Chomsky, 2002, p.63). Chomsky argues that nobody illustrated this point and as a result, Iraq was deemed as a dangerous third-world country- that at any given moment could flatten America with its WMD (Chomsky, 2002, p.63).

In order to effectively infiltrate the use of propaganda among the western nation, those of higher authority must successfully impose their doctrines onto the majority population. In the book *Media Control: The Spectacular Achievements of Propaganda*, Chomsky introduces the term “manufacture consent” coined by theorist Lippmann. Lippmann differentiates between the two types of social classes: the specialized class (those of higher authority) and the bewildered herd (the majority population). He explains that the specialized class is formed by few, educated individuals who, “analyze, execute, make decisions, and run things in the political, economic and ideological systems” (Chomsky, 2002, p.16). These authoritative figures rigidly control the ‘bewildered herd’ to believe they serve a higher role in the decision-making processes (Chomsky, 2002, p.17). However, they are purposely positioned as spectators within society and only receive a powerful voice when they are called upon to vote for their choice in a representative (Chomsky, 2002, p.17). The public is made to feel like they are valid participants in a democratic society; in reality, this is the only control they are entitled to (Chomsky, 2002, p.17). This is perfectly orchestrated by the group of ‘responsible

men' who wish to maintain their power stance through the technique of propaganda (Chomsky, 2002, p.19). This is emphasized with Foucault's rhetoric, that having knowledge is power (McGee, 1998, p.35). McGee continues this thought by claiming that "power can't be exercised without knowledge" (McGee, 1998, p.35) because both dispositions prove that rhetoric is needed to gain power. It shows people the art of persuasion through 'plain folks rhetoric', learning defence mechanisms, justification, proper implementation of evidence, and how to make judgements (McGee, 1998, p.31). Overall, the U.S. Government uses propaganda by exercising rhetoric as a technology of power when their knowledge can easily sway the majority population.

Furthermore, the U.S. Government distracts the bewildered herd from challenging their interests by frightening them with media clips of violence situated in Iraq. The instillation of fear closes the people off from doing research on the facts and distracts them with American pop culture such as the Superbowl (Chomsky, 2002, p.28). The representation of violence terrorizes the western population in reverting to a collective identity; the people conform to a nationalist demographic which helps to excuse the sickly inhibitions enforced by the U.S. Government (Chomsky, 2002, p.44). Although many may not stand with the nation's desire for war, the use of propaganda intelligently protects those in the U.S. at the expense of people in Iraq. Generally, the public does not want to resort to foreign killings and torture, so the government has to convince them it is okay due to the nation's safety being at risk (Chomsky, 2002, p.30). Through the use of propaganda, they make the public believe that

their intentions are ‘noble and right’ (Chomsky, 2002, p.35), and that no other options are available. Mark Fisher illustrates this notion in *Capitalist Realism* by saying any sense of idealistic hope is an illusion (Fisher, 2009, p.16). Consequently, the ‘war on terrorism’ becomes idealistic because the hidden use of propaganda has the public believing no alternative exists, and if the idea of an alternative is presented it is, “easily painted as naïve utopianism” (Fisher, 2009, p.16).

In order to keep everyone distracted and conforming to a nationalist identity, slogans such as ‘support our troops’ are created to maintain a sense of harmony (Chomsky, 2002, p.26). Chomsky confirms that well constructed propaganda creates a slogan that nobody will be against because the ‘responsible men’ do not want the majority population to cause ‘trouble’ in an American democratic system (Chomsky, 2002, p.26). These slogans are highly effective due to the fact there is no meaning behind them; the simple phrases make it very difficult for the bewildered herd to disagree with or question. Chomsky mentions that if the slogan was reversed to something like, ‘do you support our policy?’ it would allow the people to form an opinion, which is the opposite of what the government wants (Chomsky, 2002, p.26). America also uses the term ‘freedom’ which creates a dominant ideology that their human rights are more important than the average innocent person living in Iraq (Chomsky, 2002, p.37). They are made to believe all human rights abuses should be met by force, but fail to switch the perspective of those same abuses being inflicted onto their nation (Chomsky, 2002, p.53). Overall, the U.S. propaganda brainwashes the majority population to conform to

an ‘us vs. them’ model; all the while, Iraq is portrayed as a corrupt, terrorist society with the intention of perpetrating danger onto the western civilization.

The western culture is famous for its movies and various art forms, yet this becomes problematic when these artistic forms are the main source of distribution for propaganda. In *The Society of the Spectacle*, Debord makes a valid statement about how ideologies are represented in society, and how they impact the public. He explains this with, “when the real world is transformed into mere images, mere images become real beings – figments that provide the direct motivations for hypnotic behaviour” (Debord, 2014, p. 6). People make judgements based off of their personal experiences (McGee, 1998, p.61) and demand to watch situations in television shows that are culturally real for them (McGee, 1998, p.58). However, these experiences broadcasted in the media are not the experience itself, but a representation of an experience (McGee, 1998, p.56). Movies and various art forms do portray relations as they exist in society (McGee, 1998, p.52), but these depictions are favoured to the public. Based on true events, the movie *American Sniper* is a prime example of how the film industry glorifies actions of war. The main character Chris Kyle is known for his ability to snipe insurgents; it is unclear whether any of his 160 confirmed kills were innocent civilians or not. As the storyline progresses, he becomes more obsessed with killing the Iraqi “bad guys” and raiding homes to create military bases in the name of his country. Movies like *American Sniper* help to support the idea of war and develop a framework that those who fight for the nation are the nation’s heroes. Chris Kyle remains a sniper ‘legend’ in America and claimed he only wishes he had

killed more so, “the world is a better place without savages out there taking American lives” (Abley, 2015). Although there seems to be a great amount of backlash when people fail to support the troops, it is equally important understanding the difference between supporting war and the troops involved. The protection of human rights applies to all Americans just as much as it applies to the men, women and children who unfortunately lost their lives in Iraq. Altogether, the U.S. uses the rhetoric of media sources to distribute propaganda and serve their power interests to the nation.

Lastly, Herman and Chomsky created a propaganda model demonstrating how raw media must operate through five filters: ownership, advertising, the media elite, flak, and the common enemy (Chomsky, 2017). The mass media firms have ownership over what is fit to print; prioritizing profit. The stories of greater interest are more likely to be published than any form of critical journalism (Chomsky, 2017). The role of advertising also plays a large part in funding mass media corporations; the media must filter what news is published in favour of the advertising providers (Communication Theory, 2018). Additionally, not all journalism outlets have access to a direct source. For this reason, governments, corporations, institutions and other ‘experts’ are crucial for interviews and instigating their personal narrative to mass audiences (Chomsky, 2017). Groups of higher authority can also be detrimental to a company’s reputation meaning that many journalists respond with caution to avoid flak (Brahm, 2006). The final filter reverts back to Lippmann’s “manufacture consent” and shows how the media specifically reports to a targeted audience. Through the use of propaganda,

these audiences are manipulated to be against a ‘common enemy’ such as: communists, terrorists, immigrants, or perhaps, the entire country of Iraq (Chomsky, 2017).

As a result of these five filters, the war between the U.S. and Iraq was crafted by propaganda through the U.S. embedded journalists representing the Pentagon and the Bush administration (Kellner, 2003, p.152). When the invasion on March 19, 2003 occurred, U.S. television networks framed the violence as triumphant and often referred to it as ‘Operation Iraqi Freedom’ (Kellner, 2003, p.150). The overall message given to the western civilization was that the U.S. military wanted to free the people of Hussein’s nasty regime and somehow bring democracy to Iraq by killing thousands of people (Kellner, 2003, p.149). The U.S. networks focused on celebrating their intervention by broadcasting a sanitized view of the war, glorifying the demolished buildings as a win, rarely showing the Iraqi casualties and by providing a nationalist, controlled view of the war compared to the various networks on site (Kellner, 2003, p.152). Networks such as CNN, Fox News, and NBC cable provided little propaganda, yet the stories were one-sided and patriotic (Kellner, 2003, pg. 152). In comparison, Al Jazeera and independent journalists from Europe would frame the war as an ‘invasion’ and provide the most accurate information (Kellner, 2003, p.151-152). A CNN reporter by the name of Walter Rogers recounted that when one of his reports did show a dead Iraqi, there was a multitude of angry viewers commenting about how they do not want to see any dead bodies (Kellner, 2003, p.152). This illustrates how people would rather be in denial about the human cost of war (Kellner, 2003, p.152); especially when there was little to no



comparison about the fact that the attack on 9/11 killed roughly 3,000 Americans and the invasion of Iraq left 130,000 civilians dead (Conflict Casualties Monitor, 2003). Of the 45,799 victims that the Iraqi Body Count (IBC) could identify through age cohort, 3,911 were children (Conflict Casualties Monitor, 2003).

It is evident that the U.S. Government successfully utilizes propaganda to control the western view of Iraq. They use 'plain folk's rhetoric' to persuade the majority population and make them believe they live in a democratic society when in reality, they have little control in the decision-making processes. The U.S. Government terrorizes the people by threatening them with violent media news reports making them conform to the nation's desire for war. Even though a general consensus of Americans may not believe killing and torture is morally acceptable, those of higher authority confirm that it is noble and right when the nation's safety is at stake. Furthermore, slogans and pop culture are used to distract the bewildered herd as a technique to brainwash the Americans that Iraq is a corrupt, terrorist society. Television, media networks, movies and other sources highly influence society by showing a representation of real life experiences. This becomes problematic when the U.S. uses media sources as a form of rhetoric to distribute propaganda and serve their power interests to the nation. Lastly, Herman and Chomsky demonstrated how the five filters of the propaganda model decide what is 'fit to print' and how many media networks misreported the invasion of Iraq in support of the Pentagon and the Bush administration. Altogether, the U.S. Government

used and continues to use propaganda to control the western civilization's view of Iraq in order to serve their power interests.

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# The Tao Te Ching: Translation Theory and Semantic Variance

*Alina Moore*

Translations of ambiguous poetic, sacred, and philosophical texts offer challenges when portraying cultural and semantic ideas. These challenges and variances become apparent when an artifact is translated multiple times by multiple translators over many generations. The *Tao Te Ching*, an influential and fundamental Ancient Chinese poetic and philosophical text, is an excellent point of reference as it has been translated over 300 times since publication in 4th Century BC. By discussing the translatability of a written piece, analyzing the social and cultural backgrounds of the translators in their use of "fidelity" and "license", examining the variances found between four different translators in their translations of the

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*Tao Te Ching*, and relating it to Semantic and Semiotic Translation Theories, we will find that semantic and semiotic meaning varies cross-culturally and temporally.

As discussed in chapter six "The Consequences of Babel: Translation," in John Edwards' *Multilingualism: Understanding Linguistic Diversity*, the translatability of a

written piece is often met with contrasting attitudes. On the one hand, translation is sometimes contested, especially with sacred writings for colonial appropriation, or what Edwards describes as "voice appropriation," and on the other, it is commended for allowing access to cultural ideas, or "bridging language gaps." (Edwards 59) Regardless of these debates, translation also has the potential to prolong the life of a piece that may otherwise be lost temporally. Edwards states that "every act of translation involves interpretation and judgement," or as Walter Benjamin terms it "fidelity and license," as all interpretation of meaning derives from the act of individual rationalization and decoding, and changes depending on the position of the interpreter (Edwards 61-62). This becomes even more apparent with philosophy and poetry, where the use of abstract and ambiguous language instead promotes the interpretation of multiple meanings: "poetic or philosophical productions also lay traps with their use of metaphor, allusion or dense, abstract reasoning," which when translated by multiple translators makes for an interesting area of comparison (Edwards 63).

The *Tao Te Ching* (also known as the Tao Teh Ching, Dao De Jing, 道德經, The Book of the Way and of Virtue, and so forth.) is a classical Chinese philosophical, religious, and poetic text that dates back to the 4th to 6th century BC. Although these dates and the existence of the original author remains a topic of debate, its origination is credited to Laozi (or Lao Tzu), whose name means "Old Master," and Tao meaning "The Way." This text is fundamental to philosophical and religious thought in Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, and has been used as a source of inspiration for artists all around the world. It's "rhetorical

style combines two major strategies: short, declarative statements and intentional contradictions,” making it an interesting text for translation as it is intended to be ambiguous, leaving room for interpretation where meaning can change the more times it is read, even with only a single reader (Wikipedia). As it was originally written in ancient Classical Chinese, which used very little punctuation, many of its original ideas may have been lost over time, but through numerous amounts of translations (over 300), some of its ideas have been revived for a contemporary and western contextual understandings.

For this analysis, I will compare section 1 of four different English translations of the *Tao Te Ching* in order to examine the translators' use of interpretation and judgement, and the way their social and cultural position can change the consequential implications of a text. The translators I chose for these analyses are Gia-Fu Feng, Stephen Mitchell, John H. McDonald, and Ron Hogan. Gia-Fu Feng's edition was translated in 1972. His translation is significant as he was born in Shanghai, China, and was a teacher and practicing Taoist, giving him a spiritual and cultural emic perspective to the text. He also spent time in the United States translating classical Chinese texts for Alan Watts, giving him both eastern and western political, philosophical, and spiritual perspectives (Wikipedia). Stephen Mitchell published his translation of the *Tao Te Ching* in 1988. He is a renowned American poet and translator and has translated over twenty pieces, many of them religious and classics, into English. His version of the *Tao Te Ching* was highly recommended online and is still popular to this day. His western, Zen spiritual, academic, and poetic background makes for an interesting

perspective for his translation ([stephenmitchellbooks.com](http://stephenmitchellbooks.com)). John H. McDonald's translation was published in 1996. It is a significant translation as it is known for its use modern language and clarity, and like the original, it did not use numbers for section titles to allow for a more fluid reading experience ([books.google.com](http://books.google.com)). Ron Hogan's 2004 version is an interesting and controversial translation, as he did not translate it from Chinese, but rather was inspired by Mitchell's and other English translations, meaning it is a translation of a translation. Rather Hogan tried to simplify and clarify the text by making it less "poetic" and more of a "dialogue," in order to focus more on the underlying advice within the text. His version is commended for making the text accessible to a wider audience and is criticized by scholars and Taoist's because it is seen as "unfaithful" to the original (Hogan Foreword). These translators are significant because of their social, cultural, philosophical, religious, and academic backgrounds, as well as the years translated for more or less contemporary understandings.

Section 1 of the *Tao Te Ching* begins with a vague description of what Tao is not. Both Mitchell and Feng's first two sentences are translated identically as, "The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao" and "The name that can be named is not the eternal name." McDonald's is similar, but rather translates "told" as "described" and "named" as "spoken." Although these words are similar, their insinuations and syllable lengths make for a slightly different interpretation, to "tell" seems to imply less detail than the word "describe." Also, to "name" something can both be done internally, in a written, or a spoken manner, whereas

“spoken” implies only being said aloud. Hogan’s translation then simplifies these lines further to “If you can talk about it, it ain’t Tao. If it has a name, it’s just another thing” (Hogan). By adding the pronoun “you,” the translator makes the phrase personal and possessive, and the word “talk” implies it is only if it is spoken aloud.

Feng then translates the next line, “The nameless is the beginning of heaven and earth.” This time McDonald’s translation is similar to Feng’s, but rather than using the term “beginning” he uses the term “boundary.” The word “beginning” implies the start or creation of “heaven and earth,” whereas “boundary” can imply both beginning and end, or marking a division or border. The word “heaven” also implies Christian connotations. Here, Mitchell's translation takes a different path: "The unnameable is the eternally real." Using "unnameable" changes the meaning to "cannot be named," whereas "nameless" suggests it "does not have a name." Mitchell's translation inspires Hogan is this line and simplifies it to "Tao doesn't have a name," but, by adding the name "Tao," this line then is a contradicting statement.

Feng’s next sentence is translated to “the named is the mother of ten thousand things,” and McDonald's is "The named is the mother of creation." The numbering of "things" appears to set a limit to what is named, whereas "creation" can be seen as endless. Mitchell translates this line to “naming is the origin of all particular things,” and by changing the verb “named” to the adverb “naming” it seems to imply it is still currently happening. Here, Mitchell also uses "origin" rather than "mother," which rather than implying a matriarchy implies the beginning

of existence. Again, Hogan seems to simplify Mitchell's translation further to "Names are for ordinary things." These all seem to imply that if something has a name, it is profane.

Mitchell's next paragraph translates "Free from desire, you realize the mystery. Caught in desire, you see only manifestations." McDonald's translation is close, "Freed from desire, you can see the hidden mystery. By having a desire, you can only see what is visibly real." McDonald, using the past tense "freed" implies that once the individual was not free and had to achieve freedom, and his use of the word "hidden" implies that the mystery was concealed, rather than Mitchell's "realize" which instead implies it is the individual becoming aware of the mystery. Mitchell's use of the word "caught" implies being "stuck" or "trapped," whereas McDonald's "having," implies a type of possessive ownership and responsibility of the individual. Mitchell's use of the word "manifestation" appears to have a more abstract active meaning than McDonald's "visibly real," which appears more tangible. Both of these passages do not flow as nicely as Feng's, "Ever desireless, one can see the mystery. Ever desiring, one sees the manifestations," where the use of the word "ever" implies the concurrent nature of the desire. Hogan's translation appears as more of a command than a suggestion, "stop wanting stuff; it keeps you from seeing what's real. When you want stuff, all you see are things."

Mitchell's "mystery and manifestations arise from the same source," and McDonald's "mystery and reality emerge from the same source" are similar. However, using to "arise" seems to imply "ascension" whereas to "emerge" suggests to "come from." For both, "This source is called darkness," but for Feng "These two spring from the same source, but differ in



name; this appears as darkness,” to “spring” implies a type of sudden movement, and is more detailed. The use of “appear” seems to have less agency, rather than “source,” which implies directly where something comes from.

In the final paragraph of section 1, both Feng and Mitchell translate "darkness within darkness," but McDonald uses "born from" rather than "within." McDonald's version suggests that darkness rather creates itself, and is established further with the final line "the beginning of all understanding," connecting “born” and “beginning.” Feng’s final line is “The gate to all mystery” and Mitchell’s is “The gateway to all understanding,” which both imply that the doorway to “mystery” or “understanding” can be opened or closed, but “mystery” implies more abstraction than “understanding,” which can be comprehended.

This comparison of English translations of section 1 of the *Tao Te Ching* intends to show how the use of interpretation and judgment when different translators select words can suggest different semantic and cultural insinuations within the same text. Kianbakht’s study “Cultural Conceptualizations, Semantics and Translations” relies heavily on Rojo’s article “Applying Frame Semantics, A Practical Example,” which use Frame Semantic Theory to approach Translation Studies in order to explicate the problems of semantic variances and relationships between source texts and target texts, and the environments of cultural elements. As language and culture cannot be separated, it is important to consider the cultural contexts surrounding both the source and translated texts when understanding the semantic and semiotic meaning. Kianbakht describes a frame as consisting of "a group of words as well as cultural

conceptualizations and the situation it initially implies... With every utterance, the associations that we refer to stored cognitive models and cultural conceptualizations from which we try to call up similar experiences" and as everyone experiences the world differently, the experience recalled by each links different associations (Kianbakht). Rojo similarly describes a frame as "structure of knowledge that represent the world view of a particular society, that is, its beliefs, values and emotions, prototypes of people and things, of sequences of situations and events, social scenarios and the metaphorical and metonymical structure of thoughts" (Rojo 313). These accounts of Frame Semantic Theory help to explain the variances found within cross-cultural and cross-generational translations as contextual and cultural frames differ in the cognitive recall process for every individual.

Kianbakht's second notion presented in his study was that of "Functional Equivalence" in translation theory. He categorizes two modes of equivalence, "functional equivalence" in translation works to modify the meaning of the source text to fit the cultural context of the target text, whereas "correspondence" in the translations target text works to activate the intended knowledge of the source text (Kianbakht). The challenge in identifying equivalence between the source text and translated text of the *Tao Te Ching* occurs because of the age of the text and language used during that time. Ancient Chinese is not practiced commonly today and uses very little punctuation and verbs. However, in analyzing Hogan's translation of Mitchell's already English translation, it appears as though he uses the mode of functional equivalence over correspondence because Hogan works to make the text more accessible to a

culturally western audience. The choices between functional equivalence and correspondence account for some of the variances found between the English translations of the *Tao Te Ching*.

Between source text, translated target text, and reader, and the cultural and contextual frames each brings to the writing, translating, and reading experience, a significant amount of variances will co-occur. Rojo argues, "only if the TT (target text) linguistic elements activate the relevant frames for the interpretation of the text, will readers be able to draw the correct contextual inferences on the basis of their frame- based knowledge. From this point of view, the translator becomes a bilingual and bicultural ‘mediator’ between two different conceptual systems" (Rojo 315), which is why it is essential for the translators to be sensitive and aware of cultural and contextual systems.

The art of translation and the role of the translator has kept the *Tao Te Ching* alive transnationally since its origination in the 4th century BC and has continued to pass down its philosophies since its creation. Although variances occur between translators and translations, so does semantic understanding between readers of the same text. Even if variances have occurred from the source text to the translated ones, the translation of the *Tao Te Ching* has managed to continue to extend the life of this text, and to bridge the language gaps between China and the rest of the world, spreading interpretations of its philosophical teachings, and enriching not only the target language but also the source language in the process.

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# An Analysis of Susan Sontag's Book, *On Photography*, Chapter 1: "In Plato's Cave"

*Brittany Valcourt*

Plato's allegory of the cave is an extended metaphor that is homogenous to contemporary society. The cave itself represents a person's philosophical journey by symbolizing the physical world. Plato uses the cave to symbolize the process of establishing truth from falsehoods through the presentation of the prisoner's ignorance. Incapable of distinction, the prisoners base their reality on the accessible physical senses around them or the immediate illusions inside the walls of the cave. The intelligible world is only steps away from the prisoner's current reality, but their own ignorance is preventing this discovery. For Plato, the allegory of the cave represents humanity's lack of consciousness and rationalization.

Susan Sontag argues that humanity is still inside Plato's cave. Plato's epistemology draws a sharp distinction between knowledge and mere opinion. Between knowledge and opinion, contemporary society has come to prefer concepts that are readily available. "The Allegory Of the Cave" theorizes this by having the prisoners believe their immediate senses rather than their objective reasoning. In

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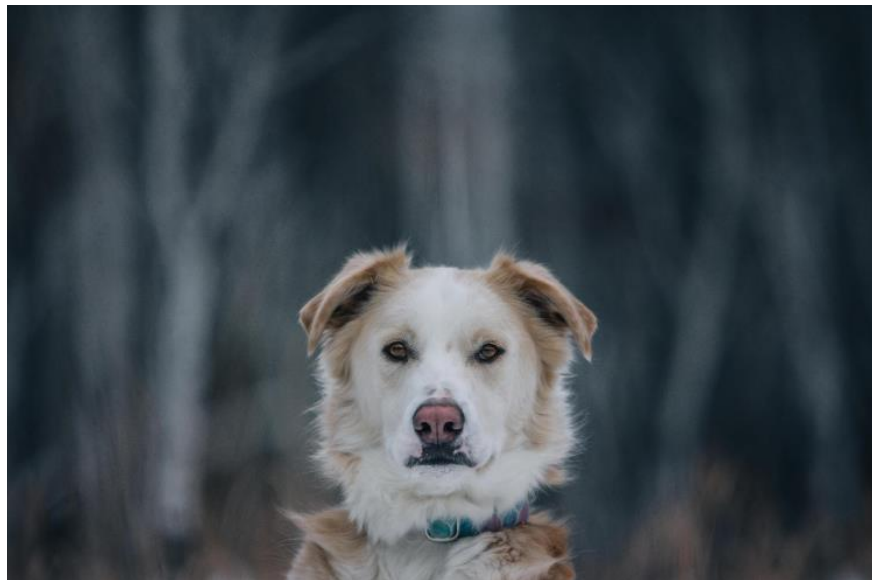
her collection of essays, Susan Sontag applies these theories to photography. Through photography, we collect fragmented stills of the world and reproduce them for others. These stills represent the world through fragmented presentations that are adapted by a photographer's interpretation. Photography has the power to apply meaning to a situation by establishing it as an event worthy of being captured. Photography exemplifies artistic representations of the human experience. Sontag's observations warn of the power and influence photography can have on society.

Photographers can intelligibly control the representation of truth and art in their photographic images. Photographers present images to be favourable to their viewpoint by manipulating them to enhance their rhetorical function. As a multi-layered representation of truth, photographers have the power to manipulate emotion and mentality through their images. Photographers do this by photographing subjects, that support "their own notions about poverty, light dignity, texture, exploitation and geometry. In deciding how a picture should look, in preferring one exposure to another, photographers are always imposing standards on their subject" (Sontag 4). To support this claim, I contacted the local Winnipeg photographer, Chris P. Bakon. Bakon sent me a variety of photographs, raw and edited, from his most recent photoshoot. Memorializing a seemingly mundane event (Figure 1), he crafts a generic photograph of a dog to elicit emotion (Figure 2) through various computerized enhancements.



(Figure 1. *Chris P. Bakon Photography 2019*)

The subject of the photograph remains the same from the raw (Figure 1) and edited photograph (Figure 2), but the overall pathos is drastically enhanced through various photographic manipulations.



(Figure 2. *Chris P. Bakon Photography 2019*)

The artistry in the edited photograph is evident as it supports Sontag's claim that "photographs are as much an interpretation of the world as paintings and drawings are" (4). The edit of a

photograph can depend on the emotion and message the photographer wishes to elicit. In Chris P. Bakon's case, his edits (although harmless) are presenting an idealized representation of his subject, crafted to support the overall pathos of the original photograph.

Photography has become a widely practiced art form that can be approached by amateurs and professionals alike. Editing software is readily available to those wishing to further their interpretation of a given image. In contemporary media, the editing of photographs is encouraged and well-received. A professional photographer needs to master composition and technique in order to edit their photos appealingly. As a society, we have grown to idealize misrepresentations of truth and aim to present our photographs in an attractive way. Users on the social media platform, Instagram, are encouraged by social media influencers to present their pictures in a theme-like format. Instagram themes focus on the overall fluidity of the page rather than each fragmented subject (Figure 3).





(Figure 3. [www.instagram.com/craspybakon](https://www.instagram.com/craspybakon))

Although the fragmented piece is important, an Instagram theme displays visual consistency. By being visually consistent, photographers can market their photos to a target audience. Instagram culture encourages consumerism through photography. Brand cohesiveness is an essential part of contemporary photography.

In a network era, photography has become a way to shape one's identity. We engage with others online and produce photos that reassure others of our social identity. The private

sectors of our lives have become defined by the social identity we display within the virtual sectors of our lives. To increase our self-image and perceived likeness of our in-group, we will actively post favourably to the groups we identify with. Our lives have now become visually accessible to those we associate with. Photographic images play a big part in Western social identity. We are a society consumed with the visual medium that has the power to define us and those around us. Photography can mislead or misrepresent our self-identity to one that we aspire to present. Social media allows users to display idealized representations of their life. As a viewer, we only see the finished product, the image. Photographic images are often calculated, composed and then edited to reinforce our perceived social identity.

Photography collapses physical boundaries by creating the illusion of closeness through photographed images. We have become dependent on the connectedness photography, and social media provides. Photographs elicit desire by feeding directly into the erotic feelings of those "whom desirability is enhanced by distance" (Sontag 12). The immediacy and availability of photographic images expose viewers to fragmented scenes of reality. Susan Sontag describes this process as, "once one has seen such images one has started down the road of seeing more – and more. Images transfix. Images anesthetize"(15). Since the rise of our technology-mediated world, photographs that dance with the ethics of photojournalism have become highly circulated on various social media platforms. Although the circulation was in effect years ago through printed media, the rise of the technological era has made dangerous and grotesque images readily available and familiarized by those who view them.

“Photographed atrocities wears off with repeated viewing,” (Sontag 15) which can have an incalculable effect on our ethical sensibility.

The ethical issues that are raised from the practice of capturing atrocities is called the “ethics of seeing.” By placing distance between the subject and photographer, the photographer must ask themselves if they wish to take advantage of the situation by exploiting the subject for financial or artistic gain. This moral dilemma presents the photographer with a choice "between a photograph and life" (Sontag 8). Unfortunately, in most cases, a photographer will choose the photograph. The cost of images is a dangerous one. We view photographs as truth and "accept it as the camera records is" (Sontag 17). We familiarize and desensitize ourselves to the realities provided from photographic images. Sensationalism has become a dominating tool in Western media. Photography grants photographers with privilege and power by not viewing them ethically responsible for capturing obscene images (Sontag 15). Contemporary photography often focuses on the physical manipulations of a photograph rather than the deeper problematic issues of the subject being photographed. I think it is important to note that obscene photography can bring light to issues that may have been hidden from the general public before. I believe there is a way to document a situation in a way that is ethically responsible and sensible to the subject being photographed. Social consciousness and responsibility is an integral part of the visual arts industry.

Susan Sontag analyzes the visual narratives presented by contemporary photography by revealing the aesthetic consumerism properties that control it. Her argument places

photographs as privileged fragmented pieces, interpreted images by visual artists. A camera is a tool of power that assists professionals and amateurs alike in this artistic craft. We as a society have developed a dependence on the photographed image. We rely on images to provide proof and context of our everyday lives. The effective capacities of photography can desensitize grotesque situations with repeated exposure. Photography has the power to influence and persuade judgment despite the manipulative capabilities that go into contemporary photography. Photographs cannot be trusted as mirrored representations of reality but can be advantageous in the way it connects us to people and places like never before. When viewed critically, photographs can be enjoyed for their artistic presentation.

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# Getting Good: The Benefits of Video Games and How They Affect Society

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*CLARENCE is currently enrolled in the Faculty of Education at the University of Winnipeg. With a major in History and a minor in Chemistry, Clarence is enjoying his first year at the University. Clarence is currently working on a short story for an extended Academic writing class that is inspired by video-game culture.*

The video game industry has reached new horizons for the entertainment industry. Video games were first introduced in 1958 when a physicist named William Higinbotham created a simple game on a screen that is similar in gameplay to the more iconic '70s game, Pong. As the years progressed, video games have evolved from Pong's simple platform to a realistic production of modern life. However, the entertainment industry cannot exist without opposition. The most notable candidates for opposing video games would be social justice warriors, pastors and highly-religious people, overprotective parents, and of course, the media. These specific groups of people are known to have said and written things that give video games the stigma of being "potentially dangerous" and "unhealthy" for it's audience. To a certain extent, they are not wrong. It is true that video games are unhealthy both physically and mentally, and they do have contain mature subject matters for their mature audiences. Despite this, nothing much is said about the benefits of video games. In this essay, I will be arguing the opposition stance on videogames and how they can be useful in everyday life. I will be discussing the

potential benefits of videogames in regards to a person's cognitive and physical functioning. I will also highlight the hidden charms of video games is sure to fascinate those unfamiliar with the video-game industry.

One big issue in video games is the majority of popular games involve the player sitting in their chair for hours on end. Video games are branded as being physically unhealthy when they are casted under this light. Video games have combatted these issues through the term known as "exergaming," which was first introduced when Konami's, Dance Dance Revolution made its debut in the arcade. Although it is not the most popular genre these games involve the use of the human body to perform motions to play the game. The Japanese video game company, Nintendo, introduced its revolutionary use of motion-sensing technology with their new home console, the Nintendo Wii, in 2006. The console came with a game titled *Wii Sports*. In *Wii Sports* players can simulate playing various sports with the simple motion of the Wii Remote in their hand. For example, playing tennis would require a person to swing the Wii Remote as if they were holding a tennis racket. Only a year later, Nintendo introduced *Wii Fit* along with its unique controller known as the "Balance Board" in 2007. The balance board led to a remarkable and unique new form of physical therapy known as *Wii-Hab* and was created for children and seniors alike. Physical therapists have been able to implement this new form of therapy into their daily therapy regimens with plausible results. It is important to note that *Wii-Hab* does not provide the precisely required therapies that patients need but it does provide patients with different benefits, especially when the Balance Board is being used.

The Balance Board can determine a person's ability to balance their weight, and track progress on the individual. The Balance Board also acts as a remote for various physically demanding games, such as dancing. One of the most popular forms of "exergaming" is the game *Just Dance*, developed by Ubisoft. Players can dance to a whole plethora of songs and score points by performing the movements in sync to the game's display. These movements are custom to each song and vary in intensity, ensuring the player's maximum enjoyment when performing the routine in sync with the screen.

Video games are known for its cognitive benefits. One of the most renowned benefits of video games are their ability to improve a person's hand-eye coordination. In a study conducted by the University of Toronto, thirty-six participants took part in a test where eighteen participants, who have played fast-paced action games, and eighteen non-gamers were tasked in tracking a moving white square. The ultimate goal of the test was to keep the mouse cursor inside the square as it moved into increasingly more difficult and intricate patterns. At the end of the trial, the gamers edged out the non-gamers (although at a slow start). However, this test showed that playing video games does not provide a person with an immediate boost when attempting to master new skills, but it can help some individuals learn these skills over time. Hand-eye coordination is not the only benefit that people can gain as a cognitive skill through video games. Each game has its way of showing its value in regards to a person's cognitive abilities. Cognitive abilities involve a person's memory, their attentiveness, their concentration skills, their problem-solving skills, communication skills,

and their reaction speed. Video games, such as *Real-Time Strategy*, allows for a person to improve on their situational awareness skills as well as multitasking skills. Games like these include the popular series *StarCraft*, *Company of Heroes*, and *Age of Empires*. These games require a player to gather and manage resources while training their units to successfully defeat an opponent's base whilst defending their own.

Alongside the improvement of cognitive abilities, video games have also been proven to aid those suffering from mental disabilities, such as autism and post-traumatic stress disorder. In an online article titled "How Video Games Are Helping Young Veterans Cope" by Jake Offenhartz, Jake interviews a young retired U.S. Army specialist named Rob Gibson, who was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder. Gibson told Offenhartz that he uses video games as his means of suppressing any symptoms of PTSD. According to the article, Gibson enjoys playing *Mass Effect* and *Fallout series* as he avoids games that are too realistic to modern reality, such as *Battlefield* and *Arma*. Gibson also plays *Counter-Strike: Global Offensive*, also known as *CS: GO*, which is an online multiplayer first-person shooter. Surprisingly, despite *CS: GO* being a shooter based on real-life entities, Gibson states, "It's kind of nice just because you focus on that other person for like 90 minutes: I am not Rob with PTSD, I am that person in the game. I am very vocal there, calling out which location to go to and stuff like that" (Offenhartz). Journalist Hillary Smith writes in her blog post, that individuals with autism use video games as a way of learning how to problem solve and to adapt to different situations. Hilary Smith (2016) states that by:



Putting children or adults with autism in these situations will be uncomfortable for them at first, but if they want to continue playing the game, they will have no choice but to become more flexible in their way of thinking. Over time, this will help individuals improve their problem-solving skills and handle change more gracefully in the world.

A common misconception about video games is that they supposedly make players "less sociable" to other people. However, studies have shown that seventy percent of gamers play with friends, and an even more significant number of gamers play games where they can be connected with others across the globe. These games fall under the "Massive Multiplayer Online (MMO)" genre. MMO series include *World of Warcraft* and *Destiny*, which typically involves role-playing game play. In role-playing game play, players can interact with each other in real time and do specific tasks and activities in a small group, referred to a party or team. The addition of multiplayer functions creates these virtual social communities where people make decisions on whom they can trust the most and provide them with leadership skills. "People who play video games, even if they are violent, that encourage cooperation are more likely to be helpful to others while gaming than those who play the same games competitively, a 2011 study found" (Bowen). One good example of this type of game is the tactical, first-person, multiplayer shooter, *Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six: Siege* (Ubisoft 2015). In *Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six: Siege*, there are five players on two teams, one attacking and one defending as they go head to head in a typical "best three-out-of-five style" match to come out

victorious in the end. Attackers gather information on the location of a strategic objective as well as enemy defender positions, while defenders attempt in stopping the attackers from securing the said objective. *Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six: Siege* is heavily centred on the destruction of the environment, which opens up new sightlines and points of entry for all players. *Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six: Siege*'s main catch, however, is that it highly encourages communication amongst players to talk to each other and communicate any form of crucial information to their teammates in order to win. Critical information is the location of the objective, positions of enemies, or potentially hazardous routes. In addition, video games can be used even for educational purposes. Some games have been made specifically to educate and train players on various math problems, literacy problems, and memory. Games like these include *Brain Age* and *Big Brain Academy*. Despite the typical dramatization of the modern human experience, some video games use this to their advantage by basing their platform off real historical events that revive history and show us how some societies and civilizations once lived.

The charm of video games may be overlooked upon first glance. The video game industry has opened up new forms of employment for people who specialize in different fields. People who are artists, composers, musicians, designers, or writers can work in the entertainment industry as a video game engineer. Video games are comparable to film in the way they can provide a compelling story, noteworthy graphics, tear-jerking music, and brilliant dialogue. The benefits of the video game entertainment industry is often overlooked

due to some of the violent nature that is present in some video games. To shed light on the situation, some incredible masterpieces have been made over the years in the video game industry. These legendary video game masterpieces include the *Halo* series, *The Legend of Zelda* series and the *Ace Combat* series.

To conclude, video games are a staple entertainment industry in today's society. The description of Jamie Madigan's book, *Getting Gamers: The Psychology of Video Games and Their Impact on the People who Play Them*, says "Much of the medium's success is built on careful (though sometimes unwitting) adherence to basic principles of psychology." Although the media and certain groups of people cannot stop putting video games down for what they are, video games are always making uncovering new bounds under the radar. The continuous development of games that promote physical activity are being further enhanced with new introductions of virtual reality and augmented reality that can help people become more physically active. Additionally, video games are also adding in features that allows people with various disabilities to participate. Colour-blindness settings have been around for quite some time, and specially configured control inputs were made for people who even have missing limbs. Video games may have a bad reputation due to the constant negativity from various platforms. However, they have also shown us what positive benefits they can provide. Whether they are meant for the eyes of children or meant to be played by older folks, video games will always play a crucial role in modern societies entertainment industry.

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# Saturday Night Live with Performances from Donald Trump, brought to you by Capitalist America: A Sociological Review on the Relationships between Satires and Political Ideologies

*Tamika Reid*

During the 2016 American presidential election, Donald Trump's vulgar and informal rhetoric was accepted because of his celebrity identity and self-branding. NBC's Saturday Night Live's (SNL) rise in popularity subsequently matched the rise in popularity of Trump during the 2016 American presidential election and inauguration of President Trump. In 2017, NBC reported that SNL's 2015-16 season reached its highest Nielsen ratings in 22 years (Littleton, 2017). The show, now infamous for its satirical sketches and re-enactments of President Trump's media appearances might not just undermine President Trump's character, but actually promote his political agenda.

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## **An analysis of Political Ideologies:**

The purpose of this research paper is to investigate if SNL, despite its seemingly leftist position, actually supports the Trump administration's political agenda and the dominant capitalist ideology in America. In order to evaluate SNL's support for the Trump

administration's political agenda and support for capitalist ideologies in America, Donald Trump's policies, and his political and celebrity image; mass media and pop culture's relationship with political ideologies; implication of satirical humor; SNL's relationships to American politics; and specific SNL episodes with parodies of Trump need to be studied.

### *Donald Trump's Political and Celebrity Image*

In previous decades, prior to the 2016 presidential election, Trump entertained the masses on reality television shows with the same comical and vulgar behaviours he demonstrated during the election. Goldstein & Hall (2017) argue that Trump's unconventional behavior gave him an advantage in a political arena; "his opponents could not compete with the comedic weapons of this powerful celebrity, precisely because his antics, while inappropriate for politicians, could readily be excused in Trump's case as the stuff of entertainment" (Goldstein & Hall, 2017).

### *Mass Media Relationship with Trump and Political Ideologies*

Although the media has framed Trump's actions as controversial or negative, the media still functions to reinforce the same capitalist ideology Trump's administration is based on. According to Smythe (1981), the media's main function in a capitalist society is to produce audiences and sell these audiences to advertisers including political candidates. The controversial coverage of Trump in the media can be summed up as a network's façade of democracy because:

The media and their controllers boast of the openness of the communications system that permits such critical material to be aired to the nation. Mass audiences accept this argument and are persuaded that they have access to a free flow of opinion. (Schiller 1973)

It is essential to maintain the façade of media neutrality to maintain a system of control where audiences believe “no special groups or views have a preponderant influence on the country’s important decision-making process” (Schiller, 1973). The outcome of political advertising and news management, according to Smythe (1981), is to produce people who support or oppose particular policies. Moreover, the media curates a daily agenda of ideas and issues audiences pay attention to (Smythe, 1981). The coverage of Trump in the media, critical or not, gives Trump and his administration policies a platform to frequently reach mass audiences. If Schiller’s concept of myth neutrality is combined with Smythe’s theory of political advertising, the frequency of Trump’s messages and his administration’s policies in the media aims to produce audiences who will overtime accept the Trump administration’s policies because it seems natural and inevitable.

Although Americans can access different types of information and entertainment programs, all programs fit into a narrow range of categories; “this means that diversity in the information-entertainment sector exists only in the sense that there are a number of superficially different versions of the main categories of programs” (Schiller, 1973). The news and SNL, subsequently, can therefore be categorized as similar programs; according to Reinheld (2006), young adults in America “learn about the news and political issues from the

‘smart alecks’ on the program (SNL) who give their own opinions through ‘Weekend Update’ jokes or characterizations of political figures.” Moreover, SNL is a “rival media organization” that “influence[s] public opinion on candidates and issues” (Abel & Barthel, 2013). Correspondingly, Schiller (1973) claims that, “the notion that entertainment is not instructive must be classed as one of the biggest deceptions in history.” So what is SNL instructing viewers to do or think in a political landscape?

### *SNL’s relationship to American Politics*

The idea of using self-ironising jokes to reinforce political ideologies was first introduced by Adorno. From the Frankfurt School of critical theory, Adorno first argued in the twentieth century that the culture industry commodified all forms of art. In the case of satire, Adorno claims satirical humor teaches viewers to laugh at their present environment and adjust to their humiliating situation in society (Adorno, 1954). It can then be argued that SNL is in fact conditioning viewers to accept Trump’s policies and a dominant capitalist ideology in America. According to Kreller (2014), SNL’s long-standing success is attributed to the show’s ability to adapt to, and promote, the current political beliefs in America. Hakola (2017), also affirms that topicality is emphasized in SNL political sketches that feature impersonations, as “candidates are presented in changing situations, which may be familiar to the audience due to earlier events or media discussions, such as primaries or television debates.”



According to Hakola's in-depth research on the effects of SNL's political impersonations, Donald Trump and Hilary Clinton impersonations during the 2016 presidential election became the highlight of SNL. Hakola (2017) claims that, "impersonations have often focused on creating recognizable caricatures and memorable quotes instead of including direct or harsh criticism" about candidates or their campaign. Although Hakola suggests SNL supported Clinton by giving her character more relatable attributes through impersonations with audience-to-actor reactionary shots, I dispute that SNL reduced Clinton to a passive icon for liberal viewers to follow in suit of. Hakola (2017) argues that the main point of SNL debate sketches were to "show Clinton's reactions to Trump's comments" in order to spark laughter and create "a mark of social understanding" with potential Clinton supporters. In conjunction to Hakola's argument, Director of the Centre of Politics at the University of Virginia, Larry Sabato said, "people who hate Trump need to gather together and sometimes it's in the streets and sometimes it's watching a show like 'Saturday Night Live'" (as quoted in Battaglio, 2017). Overall, Hakola theorizes that Clinton's function in SNL's 2015 – 2016 season sketches were to enact a liberal agenda by including liberal viewers on the inside of jokes, while excluding Trump and his supporters to the butt of jokes. Later in this paper, I will also analyze, and prove, how Trump and Clinton's impersonations during SNL season 2015 – 2016 is supporting Trump, Trump's administration, and a capitalist ideology by using Schiller's concept of mind management.

#### *Theoretical Analysis of SNL Episode*

In her analysis of SNL 2015 – 2016 season sketches featuring Clinton, Hakola (2017) reports that SNL “made Trump an active part in the sketches and reduced Clinton’s role to being reactive. Thus, in the latter part of the campaign SNL toned down Clinton’s political expertise.” In my analysis of sketches featuring Trump and Clinton during the 2015 – 2016 SNL season, I also found Clinton became passive to Trump’s antics. To further illustrate that the effects of making Clinton passive in sketches caused Trump to appear to be the dominate candidate, I will analyze one “Donald Trump vs. Hilary Clinton Debate” sketch from season 42.

*Donald Trump vs. Hilary Clinton Debate Season 42, Episode 1705*

In Alec Baldwin’s debut performance of impersonating Trump, he immediately became the focus of the skit. In the skit, Trump made racist comments about Black Americans, Mexicans, and China; and misogynic comments about Rosie O’Donnell. In accordance with Schiller’s concept of mind management, SNL is therefore reinforcing and normalizing Trump’s harmful rhetoric. Clinton, played by Kate McKinnon, was overshadowed by Trump.

When Clinton attempted to call out Trump on his lack of concern for climate change, starting the birther movement, and his bullying antics, Trump talked over her saying her statements were wrong. Furthermore, when Clinton suggested that Trump has never paid taxes in his life, Trump indicated Clinton’s statements were true by saying she was getting “warmer”; in this exchange we see that Trump is asserting the “dominant interests of the state-

capitalist economy” over Clinton’s leftist position (Schiller, 1973).

Although Hakola (2017), argues that SNL sketches favored Clinton, by giving her more relatable qualities, letting her break the fourth wall to connect with viewers, and foreshadowing that she would win the election, I dispute that the sketches made Clinton appear to be the weaker candidate of the two. In the beginning of the skit, Clinton’s was poked fun at for her fight with pneumonia earlier that year as she entered the debate stage falling, and then summersaulting back up like Gene Wilder in *Charlie in the Chocolate Factory*; I argue that this representation of Clinton instructs viewers to question the capability of her physical strength. In the middle of the skit, Clinton broke the fourth wall several times to share her facial expression to viewers while Trump said outrageous things; because Clinton refused to speak over, or address Trump’s accusations, I argue that SNL undermined Clinton by allowing Trump to again reinforce his dominance. Furthermore, when Clinton was offered two minutes to respond to Trump’s outrageous allegations, she said “that’s okay [Trump] could have my two.” Even though SNL foreshadowed that Clinton would win the 2016 election in the skit when Clinton said, “I think I’m going to be president,” and “this (the debate) is going so well.”; SNL contradicted this idea later in the skit. In Clinton’s closing statement for the debate, she said, “listen American, I get it. You hate me. You hate my voice and hate my face. If you never want to see my face again, elect me president and I swear to God I will lock myself in the oval office and not come out for four years. But if you don’t elect me I will continue to run for president until the day I die, and I will never die.” This statement

ultimately lessened the urgency for American's to vote for Clinton in the 2016 presidential election, because Clinton said she will keep running for president. Again, using Schiller's concept of mind management, I argue that SNL is working in "a commercial society is not to arouse but to lessen concern about social and economic realities" in the wake of Trump's presidency (Schiller, 1973).

Overall, SNL undermined Clinton's capability of being the 45<sup>th</sup> president of the United States and presented Trump as active and dominate presidential candidate. Even if the reports suggests viewers of SNL were more likely to support Clinton, according to Hakola (2017), I argue that SNL is instructing liberal viewers to passively accept Trump and his political administration through self-effacing humor.

### *Conclusions and Future Study*


By researching Trump's policies, and his political and celebrity image; the mass media and pop culture's relationship with political ideologies; the implication of satirical humor; SNL's relationships to American politics; and a specific SNL episode with parodies of Trump, I conclude that SNL is supporting the Trump administration's political agenda and the dominant capitalist ideology in America. In addition, the medium on which SNL exists exacerbates submissiveness in viewers, because "one of the characteristic things about television, is that you turn it on and then you take whatever comes, which implies an enormously passive attitude on the part of the viewer" (Arnheim, 1972). To quote Erik Barnouw, "fiction may be far more important than non-fiction in forming people's opinions,"

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# *Rooted in Rhetoric*

*Introspection*

*Outrospection*



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