Rooted in Rhetoric

Identity in the 21st Century

Volume 7

Fall 2022

Cover Art

Trinity Chartier

Editors

Zena Bjarnason
Trinity Chartier
Keira Jordan
Ashley Hantscher
Breanna Markiewicz
Sarah Seroy

Layout Editor

Juscenta Haligowski

Contributors

Matthew Frank
Dagen I. Perrott
Grace Klassen
Evan Teillet
Kelsey Tishinski
Juscenta Haligowski
Celeste Paquette
Isabela Marie Franco
Sarah Seroy
Aanuoluwapo Aribilola
Anna Schaible-Schur
Noah Douglas-McKay
Ana Ilagan
Alvena Ali Wasim
Malaihka Siemen

Table of Contents

Foreword: Zena Bjarnason....3

Introduction: Trinity Chartier....5

Rhetorical Critique

Matthew Frank: *Atlanta* and the Aesthetic of Absurdity....7

Dagen I. Perrott: Creating Content Through Form: Art as a Product....21

Evan Teillet: Aristotelian Critique of Ron DeSantis....40

Grace Klassen: The Power of Pacifism....55

Kelsey Tishinski: Terry Crews' Amazon Advertisement....69

Juscenta Haligowski: Entering the Hermeneutic Circle with BTS' Infamous "War of Hormone"....84

Research Essay

Celeste Paquette: Adolescence Versus the Power of Representation....99

Isabela Marie Franco: Analyzing Cancel Culture's Role in Society....112

Sarah Seroy: Indigenous Resistance, Infrastructure Projects, and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women....129

Aanuoluwapo Aribilola: Black Cultural Appropriation (Blackfishing) in Popular Culture and Main Media....155

Book Report

Sarah Seroy: *Ten Days in A Mad-House* by Nellie Bly....167

Book Review

Anna Schaible-Schur: Star-Spangled Ratings: The Anthropocene Reviewed...177

Reportage

Noah Douglas-McKay: Fisher River Cree Nation: A Story of Environmental Innovations and Economic Resilience 187

Ana Ilagan: Beginnings..... 208

Personal Essay

Alvena Ali Wasim: High Ceilings and Persian Rugs..... 229

Malaihka Siemens: Post-Secondary Imposter Syndrome 237

Foreword: Zena Bjarnason

How does one encapsulate identity within a few words? Our students who submitted their work into this year's *Rooted in Rhetoric* may agree with us that it is nearly impossible. The issue of identity, especially within the 21st century, has become so complex. When a person expresses themselves in the public eye, what consequences may they face? There may be issues surrounding proper representation. After all, we must find a way to share a person's story properly. How do we contend with viewpoints where we disagree or where we sense discrimination, or do we simply avoid topics we hold dear to our heart? During 2022, where we as students attempt to deconstruct everything we thought we knew, we may discover our identity as we read between these lines. Through what may seem like a simple review of a book or TV show, we build upon theories of classism, racism, objectification, as well as the ever-tricky, ever-

controversial cancel culture. We do this in order to form our own identity in a world that tries so hard to label and define us. Identity may be found through our own heritage or upbringing, our environment, perhaps with a change of environment, or even through examples we see in media around us. And thus, as we find our own identities in this current world. We can do our best to bring about concrete change, and create a world that better fits our hopes, dreams, and passions. Through this 2022 issue of Rooted in Rhetoric, we invite you into our perspectives of how we see the world working and how we can change things for the better. As you travel along this literary journey, we hope to inspire you through our own explorations of identity.

Introduction: Trinity Chartier

"Identity in the 21st Century" is the seventh volume of *Rooted in Rhetoric*, an academic journal published by the University of Winnipeg's Department of Rhetoric, Writing, and Communications. Volume seven, displays student writings in the form of research essays, personal narratives, critiques, and book reviews. The authors of these works come from a variety of disciplines, including but not limited to, Rhetoric, Conflict Resolution, Sociology, English, and Politics.

The theme of identity woven with modern ideas is present in the different articles of writing. In our ever-evolving world, the students of the University of Winnipeg bring forth a portfolio of writings that critique the world we live in, demonstrating students' ability to think for themselves and navigate the world. The writings in this volume set out to inspire thought and divergence.

Thank you to the students who wrote pieces for the journal.

Thank you to Dr. Andrew McGillivary, Dr. Helen Lepp Friesen, Dr. Eunhee Buettner, and Dr. Ryan Clement for advising on and facilitating the production of this seventh volume. Thank you to the Department of Rhetoric, Writing, and Communications for funding the *Rooted in Rhetoric* journal, to allow for the sharing of student ideas.

Matthew Frank: *Atlanta* and the Aesthetic of Absurdity

Matthew Frank is an undergraduate student at the University of Winnipeg and is currently pursuing a BA in Communications. Once graduated, Matthew aspires to apply his writing to journalism. In his spare time, Matthew enjoys discovering new music and taking walks with his dog, Carlos. He lives in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

For this rhetorical critique, I will be using the Russian Formalist framework to analyze how the first episode, "The Big Bang", of the television show *Atlanta* crafts an aesthetic of absurdist realism. In doing so, I will be looking at what aesthetic devices and tools were used to create the scenes of *Atlanta*. My hope for this critique is to bring attention to the genius of *Atlanta* and to use Russian Formalism to emphasize the "artfulness" of how *Atlanta* is written and directed to create a unique aesthetic for a television show of its genre. *Atlanta* is an

important television show for our present-day reality, not only for its aesthetic tools and "artfulness", but also because it uses its creativity to bring awareness and perspective into the reality of the lives of millions of African Americans.

Atlanta premiered on FX, with its first episode, "The Big Bang", released on September 6th, 2016. Set in a mirror reality of present-day America, this fictional version of Atlanta is home to the show's main characters, Earnest 'Earn' Marks, played by Donald Glover, Alfred 'Paper Boi' Miles, played by Brian Tyree Henry, Darius, played by LaKeith Stanfield, and Van, played by Zazie Beetz. As these characters progress throughout the show, *Atlanta* highlights the impossibility for equality within the America they live in (Clarke). As Clarke states "They (the main characters) achieve just enough success to be impressed with themselves, but not enough to navigate their world with anything resembling security" (174). Routinely throughout *Atlanta*, the characters are hopelessly caught

dreaming and being disappointed by every action they make (Clarke). Director Jordan Peele perfectly summarizes the feeling of *Atlanta,* saying "For black people, *Atlanta* provides the catharsis of 'Finally, some elevated black shit.' For white people, Glover wants the catharsis to be an old-fashioned plunge into pity and fear" (Friend para. 10).

The creator, executive producer, writer, and lead actor of *Atlanta,* Donald Glover, was the driving force for the show since its inception. Before *Atlanta,* Glover gained his fame through acting on shows like *Community,* writing for *30 Rock,* and making music under the name Childish Gambino (Friend). As Friend states "Glover has always been told he doesn't sound black or Southern, loaded compliments he rejects" (Friend para. 9). Glover, growing up in the suburbs outside of Atlanta to parents who were Jehovah's Witnesses, placed much of his own experience of the subtle racism and microaggressions within the show (Friend). *Atlanta* is as

much part of Glover as Glover is part of *Atlanta.*

For my critical approach, I will be using the Russian Formalism framework. Established in 1915, the theory was birthed and further developed by key figures such as Roman Jakobson, Boris Eichenbaum, and Victor Shklovsky (Stam). Russian Formalism is primarily occupied with defining the "literariness" or the "artfulness" of an artifact (Erlich). Originally developed as literary theory, as the twentieth century progressed and the prevalence of film increased, Formalists began to apply their theory to cinema as well (Stam). To effectively define the "literariness" of an artifact in the eyes of the Russian Formalists, the principals of poetic and plot-driven language and defamiliarization were to be used.

For Russian Formalism, the distinction between poetic and plot-driven language is also a key concept when determining the "artfulness" of an artifact. With the concept primarily developed by Roman Jakobson,

the distinguishing factor between poetic and plot-driven language was that poetic language was the emphasis on the medium while plot-driven language strictly served a communicative function (Erlich). Eichenbaum stated, as cited by Erlich, "The aim of poetry is to make perceptible the texture of the word in all its aspects" (631). The poetic choices within the syntax of an artifact create its surrounding aesthetic when separated from the plot. The Russian Formalists saw the art of film to be purely aesthetic (Stam). Stam states "Just as plot is subordinate to rhythm in poetry, so plot is subordinate to style in cinema" (49). When searching for the aesthetic within a scene, one must separate the poetic and plot-driven elements and then deconstruct the choices in materials, such as lighting, camera movements, music, and writing (Stam). I will be applying this concept to *Atlanta* by first separating the plot-driven language from the poetic, and then deconstructing specific scenes to identify their aesthetic elements.

Defamiliarization, championed by Shklovsky, is the process of deconstructing the aesthetics of an artifact to show how they function to create a new experience within the artifact (Stam). For Shklovsky, poetic art was to challenge the everyday norms and go beyond conventional understanding to reveal something new (Erlich). As Stam states, "Defamiliarization was to be achieved through unmotivated formal devices based on the deviations from established norms" (48). When applying the principal of defamiliarization to film, or in this case television, I will be looking at how the aesthetic devices within *Atlanta* are used to "make strange" norms that are portrayed within the episode and how its writing and its direction utilize its aesthetic to create the effect of defamiliarization for the viewer.

For my analysis of the first episode of *Atlanta*, I will be looking at 3 separate scenes from the show. The first scene is the opening scene of the episode. The plot of the scene has the three main characters, Earn,

Alfred, and Darius getting into a confrontation with a man and a woman after the man smashed Alfred's car mirror while he was inside. As the argument persists, Alfred says "I'll talk to whoever however I want, if you got a problem with it, we can settle it, but my car was not involved, man" (Glover & Murai 00:00:40). The situation escalates and Alfred pulls out a gun and points it at the chest of the man he's arguing with. Darius spots a dog in the distance and then the scene cuts to black.

Within the first shot of the scene, Murai's direction uses poetic materials through using an over-the-shoulder shot with only the car mirror in focus. This shot creates the effect of the audience being a passive viewer of the unfolding events. After the mirror is smashed, a wide angle shot shows the silhouettes of the man and woman walking away from Alfred's car, backlit by the lights of the convenience store. Shakey camera shots track Alfred and Earn running up to the man and woman. This effect increases the tension of the scene and

shows the urgency for the characters. As the two groups confront each other, the shot changes to showing the silhouettes of both groups in front of the convenience store. Throughout the aggressive back-and-forth in dialogue, the camera alternates close-up shots of Earn, Alfred and the man who smashed the mirror. Towards the end of the scene, Glover's writing for Darius defamiliarizes the unfolding events, through pausing to spot a dog in the distance. When seeing the dog, Darius says "Hold on, hold on, man, I'm getting crazy déjà vu right now. Okay, where's the dog with the Texas on him? Oh, there he is" (Glover & Murai 00:00:53). This moment introduces the viewer to how the aesthetic of absurdism is interwoven into the stories of the main characters as they live within the version of America Glover has created.

The next scene I will be looking at takes place after Earn seeks out Alfred 'Paper Boi' to become his manager and is rejected. Earn travels to find Dave, a white radio DJ. Earn

tries to convince Dave to play Alfred's mixtape on the radio and Dave replies that for him to play it, he will need $500. Dave states "I mean, KP will usually spin some records for some scratch up top" (Glover & Murai 00:14:41). Earn then talks to a janitor and asks if he could let him sneak into the building.

Despite having a simple plot within this scene, the shot construction and the writing add considerable depth in poetic function and "make strange" what would usually be a straight-forward conversation. The opening shot of the scene is an over-the-shoulder- shaky shot of Dave getting out of his car, with Earn entering the frame. When Earn comes closer to Dave to talk, the camera moves behind Earn, causing him to be out of focus in the foreground, and focusing on Dave while he is speaking. Following this shot, the camera goes to a stationary wide angle of Earn and Dave in conversation. As the conversation continues, shots of Earn positioned on the left third of the frame, gazing out of frame at Dave, convey the visible

feeling of awkwardness and discomfort that is experienced by Earn. This shot when partnered with Dave's dialogue "makes strange" what once was a standard conversation. Dave says "Yo, we needed a real DJ. This dude can't spin worth of shit, but then he goes and he plays Flo Rida. Back to back. So I calmly pull him aside, I was just like, "Really, [N-word]?" (Glover & Murai 00:14:10). Earn replies "You really said that?" and Dave says "Yeah, man, I had to." (Glover & Murai 00:14:24). Earn justifiably shocked with Dave's casual nature, tries to maintain the conversation. Later in the scene, Earn questions the passing janitor if Dave had used the n-word around him before, to which the janitor adamantly replies that he would beat up Dave if he said it to him.

Glover's writing and Murai's direction for Earn's interaction with Dave reflects the New Absurdist aesthetic through targeting of the daily state of living in anxiety and doubt (Clarke). As Clarke states, "Writers use this aspect of the aesthetic by turning the

enlightened speaker figure on its head and forcing them to question grand narratives and their enlightenment" (174). *Atlanta* shows this through Earn's disbelief that Dave would use such blatant racism in front of him and the subsequent questioning and doubt when he encounters the janitor.

For the final scene I will be analysing, Earn is traveling home on the bus with his daughter, Lottie, in his arms after successfully making it into the radio building to give the money and Alfred's mixtape to the DJ. Earn encounters a stranger on the bus, who starts a conversation with him. Earn shares his feelings when asked by the stranger, saying "I just keep losing. I mean…some people just supposed to lose? For balance in the universe?" (Glover & Murai 00:18:14). After their conversation, the stranger leaves abruptly and Earn gets a call from Alfred.

The New Absurdist aesthetic is shown in this scene through the camera work and the script defamiliarizing the expected conversation and

conveying a tone of existential dread. The scene opens with a wide-angle stationary shot of Earn sitting on the bus, cradling his sleeping daughter in his arms. For the entirety of the scene, the bus is dimly lit. This creates the feeling of unease and anxiety. The next shot introduces The Stranger while he speaks to Earn, through a wide angle shot of both Earn and The Stranger looking at each other across the aisle. While speaking with Earn, The Stranger moves to sit beside Earn and stays out of focus. The camera is perched on the shoulder of The Stranger, showing only the bottom of his mouth out of focus while he speaks to Earn. This shot choice establishes The Stranger as an ominous figure with unknown intentions. The next shot has Earn in focus in the foreground and The Stranger in the out of focus in the background, “making strange” by beginning to make a sandwich. The Stranger’s actions further defamiliarize the scene when he insists on Earn eating the sandwich, saying “[N-word], if you don't bite this sandwich...” (Glover & Murai, 00:19:20).

Pairing dialogue with the close-up shot of the menacing face of The Stranger, creates a sense of existential dread regarding the unexpected and absurd nature of this character. As Clarke states, "The Absurd is born out of nihilism, existentialism, fuelled by certain death" (168). The scene further builds this aesthetic, with blue police lights and sirens piercing the silence and darkness outside, with the camera following Earn's quick head movement. Following this shot, the camera returns to Earn within a wide angle, The Stranger's seat now empty, with The Stranger ghostly disappearing into the forest outside.

As my analysis pointed out, the aesthetic of New Absurdism has been a consistent undercurrent within the first episode of the 2016 television show, *Atlanta.* Through deconstructing the poetic elements and the subsequent defamiliarization of the selected scenes from the pilot episode, my analysis has sought to reveal and prove the "artfulness" of *Atlanta.* While being far from under

appreciated for their genius, the recognition of the subtle tools that Glover and Murai have used to create the aesthetics of *Atlanta*, places a rare spotlight on the skills both Glover and Murai have in their respective crafts. Bringing attention to these tools will hopefully bring inspiration to continue the precedent that *Atlanta* set for television.

Works Cited

Clarke J. Rat Phones, Alligators, Lemon Pepper Wet: The New Absurd of Atlanta. *Television Series as Literature*. 2021.

Erlich, Victor. Russian Formalism. *Journal of the History of Ideas*, vol.34, no.4, 1973, pp. 627–638. https://doi.org/10.2307/2708893

Erlich, Victor. *Russian Formalism: History, Doctrine*. Third ed. 1981.Friend, Tad. *Donald Glover Can't Save You.* The New Yorker. Feb 26, 2018. https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/03/05/donald-glover-cant-save-you

Glover, D. (Writer), & Murai, H. (Director). The Big Bang [Television series episode]. In Glover, D. (Producer), *Atlanta*. FX. September 6, 2016.

Stam, Robert. *Film Theory: An Introduction*. 2000.

Dagen I. Perrott: Creating Content Through Form: Art as a Product

Dagen Perrott is a fourth-year student pursuing his BA in Conflict Resolution Studies and Urban and Inner-City Studies. He is the program assistant for the Community-Based Research Training Centre, where he coordinates and supports the creation of programming and workshops. Outside of this you can find him trying to keep his collection of plants alive.

Light entertainment can be a great break from the world. Some escape through watching reality television or reading romance serials, but for me it is a childhood love of comic books and superheroes. Last spring, Disney released the first season of The Falcon and the Winter Soldier (FWS), a six-episode series that asks who and what Captain America represents in modern times. This series stood out to me as the first time a Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) product attempted to

provide overt political commentary, in this case on race and racism in America. Guided by the question of why the MCU has chosen this topic now, this paper will apply a preliminary framework for Marxist rhetorical criticism (MRC) on FWS. To do this, I will begin by outlining some of the context and history of the MCU, Captain America and FWS. From here I will sketch out a preliminary MRC framework and apply it to this artifact. Due to the enormity of both the MCU and of MRC approaches, this will not be a comprehensive analysis of FWS.[1] Instead this will be a focused exploration on the use of an MRC approach to rhetorical analysis.

A Brief History of Marvel and Captain America

[1] Due to page constraints, this paper focuses on presenting a preliminary method of applying MRC to a case study. This is not a comprehensive analysis and is lacking in sufficient exploration of the ways in which race, nationalism, and justice appear in both the artifact and the MCU. For some more comprehensive reflections on these themes, consider Adams (2021); Kebede (2021); Long (2021); Pulliam-Moore (2021); and Woods (2021).

In 2021 Marvel began producing TV series on Disney+ that were direct extensions of their existing MCU brand that consists of almost thirty films released over the past two decades. The MCU is a cinematic extension of the comic book format which allows for episodic and standalone media to interconnect through a variety of separate characters, themes, tones, and formats. In this case print Marvel Comics from the 1940s onwards are transferred into a cinematic format (Thomas). This has been an incredibly profitable venture with the MCU films alone grossing over $25 billion dollars (Clark). The conglomeration of Marvel and Disney have only increased their media institution's significant cultural weight.

FWS is a reflection on both Marvel's history and the moment that the United States finds itself in. The background plot sees the heroes thwarting an anarchist group, labeled as terrorists, who are using increasingly violent means to achieve a world without borders. Forefront, however, is the

question of who Captain America represents and who should take on the role. The show takes place after Steve Rogers, a white, blue-eyed, and blond-haired man, retires as Captain America, a moniker he originally assumed during World War II (Thomas). In buddy-cop style, it features two leads: Anthony Mackie, a Black man, plays Sam "The Falcon" Wilson who was chosen by Rogers to replace him while Sebastian Stan, a white man, plays Bucky "The Winter Soldier" Barnes, who is reckoning with his own violent past.

The character of Captain America is a quintessential embodiment of United States war time propaganda both fictionally and historically. Wearing a flashy suit of red, white, and blue, and wielding an indestructible shield emblazoned with a star; the character first appeared in publications in 1941 as a patriotic Nazi-fighting war hero who gained huge popularity (Thomas). The character of Steve Rogers was a frail man whose patriotic commitment to the

United States' war efforts rewarded him with a super serum. After a temporary discontinuation of his comics, the 60s saw the character revived and featured in stories about the geopolitical events of the time. Fictionally and historically the character of Captain America has been an embodiment of America, its imperialism, exceptionalism, and vision of western democracy.

The Falcon and the Winter Soldier Summarized

FWS begins with Wilson rejecting the role of Captain America and giving the shield to the US government to be memorialized. His wishes are almost immediately disregarded, and the government appoints John Walker, another blond, blue-eyed, white man to take on the moniker of Captain America. The series concludes, unsurprisingly, with Wilson deciding to don the iconic role. The arc of this commentary is encapsulated in Episode two. Here Wilson and Barnes visit Isaiah Bradley, revealed to be a Black super soldier and contemporary of Steve Rogers in

World War 2. However, “being Black, his path was a little different than Cap’s: basically, living the life of a covert operative and then spending 30 years being experimented on in prison” by the US government (Woods). Isaiah is distrustful of the government and makes it clear that Wilson made the right choice to give up the shield. This scene provides the show the ability to question the nationalist project of America, its history, and who is included and celebrated. However, instead any critical theme is almost immediately disregarded.

The next scene has Wilson and Barnes leave Isaiahs’s house where Wilson expresses his anger that he was unaware of Bradley’s existence. As this occurs, a cop car rolls up, and asks Barnes if Wilson is bothering him and if there is an issue. This episode premiered just over a year after 2020s summer of Black Lives Matter uprisings, which pushed “the phrase *systemic racism* beyond activist circles and academic circles” (Serwer). A summer that

contributed to a significant shift in public awareness and conversations around issues of racism and violence in policing (North). Yet, the interaction concludes with the cops apologizing to Wilson as they realize he is a superhero, and arresting Barnes who has missed a court appointed therapy session. This is a hollow twist serving to undermine the first scene's presentation of the weight of historic racism, and the seconds acknowledgement of the ongoing systemic violence. Throughout the rest of the series we see "the idea bubbling underneath Isaiah's story is that America may not deserve and certainly hasn't earned what a Black Captain America represents. The idea underneath Sam's actions is that working harder and through adversity defeats racism" (Woods, Para. 10). This episode and the series as a whole is an obvious response to current events and discourse around race.

Episode two, as well as the series in general, received an overwhelmingly positive response by the public and critics

alike. Most reviews focused on and praised the episode for taking on the topic of systemic racism in America (Chatterjee; Drum; Garcia; Jasper; Low; Purslow; Ricci). Some others were disgruntled and felt it was too on the nose or failed to recognize how nice of a guy John Walker is (Kain). There was also a counternarrative, that I saw primarily from Black reviewers, that as an episode and series it missed the mark on issues of systemic racism (Adams; Kebede; Long; Pulliam-Moore; Woods). It is with the context of the MCU as a media institution, Captain America as the embodiment of American ideals, FWS as a direct response to current events, and favorable public reception, that we now turn to the MRC that will be used to analyze this artifact.

Putting Marxist Rhetorical Criticism Into Practice

My MRC analysis will focus on two lines of inquiry: the form,

and the content.[2] To analyze form within the MRC the artifact must be considered through its ties to productive relationships of the time. This is a "consideration of the artifact's form, sociology of construction, and the broader historical moment it exists within" (Eagleton 57). The second line of inquiry focuses on the content and how the artifact is tied to or distant from dominant ideologies. How do art and stories hide and legitimize or reveal and destabilize the dominant ideas of power and how the world works (Eagleton 5). Together these two lines of inquiries may reveal some fleeting truths about the moment, its superstructure and base,[3] and where perhaps change can occur. Due to space constraints, this analysis will focus on providing a proof of concept of this method

[2] Form refers to the artifacts' method of delivery, format, and aesthetics; whereas, content is concerned with the messages and meanings of the artifact.

[3] Within Marxist theory the base refers to the mode of production, economic infrastructure, and relations of productive forces creating the unique material reality of any given time (Eagleton, 2002; Pfeil, 1980). Whereas the super-structure is the laws, politics, structures, social consciousness, and ideology created by and contributing to the base (Eagleton, 2002; Pfeil, 1980).

rather than a comprehensive analysis.

FWS is a supplementary streaming serial (SSS), a form I would argue is unique to the 21st century. The form is made possible by the popularity of streaming services like Netflix and Disney+ producing their own content as well as large media companies like Marvel financing supplementary content for their existing properties. Bernardi and Hoxter write that "today's working screenwriter is asked to rework established, and profitable, story formulas to boost the performance of the conglomerate as well as the industrial cachet of studio executives" (64). A SSS does not exist first as artistic expressions of a screen writer, director, or actor, but as a brand's product, carefully crafted to be profitable (Bernardi & Hoxter). In some ways the product is more akin to a new Ikea shelving design than a television series. Reinforcing the class division of who creates the product and who profits. The SSS also has more oversight than many previous mediums, as even if the concept is pitched by a

screenwriter, the product ultimately will have to serve the interests and narrative needs of the brand and their executives.

The content of FWS is impacted by its form in two ways. First, the content must be familiar enough to not alienate the existing fanbase. Second, it should experiment with themes and characters that may draw new audience members into the MCU. Its content then is likely to pander to the desires of a yet to be integrated audience. However, any commentary must be aligned with the established ideology of its audience and brand. Thus far an established brand that has been primarily targeted towards young, white males, regardless of their actual viewer demographics (Lacina; Karim). In this way FWS is a reflection on, rather than of, the present moment. Where FWS alludes to racism and historical wrongs, the show is not passively reflecting the reality of America. Instead, it is reflecting on racism, portraying it through its own institutional lens. It includes social commentary because this is profitable and can draw in a potential new audience.

This tension between an existing audiences' expectations and a desire for new audiences exists in the classic comics that the MCU is based on. Peppard's feminist History of Marvel notes that the female led series of the past few decades have told stories for the male gaze. Where male executives placate an existing audience to assure them that this is just a new look for the same stories, female writers or artists attempt to draw in a new audience through promises of new ideals. This tension also appears "in response to social movements of the 1960s, [where] mainstream comics, especially represented by Marvel and DC, made gestures toward politically minded storylines along with recasting superheroes as rebels against the establishment" (Barbour 157). Ultimately, despite the shifting characterizations, the superheroes remain fundamentally tied to the same ideology and institutions as before.

So what is the ideology that FWS is tied to? One central ideology is the individualization

of race, racism, and responsibility. This individualization shifts the focus of change from systems, social structures, and the super-structure of society, to instead focus on individuals and placing responsibility on them. This is an unsurprising view considering the genre of superheroes stories: larger than life people who create sweeping changes just through their individual actions. This is especially true regarding Captain America who has been legitimized at least in the comics "as *the* representative 'American,' (Barbour 176). Wilson is contrasted with Isaiah, marking some shift in what stories Marvel will tell, nevertheless, upholds "his newfound role as [a] representative of racial unity and harmony born from a racially fragmented United States" (Barbour 176). Ultimately, the solution posited by FWS to race is Wilson pulling himself up by the bootstraps and representing a new America with the same values. Tellingly, Bucky, Rogers, and to a lesser extent even Walker are not asked to make

these same sacrifices, Instead, they, and the systems and structures of white America, become bystanders. They, and whiteness, are hidden in the background. Furthermore, it is not even considered that, in this fantasy world, race and racism could be a non-issue, instead, it is treated as an inevitability. FWS and the MCU more broadly is not positioned to create critical or countercultural narratives. Their form and content are intertwined in a way that limits both to what is profitable and palatable for the present moment.

Conclusion

This analysis provides a preliminary demonstration of the value of a MRC approach to analysis. It presents some examples of the relationships between form, content, and the base-superstructure of society. Even with this relatively surface level analysis, it becomes clear that form is both a product of the moment in time, and that it influences the boundaries of what stories can be told. This is in some ways an extension of Lukács proposition that the forms

of the epic and the novel are not separated by authors' "intentions, but by the given historico-philosophical realities with which the authors were confronted" (56). There are several key limitations to this analysis. For example, a fulsome examination of the content and themes of the artifact was not conducted and how these compare to the broader cultural understanding or stance on race, nationalism, or other such politicized concepts. The role of representation in media was left unexamined. Finally, the precise categorization of form belies the more natural evolution and amorphous nature of genres and forms. Despite this this analysis shows that form and by extension content, are not simply products of individual genius or creativity, but rather impacted by the productive relations of the time.

Works Cited

Adams, J. "Falcon and the winter soldier is weird about race." *Colorlines*, https://www.colorlines.com/articles/falcon-and-winter-soldier-weird-about-race

Barbour, C. A. *From Daniel Boone to Captain America: playing Indian in American popular culture*. University Press of Mississippi, 2016.

Bernardi, D., and J. Hoxter. *Off the page: screenwriting in the era of media convergence*. University of California Press, 2017.

Chatterjee, P. "'The falcon and the winter soldier' episode 2 is about propaganda, racism, And couples therapy."*Mashable India*, Mar. 26, 2021, https://in.mashable.com/entertainment/21189/the-falcon-and-the-winter-soldier-episode-2-is-about-propaganda-racism-and-couples-therapy

Clark, T. "All 27 Marvel Cinematic Universe movies, ranked by how much money they made at the global box office." *Business Insider*, Jan. 25, 2022, https://www.businessinsider.com/marvel-movies-ranked-how-much-money-at-global-box-office-2021-11

Drum, N. "The falcon and the winter soldier addresses racial profiling with pivotal police scene in episode 2." *Comicbook*, Mar. 28, 2021, https://comicbook.com/marvel/news/falcon-and-winter-soldier-racial-profiling-police-scene-marvel/

Eagleton, T. *Marxism and literary criticism.* Routledge, 2002.

Garcia, L. A. "'The falcon and the winter soldier' review: Episode 2 reunites the MCU's preeminent comedic duo." *Indiewire*, Mar. 26,

2021, https://www.indiewire.com/2021/03/falcon-and-winter-soldier-episode-2-review-spoilers-1234626005/

Jasper, G. “The falcon and the winter soldier episode 2 review: the star-spangled man.” *Denofgeek,* Mar. 26, 2021, https://www.denofgeek.com/tv/the-falcon-and-the-winter-soldier-episode-2-review-the-star-spangled-man/#:~:text=The%20Falcon%20and%20the%20Winter%20Soldier%20episode%202%2C%20%E2%80%9CThe%20Star,play%20nice%20with%20our%20protagonists.

Kain, E. “‘The falcon and the winter soldier’ episode 2 review: ‘The star-spangled man’.” *Forbes,* Mar. 28, 2021, https://www.forbes.com/sites/erikkain/2021/03/28/falcon-winter-soldier-episode-2-recap-review-john-walker-captain-america-zemo/?sh=578838aa5c4d

Karim, A. “The Marvel cinematic universe is 61% white, but does that matter?” *Forbes,* Oct. 10, 2021, https://www.forbes.com/sites/anharkarim/2018/10/10/the-marvel-cinematic-universe-is-61-white-but-does-that-matter/?sh=1b93c3f74482

Kebede. “Marvel’s Sam Wilson, or how liberalism is going to get us all killed part 01.” *Medium,* Apr. 28, 2021. https://newkebede.medium.com/marvels-sam-wilson-or-how-liberalism-is-going-to-get-us-all-killed-part-01-a361cabfbb20

Lacina, B. *Who watches the MCU? Race, sex, and the role of on-screen diversity.* (2020). NYU. http://www.bethanylacina.com/docs/Lacina_MCU_draftJuly2020.pdf

Long, R. “The world doesn’t need another captain America.” *Slate,* Apr. 22, 2021, https://slate.com/culture/2021/04/the-falcon-and-the-winter-soldier-cant-save-captain-america.html

Low, E. “‘The falcon and the winter soldier’ episode 2: Multiple captain Americas, super soldiers, and more burning questions*.” Variety,* Mar. 26, 2021, https://variety.com/2021/tv/recaps/falcon-winter-soldier-episode-2-recap-captain-america-isaiah-bradley-1234938852/

Lukács, G. *The Theory of the Novel: A historico-philosophical essay on the forms of great epic literature.* The M.I.T. Press, 1971.

North, A. “Do Americans support defunding the police? It depends on how you ask the question.” *Vox*, June 23, 2020, https://www.vox.com/2020/6/23/21299118/defunding-the-police-minneapolis-budget-george-floyd

Peppard, A. F. “‘This female fights back!’: a feminist history of Marvel comics.” *Make ours marvel: media convergence and a comics universe,* edited by M. Yockey, University of Texas Press, 2017, pp. 105-137.

Pfeil, F. “Towards a portable marxist criticism: a critique and suggestion.” *College English,* vol. 41, no. 7, 1980, pp. 753–768.

Pulliam-Moore, C. “‘Racism+’ is how you get shows like the falcon and the winter soldier.” *Gizmodo*, Apr. 30, 2021, https://gizmodo.com/racism-is-how-you-get-shows-like-the-falcon-and-the-wi-1846791627

Purslow, M. “Marvel’s falcon and winter soldier – review.” *IGN India,* Mar. 26, 2021, https://in.ign.com/marvels-falcon-and-winter-

soldier/156721/review/the-falcon-and-the-winter-soldier-season-1-episode-2-review

Ricci, K. " 'The falcon and the winter soldier' episode 2 gives us systemic racism with a side of couples therapy." *Uproxx,* 2021, https://uproxx.com/tv/the-falcon-and-the-winter-soldier-episode-2-systemic-racism-buddy-comedy/

Serwer, A. "The new reconstruction: The United States has its best opportunity in 150 years to belatedly fulfill its promise as a multiracial democracy." *The Atlantic,* 2020, https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2020/10/the-next-reconstruction/615475/

Tallerico, B. "The falcon and the winter soldier' recap: Secret war." *Vulture,* Mar. 26, 2021, https://www.vulture.com/article/the-falcon-and-the-winter-soldier-episode-2-recap-the-star-spangled-man.html

Thomas, R. "The Century of Captain America: A Brief History of a Beloved Comic." *Lithub,* July 2, 2021, https://lithub.com/the-century-of-captain-america-a-brief-history-of-a-beloved-comic/

Woods, S. "'The Falcon and the Winter Soldier' Sends the Wrong Message About Being Black in America." *Medium,* Apr. 29, 2021, https://level.medium.com/the-falcon-and-the-winter-soldier-sends-the-wrong-message-about-being-black-in-america-c35bed1b3a73

Evan Teillet: Aristotelian Critique of Ron DeSantis

Evan Teillet is a Metis undergraduate sociology student who graduated from St. Johns Ravenscourt School in 2017. Evan currently works as an Indigenous Liaison Officer at Stony Mountain Institution. Evan is also interested in writing and the field of rhetoric.

In politics nowadays, it is very common to see political opponents attack each other for personal gain. The bipartisan political system of America drifts further apart each day, as political opponents will try to gain leverage by any means necessary, even if it means fabricating shocking narratives. Ron DeSantis's speech on August 4th, 2021 is no exception to this prevalent "us vs them" mentality within American politics. Within this speech, DeSantis made an appearance and delivered two main messages

to his audience. First, that Joe Biden is the one mismanaging the COVID-19 pandemic and not him. Second, that he does not support Joe Biden's public health orders and finds them to infringe on personal rights, blaming immigration instead for rising case numbers. DeSantis' speech was effective in inciting anger with his supporters, further entrenching them in their support for him, and getting him closer to his goal of being a republican presidential candidate in 2024. This begs the question, "why was this speech so effective?" This essay will break down that question using the Aristotelian canon of invention.

The first step to a neo-Aristotelian critique is establishing the context of the artifact. The speech from Ron DeSantis occurred on August 4th, 2021. US president Joe Biden had recently made some unfavourable comments towards DeSantis regarding the state of Florida's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic. Biden suggested that if DeSantis is not going to help control the pandemic, he should stand out of

the way and let him take control of the pandemic-related health and safety measures. Joe Biden is referring to Florida's very relaxed COVID-19 policies they had in place, which had little to no regulation of vaccines and the wearing of masks. DeSantis had recently passed orders that school districts could be defunded for imposing mask mandates, despite the majority of Floridians supporting mandates. (GalBraith, 2021). Meanwhile, the day that the speech was delivered, Florida had set state high records for the number of COVID cases, with 16,935 new cases, and 140 COVID-related deaths just on the day of the speech alone. (Lewis). DeSantis was being scrutinized for his gross mismanagement and was called upon to respond. The famous speech in question is the result.

The critical approach being used in this essay is the neo-Aristotelian approach. Aristotle saw rhetoric as a technique, an art even, of human speech that "could be both a coherent system for classifying, studying and interpreting speeches and a skill for public

dialogue. (Lundberg, Keith, 7). Aristotle argued three main points: First, that rhetoric can be treated as a coherent area of inquiry, second that rhetoric and logic are necessary counterparts, with the third point being that the right choices in a speech are based on the speech's goals and the audience's expectations. In other words, "the logic and coherence of speeches are determined by their goals.". (Lundberg, Keith, 7). For this essay's application, Aristotle would classify DeSantis's speech as a deliberative speech, otherwise known as a speech that requires a course of action. Its purpose and the main goal is to make a case for what should or should not be done in the future. (Lundberg, Keith, 7-8). Aristotelian criticism has identified five units of analysis, which can be used to dissect the artifact, help the reader assess the impact that the speech had on the audience, and gauge the overall effectiveness of the speech for it's given purpose. Two canons will be identified and discussed in this essay. The canon that will first be discussed is invention,

which seeks to locate the ideas and materials used in a given speech, based on a set of proofs.

The idea of invention as a persuasion technique means that speakers who practice it need to offer believable reasons for deciding between competing points of view, making a case for why audience members should change their minds and/or agree with them. By Aristotle's perspective, DeSantis needs to elicit change from the audience through rational means. A way that DeSantis can make his speech more persuasive is by offering a set of proofs. The three proofs consist of *Ethos*, meaning the speaker's credibility and trustworthiness, drawing from the speaker's character, *Pathos*, referencing the emotional state of the audience, and lastly *Logos*, meaning the arguments themselves, and their logic (Lundberg, Keith, 38-42). It is first important to decipher whether DeSantis is using internal, artistic proofs where the information is being created by the speaker himself, or external, inartistic proofs, which focus on information drawn from sources

other than the speaker. Ron DeSantis makes the argument that mandating people to wear masks and get vaccinated to prevent the spread of COVID is an unfair infringement of freedom and that closing the southern border to immigration is a much more effective method to halt rising case numbers. This is an example of an internal proof he uses throughout his speech, as he frequently makes assumptions and generalizations to support his conclusions, without providing any external evidence. (Lundberg, Keith, 38). Once this information is established, this gives the critic a way to understand the *Logos* of a certain artifact, or in other words its logic. In this case, the arguments that DeSantis makes to support his conclusions about the source of the rising COVID numbers. This proves that the argument DeSantis has regarding the source of rising Covid numbers is not based in logic.

There are two main types of reasoning that Aristotle defines as ways that speakers persuade their audience. The first is syllogisms, which is the formal

reasoning previously mentioned. This is when two true premises, such as propositions or statements, are used to validly imply a third statement. The third statement is the conclusion of the speaker's argument. In a valid formal argument, the first two premises being true implies that the conclusion will be true. The conclusion is just restarting evidence that was presented previously in the two premises. This is not always the case, as sometimes even in a formal argument the two premises are true, but don't lead to a true conclusion. (Lundberg, Keith, 39) Overall syllogisms are helpful because they can prove statements to be true conclusively, however they can also be misleading and confusing at times. Ron DeSantis does not choose to use formal reasoning in this speech, as he chooses to draw conclusions without providing any premises as evidence. For example, he claims that Joe Biden is not shutting down the virus, and instead is helping to facilitate it by allowing immigrants through the southern border. In this case,

DeSantis is simply stating one premise that he and his supporters disagree with and jumping to a conclusion without actually stating how this is letting the virus in, while ignoring all other factors that could cause the increase in cases. (Lundberg, Keith, 39). This is in fact an example of the second type of reasoning identified by Aristotle, enthymemes. Enthymemes are legitimately persuasive arguments that aren't formally valid. They involve solid reasoning but tend to be missing logistical steps. They are simpler and more flexible than syllogisms. Stanford academic Chris Rapp says that “Aristotle calls the enthymeme the ‘body of persuasion’, implying that everything else is only an addition or accident to the core of the persuasive process.” (Rapp, 2010) He also says that “we are most easily persuaded when we think that something has been demonstrated.” (Rapp, 2010) This technique works perfectly for DeSantis, as his goal is to push his political agenda, and persuade his audience without ever providing evidence.

DeSantis uses the single premise that immigrants are entering the country, and from that he reaches the conclusion that they are increasing case numbers. By leaving out a second premise, he is allowing the audience to draw the conclusion that the increase in COVID cases is related to immigration, and not his lack of mandates. Due to DeSantis not using specific examples to draw this conclusion, and instead using an anti-immigration conclusion that is already held by many of his supporters, he is using what is identified as deductive reasoning. This is when the speaker "uses a generally held theory to deduce a conclusion" (McGillvary, 2021). If DeSantis were, for example, able to provide evidence that masks are ineffective at stopping the spread of COVID, then he would be using inductive reasoning. Due to his conclusion being false however, he is instead forced into using deductive reasoning because no supporting evidence exists. DeSantis thrives on deductive republican theories that are widely held by his audience.

The arguments that DeSantis makes are not the only thing involved in persuasive proof. The act of persuasion is also reliant on the credibility of the speaker. The second type of persuasion in the canon of invention is the *Ethos*. This is when an audience considers the speaker's trustworthiness and credibility. (Lundberg and Keith 41). Stanford university scholar Chris Rapp states that "the persuasion is accomplished by character whenever the speech is held in such a way as to render the speaker worthy of credence. If the speaker appears to be credible, the audience will form the second-order judgment that propositions put forward by the credible speaker are true or acceptable." (Rapp) Rapp adds that it is especially effective when there is no exact knowledge, which DeSantis uses to his advantage. Due to the fact that there are a plethora of contributors to the record case numbers in Florida, there is not a specific answer to why case numbers are so high. This allows for DeSantis to push his anti-immigration agenda by creating

an association of immigrants and case numbers. There is no exact data, so therefore it is believable. His reputation dictates that he stands up for the interests of supporters, so by blaming it on immigration, he both pushes his anti-immigration agenda, and justifies his lack of mandates. His reputation with his audience is to fight for their freedom, so DeSantis deflecting blame of rising case numbers to something that doesn't infringe his supporter's freedoms, is consistent with his image and therefore persuasive. All this contributes to an argument that is believable from his supporter's point of view.

The third type of persuasion identified under invention is *Pathos,* the emotional state of the audience created by the speaker. Audiences come to the speech with feelings based on the anticipation of what they are going to hear, and these feelings are transformed, or not, by the speech and the speaker. (Lundberg and Keith 42) These feelings, or as Aristotle called it their "state of mind" help the

audience understand the speech and either accept or reject the message of the speech. Rapp states that "the success of the persuasive efforts depends on the emotional dispositions of the audience; for we do not judge in the same way when we grieve and rejoice or when we are friendly and hostile. Thus, the orator has to arouse emotions exactly because emotions have the power to modify our judgments." (Rapp) DeSantis is arguably most effective at using *pathos* to his advantage, as he is good at inciting anger in both his supporters and opposers. In his supporters, he increases their polarizing thoughts and therefore makes them feel as if Joe Biden is trying to take away their freedoms. This creates anger from his supporters towards his opponents, which entrenches them further in their support for him.

This analysis is important because it helps give insight into how DeSantis and many other American politicians gain support. They create a common enemy and tell the American public that they are in danger

because of the politician's political opponent, then advocate that they will save them and/or protect them. Having a system such as the one Aristotle has created allows researchers to define exactly what politicians like DeSantis are doing and help determine how and why it is effective. Republican voters in the US seem to have a preference to “bully” like figures, who stand up for themselves and push their agenda at the expense of the political opposition. It is important to note that not only did DeSantis point out what he thinks is right, he spent the entirety of his speech explaining that he thinks Joe Biden is wrong, and he himself has no reason to change. It helps to recognize that DeSantis is using inartistic proofs, meaning that he has no evidence to present, but rather he reaches a conclusion using generalizations and assumptions. This type of distinction is important to assessing the validity of the work. It is also important to note the lack of writing that has been done on Ron DeSantis, particularly regarding

Aristotelian critique. No other papers on this topic have been written and been released publicly, therefore it was concluded that this essay is likely one of few, if not the only, essay written that critiques Ron DeSantis using Aristotelianism. Anytime a new critique is being performed, it contributes a new perspective to the academic world, and the world of rhetoric.

Works Cited

FOX 13 Tampa Bay. *DeSantis Blasts BIDEN: "I Am Standing in Your Way" - YouTube*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wuAbLIexkAw.

Galbraith, Alex. "Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis Responds to Joe Biden's Comments about Florida's COVID-19 Numbers." *Orlando Weekly*, Orlando Weekly, 18 Aug. 2021, https://www.orlandoweekly.com/Blogs/archives/2021/08/04/florida-gov-ron-desantis-responds-to-joe-bidens-comments-about-floridas-covid-19-numbers.

Lewis, Victoria. "5 Things to Know on Thursday, August 5, 2021." *WPTV*, WPTV, 5 Aug. 2021, https://www.wptv.com/about-us/as-seen-on/5-things-to-know-on-thursday-august-5-2021

Lundberg, Christian O., and William M. Keith. *The Essential Guide to Rhetoric*. 2nd ed., Bedford/St. Martin's, 2018.

McGillivray, Andrew. “Rhetorical Criticism, RHET-2135(3)-001.” 15 Sept. 2021, Winnipeg, University of Winnipeg.

Rapp, Christof. “Aristotle's Rhetoric.” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Stanford University, 1 Feb. 2010, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-rhetoric/#means.

Smith, Robin. “Aristotle's Logic.” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Stanford University, 17 Feb. 2017, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-logic/#SubLogSyl.

Grace Klassen: The Power of Pacifism

Grace Klassen is a student graduating with a BA in Conflict Resolution Studies in June, 2022. She was born and raised in Winnipeg, Manitoba. She is passionate about community development and creating safe spaces where people can gather.

Throughout history, nonviolence has left a long-standing impact on the perception of violence. It is easy to think that violence is our nature since it is the main act of defence of hegemonic ideology. Martyrs of nonviolence have been created through that ideology that protects its hierarchy's balance. One form of nonviolence is pacifism, which stems from anti-war ideologies (Fiala 1). Pacifism has many origins, variations, and movements that have created a powerful force within the world we live in today. Heroes have

been made out of pacifism, and these people have challenged the hegemonic ideology of their time. To understand the impacts of pacifism, one might view the story of Private Desmond T. Doss in the movie Hacksaw Ridge, directed by Mel Gibson. Hacksaw Ridge is a true story about Private Doss, a pacifist who participated in the Battle of Okinawa as a medic. By understanding Private Doss's pacifism and its origins, application, and reception, one can begin to understand the lasting impact that nonviolence has on those surrounding it.

Pacifism has evolved through history. No one person can directly pinpoint where pacifism truly originated (Kellenberger 47), but many institutions have practiced it for centuries. Buddhism was first known as a pacifist movement ("Pacifism" Encyclopedia Britannica). Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, required his followers not to cause harm to another being ("Pacifism" Encyclopedia Britannica). Buddhism has influenced many

towards the path of nonviolence, including great leaders like King Ashoka in the third century BCE, where he renounced wars of conquest ("Pacifism", Encyclopedia Britannica). Another movement is Gandhi's Satyagraha, which is the refrain for any kind of violence, physically and mentally (Kellenberger 54). Gandhi's beliefs stemmed from his lessons through Buddhism and Hindu Ways of Life (Kellenberger 54). His pacifist beliefs led to movements of civil resistance in India and attempts at dismantling the oppressing Caste system. Gandhi used nonviolence to challenge his time's hegemonic ideologies, which eventually led to his death, thus he became a martyr for peace (Kellenburger 54).

Many other religions refer to abstaining from war and violence, but Christianity's pacifism is the most relevant within the western world. The Christian Holy Bible has many passages referring to peace (Kellenberger 47). Examples of peaceful texts are "blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall

be called sons of God" (NIV, Matthew 5.9), and "I say to you, do not resist one who is evil. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also" (NIV, Matthew 5.39). Christianity also has Ten Commandments, one of those commandments is "Thou shall not kill" (NIV, Exodus 20.13); this is a commandment that many religious pacifists stand by. Some Christian pacifists believe that being an accessory to one's death makes you guilty of the same act. Religious pacifists believe that whatever deity or God one follows must protect all created beings. Religion has been one of the leading influences of nonviolence, but many people who practice nonviolence also have origins of personal circumstance.

Pacifism is not only religious; it can also be secular (Ryan 979-980). Either way, it is believed that all violence and acts of war are wrong and that the abolition of war and violence is possible (Ryan 979). Pacifism was officially coined in 1902 at the tenth International Peace Conference ("Pacifism", BBC).

There are two categories of pacifism: reformist and absolutist (Ryan 980). Absolutist pacifism believes that any kind of participation in war or violence is wrong (Ryan 980). This means that an absolutist will not support the war even through jobs like being a medic, analyst, or giving donations to the military. Absolutist pacifists may even go to the lengths to protest the war or even relocate to avoid participating (Ryan 980). The second form of pacifism is reformist pacifism (Ryan, 981). Reformist pacifists believe that it is possible to have a world without war and violence, but many still participate in nonviolent ways (Ryan 981). Reformist pacifists would participate by being medics, driving ambulances, raising funding, and other services. Reformist pacifists in the past have been looked down upon because of the hegemonic ideology of violence. Many believe they are cowards since they do not participate in the 'hard work' like using a gun. Instead, reformists often attempt to educate others on nonviolence

and lead by example (Ryan 981); causing others to be curious as to why they are so dedicated to nonviolence.

These forms of pacifism are a threat to the hegemonic ideology. Walter Wink refers to the hegemonic ideology as the domination system (38). The domination system is defined as oppression within economic relations, political and race relations, patriarchal gender relations, and hierarchy (Wink 39). These systems of oppression are maintained by violence the domination system uses to retain power (Wink 39). Pacifism challenges the domination system by refusing to be part of its violence, instead it looks to find solutions through peace rather than violence. Challenging the domination system often results in persecution, and many have faced becoming martyrs for peace. Usually, reformist pacifists are sent to the front lines of war without weapons to be a medic; this is the domination system attempting to eliminate a threat to its means of maintaining oppression.

It is possible to see the positive impact of pacifism in the story of Private Desmond T. Doss, as portrayed in the movie Hacksaw Ridge directed by Mel Gibson. Private Doss grew up in Georgia, the United States of America, where he practiced Christianity and lived with his mother, father, and brother (Hacksaw Ridge). Private Doss was not born a pacifist but chose to be. The origins of his pacifism came from two life-changing events. The first was when Private Doss was a child, and he fought with his brother. Like most young boys, the two were wrestling, when young Desmond Doss got caught up in the moment and hit his brother over the head with a brick (Hacksaw Ridge). While young Desmond's parents were tending to his brother, Desmond came across a poster of the Ten Commandments and began to cry, saying, "I could have killed him" (Hacksaw Ridge, 10:00-20:00). This was Private Doss's first encounter with life-threatening violence. Tragic events like this often impact a young child significantly; Private

Doss's circumstance taught him a true lesson of violence and that following God's word is essential. Private Doss's second instance, which made him declare he would never touch a gun again, was when his father was abusing his mother (Hacksaw Ridge). He took the gun out of his father's hands and saved his mother, but he pointed the barrel at his father after disarming him. Private Doss did not shoot but later described felt like he had (Hacksaw Ridge). The altercation of Private Doss and his father was when his religious reformist view of pacifism began by promising God he would never touch a gun again (Hacksaw Ridge).

The Second World War occurred as Private Doss reached adulthood, and he wanted to help. He explicitly mentioned that he wanted to be a medic because he refused to bear arms (Hacksaw Ridge). His desire to participate in the war non-violently declared that Private Doss was a reformist pacifist or, as they refer to him in Hacksaw Ridge, a conscientious objector. Although Doss declared himself

a pacifist, he was told to learn how to handle a gun (Hacksaw Ridge). Private Doss followed his religious beliefs of pacifism; he believed that he should not kill and not fight back when others persecuted him. He thought that violence was evil, and by being a medic in the military, he could help save others from that evil (Hacksaw Ridge). Private Doss viewed all people's lives as important; he believed this so strongly that he even saved enemy lives on the battlefield (Hacksaw Ridge).

Private Doss was a counterforce to the domination system. When the domination system is met with resistance, its supports may often look down upon pacifists. Private Doss struggled to gain his colleague's respect at basic training (Hacksaw Ridge) His Sergeant publicly acknowledged him as a coward and asked, "so you think you are better than us?" (Hacksaw Ridge, 20:00-40:00 20-40 minutes); a response to pacifists who choose to participate in war. Later, he received beatings from his fellow

trainees and was constantly asked why he would not give up (Hacksaw Ridge). His colleagues did not understand that pacifism is a commitment. Private Doss committed to helping in the war because his religious beliefs told him it was the right thing to do. Many people devoted to religion follow the texts word for word, and Private Doss believed that God's word was above all; he needed to respect God's creation (Hacksaw Ridge). Private Doss was detained for his beliefs and refused to go back on his promise to God. He was finally released after his father (a veteran of war), delivered a letter from a high-ranking commander stating that conscientious objectors were protected under military law (Hacksaw Ridge). He was released from military detention and allowed to participate as a medic.

Towards the end of Hacksaw Ridge, Private Doss follows his platoon into the Battle of Okinawa. Their enemies outnumbered them, and many were injured, so their Captain called in an airstrike and told the platoon to fall back

(Hacksaw Ridge). As everyone fled, Private Doss stood there asking God what to do, then shortly after ran back into the line of fire. He went looking for those who had survived the explosions so he could lower them to safety (Hacksaw Ridge). While doing this, he lowered 75 men from a cliff to get medical attention: including enemy soldiers (Hacksaw Ridge). Like other nonviolent leaders of the past, Private Doss's did not care about the label of friend or foe but viewed all life worthy of being saved. He knew the war was not the answer, but it was a reality, and he wanted to shine a light within the darkness. His heroic actions were not unnoticed. Once he got back to the bottom of the cliff, his Captain and other platoon survivors were waiting for him. (Hacksaw Ridge). With newfound respect, they no longer judged his beliefs and instead made time for him to practice them. Eventually, when they went back to the battle, Private Doss was injured protecting his colleagues from grenades which ended his time in the military

(Hacksaw Ridge). Post-war, Private Doss was awarded for his heroic actions and was the first conscientious objector to receive the Medal of Honor (Hacksaw Ridge).

One thing is clear through Private Doss's pacifism; nonviolence can have a substantial impact on the way violence is viewed by others. Although the domination system was against Private Doss, he remained with his beliefs. He showed compassion and taught those surrounding him that he was useful even without a gun. The domination system or hegemonic ideology leads us to believe that we have no power without violence. Some of the greatest moments in history are moments of nonviolence. An example of this is the Civil Rights Movement, where they organized restaurant sit-ins, bus boycotts, and marches to end segregation (Carson). Change can be inspired by nonviolence and courage. The domination system attempted to silence Private Doss and his message of nonviolence because the they knew that it only takes one

person to influence others. If successful in influencing others like Private Doss, a peaceful mentality can create a ripple effect. Through stories like Private Doss's, religious groups, and nonviolent movements; a trend of peace is born. Without those who risked their safety in the face of violence, we would not have organizations, educational programs, and political movements dedicated to creating and maintaining peace. With a lack of nonviolent support, it is possible to imagine a world that is dark and sad due to the unrepressed domination system. Because of heroes like Private Doss, we have a fighting chance at finding peace in this world. With small changes or acts of nonviolence, seeds are planted which can grow amidst adversity and popular cultural norms of the dominant.

Works Cited

BBC. "Pacifism", *BBC Archives*. 2014. https://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/war/against/pacifism_1.shtml

Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia (2019, November 19). pacifism. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. November 19, 2019. https://www.britannica.com/topic/pacifism

Carson, C. American civil rights movement. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. October 14, 2021. https://www.britannica.com/event/American-civil-rights-movement

Fiala, Andrew. "Pacifism". *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edward N. Zalta (ed.). 2021. https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2021/entries/pacifism/.

Gibson, Mel. Hacksaw Ridge. United States: Lionsgate. 2016.

Kellenberger, J. The Approach of Pacifism. In Religion, Pacifism, and Nonviolence. *Springer International Publishing*. 2018, pp. 47–54. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-95010-5_7

Ryan, C. Pacifism, just war, and self-defense. *Philosophia: Philosophical Quarterly of Israel.* vol.41, no.4, 2013, pp.977–1005. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11406-013-9493-7

Holy Bible. *New International Version*. Biblica. 2011.

Wink, Walter. The Powers That Be Theology for a New Millennium. *Doubleday.* 1998.

Kelsey Tishinski: Terry Crews' Amazon Advertisement

Kelsey is an undergraduate student in her final year of studies pursuing a Bachelor of Business Administration with a minor in Rhetoric, Writing, and Communications. She aspires to achieve a career in marketing and advertising where she will be able to fully use both facets of her degree.

People across the globe are exposed to a wide variety of different advertisements every single day. In the past few decades, there has been a large focus on blatant and conscious advertisements targeted toward consumers. Consumers have gotten more self-aware of this and have begun purposely avoiding advertisements by skipping television commercials, not reading whole-page magazines advertisements, and switching radio stations when a commercial comes on. As a result, advertisers have also

begun to alter their marketing materials to focus on first becoming entertainment for the consumers then subtly hinting at a product or service placement. A prime example of this is when an advertisement uses celebrity branding. Celebrity branding uses a celebrity's social status and fame to promote a product or organization (Keel and Nataraajan). Today, these types of advertisements will often take place directly on the celebrity's social media page and it is always followed up with an ad in the description. The core research question for this rhetorical critique will be looking at an Amazon advertisement done with Terry Crews and will assess if this type of unconscious marketing is able to effectively persuade its intended audience. Moreover, it will be looking at the dichotomy between the intended image the brand is trying to present to consumers and the reality of the situation. To effectively evaluate the artifact and provide an in-depth answer to the research question, this critique will be using the neo-Aristotelian framework. This

framework will delve into many different facets of the artifact, such as the intent of the addresser, the overall content and context, the five core canons, and the impact on the audience. This rhetorical critique will provide an interesting perspective and analysis of a portion of a multibillion-dollar industry.

Amazon is a multinational technology organization that places an emphasis on e-commerce and artificial intelligence (Jacoby et al.). It has become a major competitor in the global market and is one of the fastest-growing e-retailers in the world. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, most consumers were forced to stay home, and many local shops closed their doors. This provided Amazon with the perfect opportunity to provide consumption-based comfort to consumers all over the world through a simple tap on their devices and the competition from brick-and-mortar stores was no longer a concern for this organizational behemoth. As a result, it was able to achieve record-breaking profits with a

generated $386 billion revenue in 2020 (Curry). To keep up with their growing demand, Amazon began mass hiring for their distribution centres across America. To help increase the number of potential applicants, Amazon began producing advertisements to raise awareness that it is hiring and to create a positive brand identity. The artifact used in this rhetorical critique is an Amazon commercial that aims to highlight the benefits of becoming an Amazon worker and persuades viewers to apply. The main speaker of the advertisement is the beloved actor, Terry Crews and it was first featured on Terry Crews' TikTok page, which has over 21 million followers and 86 million likes (Crews). The clip shows Crews arriving at an Amazon distribution centre and he states that "Amazon is hiring a bajillion people, so I thought I'd take a look for myself". As he is at the site, he begins chatting with employees and asking them questions about the benefits of working at Amazon. In these clips, he appears to not be under any time constraints and is

having a lot of fun. To summarize the advantages of becoming an Amazon employee, at the end he exclaims “Benefits, tuition, and flexible hours! They’re hiring everywhere so check it out for yourself!”. Currently, the 30-second advertisement has amassed almost 900 000 views on his page alone.

A neo-Aristotelian framework is a critical approach that aims to understand how the artifact impacted and influenced the intended audience. Before the effects can be analyzed, it’s crucial to first reconstruct the context of the artifact. We can begin by looking at the creator of the artifact and who the main speaker is. Assessing if there are any core links between the rhetorical efforts and the speaker’s character is crucial. It is important to consider exactly who the intended audience is as well. When creating an advertising campaign, market segmentation will occur, and it will help organizations identify many details and characteristics of their intended audience (Qualtrics). When trying to

evaluate the intended audience, we can identify their potential feelings towards the creator, their personal motivations, what could persuade them, and more. Moreover, we must look at the occasion in which the artifact was created and identify any potential motivators. This allows us to further analyze how the artifact was created and how it was presented to its intended audience.

The five canons consist of invention, organization, style, memory, and delivery. Each canon touches on a specific element of the artifact and allows us to have a more comprehensive understanding of the artifact. Firstly, the invention canon allows us to prove the artifact's ideas through either internal proof or external proof. The internal proof is based on speaker-generated ethos, pathos, and logos while the external proof is drawn from other sources, such as testimonies from others. The organization canon looks at how the artifact was arranged, and we assess the format’s overall effectiveness. The style canon allows us to look

at the language used in the artifact, evaluate exactly what type of language is used, and assess its effectiveness. The fourth memory canon relates to the memorization of the text and overall mastery of the subject matter. Lastly, the delivery canon analyzes how the artifact was presented and it looks at the gestures, the visual appeal, and the voices used. Once we have the context and the canons identified, we can move into the final stage of the neo-Aristotelian framework and assess the impact the artifact had on the audience. In doing so, we must look at both the short-term and long-term effects on the audience and how effective the persuasion was. In this portion, we'll relate back to the context and the canons to provide reasoning for our assessment.

In addition to discussing the context of the artifact, we must explore the five canons of the neo-Aristotelian framework to provide a comprehensive analysis. Since the artifact in question is an advertisement, this rhetorical critique will not be discussing the canon of memory

but will be discussing the other four core canons. The first canon demonstrated is invention and this artifact uses the internal proof of ethos to persuade viewers. Ethos allows the speaker to convince the audience that they possess good character, they are credible, and therefore they can be trusted (Beqiri). Moreover, the speaker Terry Crews uses ethos by generating a sense of trustworthiness and credibility with the audience (Keith and Lundberg 38). By being a speaker that is so well-liked in the media for his past roles as a comedic actor, and his charming personality, he is a perfect example of ethos being effectively used. Additionally, the advertisement was posted on Crews' TikTok page, so most of his followers are already familiar with him as a celebrity. This artifact specifically uses an advertising execution-style referred to as celebrity endorsement. This style features a highly likeable speaker to endorse the product and it creates a three-way relationship between the star, the product, and us (Hess). It uses the positive

associate the audience already has with Terry Crews and creates an equally positive association with Amazon.

The second canon viewed in the advertisement is the arrangement and it refers to the structure of the advertisement. Since the commercial is a quick 30 second TikTok, the arrangement is crucial in getting the message across. Throughout the brief clip, the audience can see 7 settings at Amazon, ranging from the outside, lunchroom, boxing station, and more. This arrangement creates the narrative that Crews spent the whole day at Amazon, trying out a few different jobs. It helps Crews with belief that he is a credible speaker to speak on behalf of Amazon because understands the different positions that are offered. Because the arrangement is quick and brief with each scene, it captures the attention of the viewer and follows the video format of TikTok's

The third canon that can be viewed in the advertisement is the style. A core aspect of the artifact is the informal yet personal language and tone being

used by Crews. By having the language be simple and like how people regularly talk from day to day, it becomes more relatable. Saying hello, making jokes, and asking fun questions at work leaves the viewer to believe that Crews is experiencing a real and positive work environment. Moreover, the way he communicates to the audience feels as if he's communicating with a friend or a family member.

The fourth and final canon is the delivery of the artifact. Most of the ad is focused on Crews and the camera shots are a bit shaky, which makes the commercial feel less formal and more synonymous with real-life events. The commercial doesn't feel overly produced which makes it feel very personal. Additionally, having the narrative be delivered directly from Crews and not from a narrator makes the message feel more real, credible, and personal to consumers.

After analyzing the canons, we must assess the overall impact the advertisement had, both in the short-term and

the long term. It became apparent almost immediately that the advertisement was not able to effectively persuade consumers into believing that Amazon is an organization worth applying for. Although it attempted to show a positive, fun, and beneficial work environment, it received immediate backlash for being fake and unlike a real day at an Amazon warehouse. In the past, Amazon workers have reported unsafe and grueling conditions at the warehouse. Some examples include low pay, a dangerously high-paced environment, a high injury rate, mass write-ups, being treated like a robot instead of a human, and much more (Sainato). Many of the same sentiments are expressed in the comment section of Crews' advertisements which ask "Yeah, but do they pay a living wage?", "He would have been fired for taking the time to talk", and "Yeah but do the benefits include bathroom breaks or nah?" (Crews). Many users also claimed that Crews was now a sell-out, and they were disappointed in his partnership with Amazon. Despite this

backlash on both Amazon and Crews, there appear to be no lasting negative impacts on either. On Crews' most recent TikTok post, users are praising him, calling him the best, and saying they love him. Amazon is still one of the most profitable organizations and this partnership with Crews did not make a noticeable impact on sales or drastically impact their image. There are no reports or findings that mention how many candidates Amazon received from this advertisement but given the short-term impact, I suspect it was not a lot.

Advertisements frequently have a clear intent, message, and idea that they want to communicate to their target audience. However, the question of whether it is persuasive and communicates the intended image is one of the most important questions that plague the advertising industry. On the surface, the Amazon advertisement with Crews appears to be very persuasive. The advertisement is directed and filmed well, Crews is charming,

and the clip aligns with the platform they chose. Yet, this rhetorical critique has made an insightful contribution to the world of marketing as we are able to analyze an artifact using a microscopic lens. We can view the commercial as objectively as possible and as researchers, we are not persuaded by the marketing techniques they attempted to use. The neo-Aristotelian framework is the perfect framework for discussing an advertisement as it allows us to break down the artifact into its key persuasive components and identify exactly what went wrong. Moreover, this critique highlights the importance of a cohesive brand image, and it demonstrates that a well-liked celebrity endorser does not always equal persuasion to the audience. In a world that is so interconnected through social media and technology, advertisers need to be aware that these factors are impacting the brand image as well. Through our analysis, we witnessed that consumers were already aware of the Amazon warehouse work environment and Amazon did not

address these sentiments in the commercial. When a brand positions itself in a way that negates previous testimonials through advertising, it creates the possibility of some backlash from consumers. As highlighted in the rhetorical critique, this advertisement did more harm than good in the short-term. Lastly, this critique also provides a great foundation for other researchers to apply the same parameters to other advertisements or even future advertisements. Whether you are a researcher, an advertiser, or just a consumer, it's important to apply these critiques and analytically assess the marketing materials we are exposed to everyday.

Works Cited

Beqiri, Gini. "Ethos, Pathos, Logos: 3 Pillars of Public Speaking and Persuasion." *VirtualSpeech*, VirtualSpeech, 11 Apr. 2018, virtualspeech.com/blog/ethos-pathos-logos-public-speaking-persuasion.

Crews, Terry. "Terry Crews on TikTok." *TikTok*, 18 Nov. 2021, www.tiktok.com/@terrycrews/video/7028254512418737413?lang=en.

Curry, David. “Amazon Statistics (2022).” *Business of Apps*, 11 Jan. 2022, www.businessofapps.com/data/amazon-statistics/.

Hess, Amanda. “The Triumph of the Celebrity Endorsement.” *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 14 Apr. 2021,

Jacoby, James, et al. “Amazon Empire: The Rise and Reign of Jeff Bezos.” *PBS*, Public Broadcasting Service, Feb. 2020, www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/amazon-empire/.

Keel, Astrid, and Rajan Nataraajan. “Celebrity Endorsements and beyond: New Avenues for Celebrity Branding.” *Psychology & Marketing*, vol. 29, no. 9, 2012, pp. 690–703., doi:10.1002/mar.20555.

Keith, William M., and Christian Lundberg. “Argument and Persuasion.” *The Essential Guide to Rhetoric*, 2nd ed., Bedford/St. Martin's, Boston; New York, 2018, pp. 35–53.

Sainato, Michael. “'I'm Not a Robot': Amazon Workers Condemn Unsafe, Grueling Conditions at Warehouse.” *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 5 Feb. 2020, www.theguardian.com/technology/2020/feb/05/amazon-workers-protest-unsafe-grueling-conditions-warehouse.

Qualtrics. “Your Guide to Market Segmentation (Updated 2022).” *Qualtrics*, 31 Mar. 2022, www.qualtrics.com/experience-management/brand/what-is-market-segmentation/#:~:text=At%20its%20core%2C%20market%20segmentation,better%20understand%20the%20target%20audience

Juscenta Haligowski: Entering the Hermeneutic Circle with BTS' Infamous "War of Hormone"

Juscenta is a second-year student in the "Politics, Ethics & Culture" stream within the Creative Communications program. She a part of Illicit, the university's K-Pop dance crew, the UW Classics Students' Association and the Happy Happy Friends Club, a club for fostering friendships with international students. A proud Ojibwe woman, Juscenta is fascinated by popular culture, media, Indigenous and East Asian cultures.

Although it has been stated that hermeneutics "has probably existed since human beings began to speak" (Schmidt 6), it has been modified depending on application. Mainly applied to religion to begin with as Biblical hermeneutics, and then in the Renaissance to classics as philosophical hermeneutics, it is not an understatement to declare hermeneutics as a flexible framework. For that reason, there is significance in applying the hermeneutic circle to modern artifacts in a wide range of mediums. The hermeneutic circle

is helpful in deciphering how an artist's work assumes meaning. As both creation and reception are a by-product of personal views and experiences, this is in conjunction with how one's relationship with the work shifts over time. Utilizing German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer's approach to the hermeneutic circle is valuable as he regards recognition of tradition (history and prejudices), quasi-repetition and horizon-merger as the three main factors in hermeneutics used to decipher meaning. To further elaborate on quasi-repetition and horizon-merger, both align with Gadamer's view that one is constantly within the circle and in a conversation with the past (Fry 42). These factors provide a contrast between the state of mind of the consumer (or artist) at the time of creation and reception.

Therefore, this analysis will be regarding the application of the hermeneutic circle and its results to the controversial song "War of Hormone" by the 7-member South Korean boy group known as BTS. It will center

around how the application can reveal aspects about the group's ability (or disability) as artists to decipher meaning of their own works and adapt to changing societal views as defined by Hans-Georg Gadamer.

In this analysis, the main artifact of choice is a song taken from BTS' first complete 2014 studio album "Dark & Wild", known in English as "War of Hormone". This song released over a year after the group's debut contains lyrics which make various references to male puberty and sexuality, following their "school themed series" (Herman). Additionally, the lyrics sexualize women by repeatedly mentioning their bodies: "Girls, you make me cough, your clothes, they're see-through, see-through" and "But I learn body architecture 101 from you / My testosterone goes up heavily" (Genius English Translations).

In early 2015, the group moved away from the school themed series into a youth-focused series named "The Most Beautiful Moment in Life". This was a complete departure from

songs such as War of Hormone, instead pertaining to the struggles of growing up and finding oneself (Choi Jin-si). Although the group's image and sound had shifted from hypermasculine hip-hop to softer pop, "War of Hormone", along with some of the other group's past songs received criticism from fans at the end of 2015 (Big Hit Entertainment). Their company, Big Hit Entertainment released an apology pertaining to "War of Hormone" and to past songs more generally, stating:

> Big Hit Entertainment and all members of BTS would hereby like to express our dearest apology to those who felt uncomfortable with the lyrics and online posts. We would like to take this feedback seriously and reflect on it as we go through our future career as musicians. We all learned that an act of creating music is bound by where a creator belongs and

> what the creator learns from it, so the creator is susceptible to social prejudice and errors. We also realized it is not appropriate to judge a woman's role and value from a man's perspective.

As this apology was issued more than two years after the song was released, it can be argued that the song did not garner negative reception immediately. Instead, as societal views started to shift prior to the #MeToo movement (Chicago Tribune), reception to the group's music did as well. Shortly after this apology, the group released a new album known as "Wings". A supporting artifact in this analysis, is the song "21st Century Girl". The messages from this song contrast in comparison to "War of Hormone" as it was "was an attempt to cut through self-esteem and self-worth issues plaguing many young females" (Genius English Translations). The lyrics consist of lines such as "Tell them that you're strong / Tell them you're enough" and "…don't lower yourself…don't

set yourself to them" (Genius English Translations).

Lastly, the group's image and sound has grown more polished as they have gained popularity worldwide. In 2017, they partnered with UNICEF for the Love Yourself campaign to end violence and promote self-worth (Wylie). In 2018, 2020 and 2021 they delivered speeches at the United Nations (UNICEF). In terms of musicality, the group's lyrics have remained almost completely gender neutral and free of profanity. Pertaining to a song from their 2017 album "Love Yourself: Her", leader and writer Namjoon Kim stated the intention behind gender neutral lyrics: "The lyrics were based on rare and special things in life. So, I thought, those feelings transcend genders, cultures and barriers between people." (Benjamin). Ultimately, it is vital to regard the group's history prior to and succeeding "War of Hormone" to fully comprehend the impact their relationship with the song had on their own perspective.

By utilizing Gadamer's approach to hermeneutics and

more specifically the hermeneutic circle, this analysis will regard how BTS' relationship with their controversial song "War of Hormone" has evolved over an elongated timespan due to various factors. These factors include the group's prior prejudices, growth, and outside reception of "War of Hormone". Each of these factors align with how meaning is created within the circle from Gadamer's perspective.

Firstly, Gadamer places emphasis on "tradition", or the historical context. He states that both positive and negative prejudices play an essential part in creating understanding of an artifact's meaning and significance (Fry 32). This aspect will be utilized to outline the group's prejudices and actions pertaining to the creation and release of the song. It will also place focus upon the fact that the song received no initial criticism, and how that contributes to meaning.

Gadamer states that process within the hermeneutic circle is repetitive (Schmidt) and

states that “to be historically means that knowledge of oneself can never be complete” (George). Both statements elaborate upon “horizon-merger” and “quasi-repetition”, which allows focus upon the repetitive process of perspective reform influenced by other horizons. In terms of “War of Hormone”, this will be applied to the group’s choice to apologize and their shift away from initial image and sound altogether. Focus on the group’s actions after negative critical reception is essential, as it will provide insight into how the group created meaning, merged “horizons” and participated in the circle.

To fully analyze the prejudices of the group from an outside perspective, the contrast between the release and lyrics of the song to the issued apology are significant. As a starting point, the release of the song demonstrates that the group members and staff approved the song and its lyrics for public view. If the group did not approve of the song’s content, it would have not of appeared on the “Dark & Wild” album.

Gadamer states that prejudices are “shaped by the larger context of historically inherited meanings that remain operative” (George), and the release of the song itself is demonstrative of these meanings and social constructs. As the group members and credited writers (Big Hit Entertainment) are all male and born into a conservative country, it is understandable and natural that they would carry historically inherited prejudice or misogynistic bias even if unknowingly. The group themselves further commented on their own prejudice within their apology, stating that the “act of creating music is bound by [the creator’s experiences] so the creator is susceptible to social prejudice and errors”. The group’s confirmation of their own prejudice directly connects to Gadamer’s interpretation of “tradition” within the hermeneutic circle. Along with connecting to tradition, it allows for the first modification of the song’s meaning to the group as well. After realizing this prejudice which became embedded in the song, the group

no longer publicly approved of the song lyrics.

Furthermore, the fact that the song did not receive noticeable criticism initially showcases historically inherited prejudices within consumers as well. Without disapproval, it suggests that the lyrics of the song were not considered offensive at the time of release, or that there was not enough initiative for many to speak out against it. Context pertaining to this criticism aligns as well. As mentioned prior, the #MeToo movement mainly began in 2017 (Chicago Tribune). The movement was a part of fourth-wave feminism, dominated by discussion online and social media activism (Cochrane). Therefore, it is apparent that prior to the movement there was less online feminist discourse, allowing for a larger presence of misogynistic rhetoric.

The apology is evident of the group's own recognition of these prejudices and realization of originally narrow mindset. Gadamer elaborates on interpretation in hindsight that "in [an] interpretive experience,

our attempts to understand can and should lead us to recognize that our own horizon is not as insular or narrow as we first thought" (George). This links to the group's attempt to view the situation from the perspective of those whom it offended, stating in the same apology that "[they] also realized it is not appropriate to judge a woman's role and value from a man's perspective". Although initially not considered, the group recognizes that their past prejudices drove them to commit offensive actions. This recognition is a broadening of horizon, as the criticism is utilized to reform the relationship with the artifact.

Another example of how the group merged horizons lays in their intention to continue positive work. This is evident by regarding context such as the song "21st Century Girl", gender-neutral lyrics and their Love Yourself campaigns. As each of these events occurred 2017 onwards, it can be argued that pertaining to Gadamer this also constitutes as quasi-repetition. Although not directly pertaining to "War of Hormone", the lack of

repetition of the same offensive behaviour and themes implies improvement of morals. This in turn suggests that the group's interpretative experience with "War of Hormone" in the circle has mimicked the "conversation with the past" as Gadamer has mentioned. By utilizing the past as a consistent indicator of significance, the group then has used it to shape not only their views upon the song, but their future actions as well. This continuation of action aligns with Gadamer's perspective on the continuous process of being within the circle and using it to shape perspective.

To further quote Gadamer in the words of Paul Fry, he states that Gadamer insists "[that] there's always something of me in my interpretation, insisting, however that the hermeneutic circle is a vicious one if I am not mindful of other horizons" (38). In responding to criticism and adjusting their image and sound, the group had to firstly recognize their own inherited prejudices. Secondly, they merged their horizons with those claiming that the song had offensive content.

Thirdly, they adjusted their image and sound repetitively in relation to both the prejudices and merged horizons. The application of Gadamer's approach to the hermeneutic circle upon the relationship BTS has had with "War of Hormone" has revealed how an artist can utilize this process to recognize their own inherited prejudices, reform their horizon and expand their view positively. In going through the interpretive process within the circle, it can be concluded that the group has distinguished the meaning of their song to the point where it impacts their actions long after release.

Works Cited

Benjamin, Jeff. “BTS Explain Concepts Behind ‘Love Yourself: Her’ Album: ‘This Is the Beginning of Our Chapter Two.’” *Billboard*, 20 Sept. 2017, https://www.billboard.com/music/music-news/bts-love-yourself-her-album-rap-monster-interview-analysis-meaning-7966098/.

Big Hit Entertainment. *Big Hit Entertainment Apologizes for BTS’ Misogynistic Lyrics (Full Translation).* http://kpopherald.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20160706172613553344 7_2. Accessed 4 Apr. 2022.

Choi, Jin-si, Digital. “방탄소년단이 말하는 ‘화양연화’ (인터뷰①) | 텐아시아.” 텐아시아 연예뉴스, 29 Apr. 2015, https://tenasia.hankyung.com/topic/article/2015042950634.

Cochrane, Kira. “The Fourth Wave of Feminism: Meet the Rebel Women.” *The Guardian*, 10 Dec. 2013. *The Guardian*, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/dec/10/fourth-wave-feminism-rebel-women.

“Four Waves of Feminism.” *Pacific University*, 25 Oct. 2015, https://www.pacificu.edu/magazine/four-waves-feminism.

Fry, Paul H. *Theory of Literature*. Yale University Press, 2012.

Genius English Translations – BTS - 21세기 소녀 (21st Century Girl) (English Translation). genius.com, https://genius.com/Genius-english-translations-bts-21-21st-century-girl-english-translation-lyrics. Accessed 5 Apr. 2022.

Genius English Translations – BTS - War of Hormone (English Translation). genius.com, https://genius.com/Genius-english-translations-bts-war-of-hormone-english-translation-lyrics. Accessed 4 Apr. 2022.

George, Theodore. “Hermeneutics.” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta, Winter 2021, Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2021. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2021/entries/hermeneutics/ .

Helen Wylie. *BTS and Big Hit Renew Commitment to "LOVE MYSELF" Campaign to Support UNICEF in Ending Violence and Neglect as Well as Promoting Self-Esteem and Well-Being*. 4 Mar. 2021, https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/bts-and-big-hit-renew-commitment-love-myself-campaign-support-unicef-ending-violence.

Herman, Tamar. "How BTS Took Over the World: A Timeline of The Group's Biggest Career Moments." *Billboard*, 14 May 2018, https://www.billboard.com/music/music-news/bts-takeover-timeline-bbmas-8455612/.

Kennedy Schmidt, Lawrence. *Understanding Hermeneutics*. Taylor & Francis Group, 2014.

Martin, Wallace. "The Hermeneutic Circle and the Art of Interpretation." *Comparative Literature*, vol. 24, no. 2, 1972, pp. 97–117. *JSTOR*, https://doi.org/10.2307/1769963.

Tribune, Chicago. "#MeToo: A Timeline of Events." *Chicagotribune.Com*, https://www.chicagotribune.com/lifestyles/ct-me-too-timeline-20171208-htmlstory.html. Accessed 7 Apr. 2022.

UNICEF. *BTS Speech at the United Nations | UNICEF*. 2018. *YouTube*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oTe4f-bBEKg.

Celeste Paquette: Adolescence Versus the Power of Representation

Celeste is a first-year student, born and raised in the city of Winnipeg. As a First Nations and Metis woman herself, she is committed to providing representation and a voice for the Indigenous peoples of Canada through her academic and artistic pursuits, such as film, at the University of Winnipeg.

I grew up in a city with one of Canada's largest Indigenous populations. As an Indigenous kid in Winnipeg, I saw a lot of myself on the streets of downtown, but very little on the screen I would turn on every day. Now, if you've seen Twilight, you might remember Gil Birmingham who plays Billy Black. Did you know he also happens to play every other Indigenous character you have probably seen on TV? That may be an exaggeration, but what I *am* trying to say is that there is an

absurdly small group of well-known Indigenous actors that often play the same Indigenous role in every show or movie. I internalized this phenomenon from an early age and began to compare the lack of casting of Indigenous peoples in the film industry with the low probability of becoming an Indigenous actor myself and not have my only role be “The Indian.” Looking back now, I realize that mass media (TV, film, advertising, social media, etc.) not only continues to poorly affect the development of my own sense of identity as an Indigenous woman, but other young people's sense of identity as well. Through reflection and research, it has become evident that the psychological development and mental health of adolescents has been negatively affected more than ever due to the increase and accessibility of mass media and its influences on race, gender, and identity.

To start off, the mis/underrepresentation of BIPOC in mass media has become an additional obstacle in creating a sense of identity and

belonging within a community. Being a teenager and trying to figure yourself out is already a heavy load on its own, but if you also don't have anyone to look up to on TV that looks like you, it certainly adds a few pounds. If you have a pair of eyes and a TV, you might have noticed that Indigenous peoples are among the most underrepresented in film in North America. In fact, Indigenous peoples make up around 0.4% of all on-screen characters in the U.S. (Hawk par. 5) and far less behind the camera. And when they are represented, it is most often misrepresentation. Try as we might to be politically correct, when most people hear Indigenous or "Indian" they think of old western movies, Pocahontas, and feathers. While these ideas are outdated and incorrect, they are not our concluding thoughts. They are simply what the media has taught us from an early age to think and associate Indigenous peoples with. This association will not only drive young viewers to stereotype Indigenous peoples, but it will also create the impression that this limited box

of stereotypes is the only way Indigenous youth can view themselves.

Other common instances where mass media, such as television and film, impedes positive representations of POC are the use of Black stereotypes. For Black people, particularly Black women, the setback of misrepresentation has always been historically relevant, dating back to the famously racist Aunt Jemimah pancake syrup to this past decade's latest trope of the "angry Black woman" continuously depicted in media. Such misconceptions reinforce stereotypical portrayals of Black women and consequently, affect the minds of Black youth and their non-Black peers. In 2014, a questionnaire was conducted to demonstrate the psychological effects of how Black youth interpret the images Black women in media. The questionnaire involved focus groups and provided them with several stereotypical depictions, which included the angry Black woman trope (Adams-Bass et al. 93). The focus groups were asked for their insight and to further

dissect the negative and offensive depictions. It was concluded that the Black youth focus groups were aware that the images in media enforced a negative view of Black women and raised a major concern on how it would encourage the majority group, such as their white peers, to view themselves and Black women (Adams-Bass et al. 79).

In addition to the effects of stereotypes inflicted on youth, we are accompanied with the use of gendered advertising in media directed towards children. The classic and outdated “pink is for girls and blue is for boys” remains a distinct societal trait that the media uses to separate the two. In modern society we know that that is not the case realistically, but to young people it is not simply a matter of choice. Advertising images of children's toys often portray girls with the behavior of a nurturing family role and beauty, while boys are portrayed with the behavior of physicality and cognitive skills like cars and construction sets. Additionally, the language used in children's advertisements reflects the type

of toy it is aimed toward. Common examples of language used in boy's advertisements include “power” or “hero”, while “babies” or “glitter” are often used for girls (Frisoli 26). These types of languages and images to the young eye, whether intentional or not, can influence their actions and their thoughts based on their gender rather than influencing them to develop their own personal interests and opinions. If a child does in fact choose to not conform to these stereotypes and fixed guidelines on gender set by the media, it could lead them to be bullied and outcasted by peers (Frisoli 28). As a result, this influence will impact how they convey themselves in society and form doubts about their capabilities as they grow older (Fine and Rush 779).

Furthermore, as children lead into adolescence and adulthood, these learned behaviors can be shunned by traditional thinkers if a man does not excel in a field deemed masculine or if a woman excels “too much” in a male-dominated field. To fix these issues, it is not

so much removing the feminine and masculine geared toys off the shelves altogether, but more so leaning toward educating media creators to include all genders in teir advertisements. Although media creators are not responsible for how children obtain their content, educating parents to reduce the need to genderize their child before they even know who they are can be beneficial as well. This way children can be free to play with the toys they choose based on theme and function, which will in turn allow children to develop their own interests and experience life without limitations due to the gender stereotypes inflicted upon them.

In contrast, parental guidance is not always at the forefront when preventing children from being affected by mass media, especially social media and its connection to the decline of mental health in teens. Nowadays, most adolescents have their own cellphones and are far more versed in the navigation of social media than their parents. Having said that, simply knowing how these social

media platforms work does not necessarily mean that young people are not vulnerable to the negative connotations social media may inflict on them. The negative connotations of social media can be demonstrated by, but are not limited to, the innate need to compare yourself to others. This can be illustrated in the (often photoshopped) images viewed by young people on these platforms that idealize a certain standard of physique, beauty, and lifestyle. Recurring physical standards that bombard social media and cause mental harm are thinness (Frederick et al. 189), usually directed to equate to the presence of femininity, while muscles and strength are physical traits that equate to the masculine image (Rogers et al. 407). Beauty standards are often represented as Eurocentric and exclude the presence of BIPOC. While lifestyle can be connected to the sponsored and advertised social media accounts of celebrities and influencers that stage an overly-privileged and luxurious ideal.

The negative connotations mentioned above can not only lead to a clouded

view of an adolescent's self-image, but also may invoke a feeling of inadequacy for things that are often out of their control like their race, appearance, or social status. To some, the thought of appearance and social status might sound like a superficial issue, but this feeling of inadequacy that is linked to social media frankly only scratches the surface of a much more profound and developing issue that lies beneath: mental illness. Depression, anxiety, self-harm and eating disorders are frequently listed mental illnesses that have been either associated with, induced, or made worse by social media use in adolescents of all genders. In fact, it was concluded that girls aged 13-15 who used social media daily had a greater association with low self-esteem, depression and inflicting self-harm (Barthorpe et al. 866). Counter to the continuous studies that state a lower rate of social media's mental health effects on adolescent boys compared to adolescent girls, it is without question that they, too, remain affected by disordered eating

stemming from body image concerns and attempts to fit into the ideal of masculinity (Rogers et al. 405). With that said, is there a solution? Modify the algorithm. Social media is one of the only places where you are in control of what you want to see, and I believe the best way to provide a better experience and to limit the exposure of potentially harmful content is to educate young folks on the media they consume and how moderating their feed and explore page can create a more positive and inclusive space.

Subsequently, creating positive and inclusive spaces could restore many of the damaging effects mass media has caused many adolescents, but who will create those spaces? The now-grown adults who have already endured and experienced the mental effects of mass media? Maybe. And maybe that is not their responsibility. Maybe people will learn to stop creating characters that stereotype Black women. Maybe gendered advertisements will finally be a thing of the past. Maybe teens will someday have a better

education on mental health. Maybe I will still become a voice for Indigenous people's representation in film. It is all up in the air. What we do know for sure is that mass media has become a constant and recurring slope of psychological harm against adolescent development and mental health. Adolescents continue to be targeted and subjected to TV and film portrayals that obscure their realities on race by stereotypes and underrepresentation. They are influenced by advertisements to believe in a set rulebook based on their assigned gender. And ultimately, social media continues to run rampant and to steal their sense of worth and personal identity during adolescence. Although it is impossible to abstain youth from the media on such a large scale, we are ultimately at a stage in technology and communication that requires us, as teachers and creators, to educate and re-evaluate what we put out into the world. To push for and allow room for positive change and diversity among mass media producers that influence the

vulnerable minds of younger

generations.

Works Cited

Adams-Bass, Valerie N., et al. "That's Not Me I See on TV . . . : African American Youth Interpret Media Images of Black Females." *Women, Gender, and Families of Color*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2014, pp. 79–100.

Adams-Bass, Valerie N., et al. "Measuring the Meaning of Black Media Stereotypes and Their Relationship to the Racial Identity, Black History Knowledge, and Racial Socialization of African American Youth." *Journal of Black Studies*, vol. 45, no. 5, 2014, pp. 367–95.

Alper, Meryl, et al. "Researching Children, Intersectionality, and Diversity in the Digital Age." *Journal of Children and Media*, vol. 10, no. 1, Jan. 2016, pp. 107–14.

Barthorpe, Amber, et al. "Is Social Media Screen Time Really Associated with Poor Adolescent Mental Health? A Time Use Diary Study." *Journal of Affective Disorders*, vol. 274, Sept. 2020, pp. 864–70.

Clark, Brad. "We Interrupt This Program: Indigenous Media Tactics in Canadian Culture." *Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, vol. 38, no. 1, Jan. 2018, pp. 213–16.

Fine, Cordelia, and Emma Rush. "'Why Does All the Girls Have to Buy Pink Stuff?' The Ethics and Science of the Gendered Toy Marketing Debate." *Journal of Business Ethics*, vol. 149, no. 4, June 2018, pp. 769–84.

Frederick, David A., et al. “Exposure to Thin-Ideal Media Affect Most, but Not All, Women: Results from the Perceived Effects of Media Exposure Scale and Open-Ended Responses.” *Body Image*, vol. 23, 2017, pp. 188–205.

Frisoli, Abigail. "How Commercial Advertising Enforces Gender Stereotypes among Children and the Ways This Affects Them Psychologically." *Sacred Heart University Scholar*, vol. 3, no.1, 2019, https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/shuscholar/vol3/iss1/4

Hawk, Crystal E. “Indigenous Representation Is Still Scarce in Hollywood: ‘We Need More Native Stories’ *(Guest Column)”*, *Variety,* 11 Oct. 2021, https://variety.com/2021/film/opinion/indigenous-representation-hollywood-native-stories-1235086445/. Accessed 12 Apr. 2022.

Kırcaburun, Kagan, et al. “Problematic Online Behaviors among Adolescents and Emerging Adults: Associations between Cyberbullying Perpetration, Problematic Social Media Use, and Psychosocial Factors.” *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, vol. 17, no. 4, Aug. 2019, pp. 891–908.

Rodgers, Rachel F., et al. “A Biopsychosocial Model of Social Media Use and Body Image Concerns, Disordered Eating, and Muscle-Building Behaviors among Adolescent Girls and Boys.” *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, vol. 49, no. 2, Feb. 2020, pp. 399–409.

Steinsbekk, Silje, et al. “The Impact of Social Media Use on Appearance Self-Esteem from Childhood to Adolescence – A 3-Wave Community Study.” *Computers in Human Behavior*, vol. 114, Jan. 2021, p. N.PAG.

Isabela Marie Franco: Analyzing Cancel Culture's Role in Society

Isabela Marie Franco is an aspiring writer majoring in Creative Writing and Psychology. Her passion for writing began as early as learning the alphabet. She is currently in her second year and her primary goal is to touch people's lives through her work.

Cancel culture has only begun to get recognized recently. The expression has an unfavourable connotation and usually pertains to well-known people saying or acting in a way that is deemed displeasing to the public eye. As this term has started to gain popularity, public figures find it more and more difficult to live a so called "normal life" without the fear of being dehumanized by society. "Call-out culture" is another form of ostracism and originated as a part of the #MeToo Movement in 2006. The purpose of this activism is to call

out a survivor's past abuser or sexual offender and to spread awareness about the situation on social media. Social media has been around for decades, but it was not until the early 2000s that it proliferated, and the escalation of cancel culture was highly influenced by the expansion of social media.

The line between cancel culture and call-out culture seems to be blurred but knowing the difference between the two is crucial. An article called "*The Mental Health Effects of Cancel Culture*" written by Lindsey Toler does an excellent job of defining the distinction between both. Toler explains that:

> These terms are often used interchangeably, but there is a difference. Call-out culture is about calling attention to someone's wrongdoing and giving them a chance to learn. Cancel culture, does not give the person the chance to learn from their mistake. Instead, the person is immediately labeled as "bad."

When delving into such a controversial topic, questions such as, “Is this an escalating issue?” or “Is it fixable?” weigh heavily on one’s mind. The debate lies between the two opposing sides of the spectrum. One side believes that calling out perpetrators brings about social change to those who feel that their voices have been silenced, while the latter argues that cancel culture can be risky because it makes people afraid to speak their opinions due to fear of being shunned by the public.

Another critical argument is cancel culture’s impediment on free speech. Is it possible to turn cancel culture into an educational tool? Many dispute that the people who voice their opinions and who are labeled as “ignorant” simply lack awareness. Their worldview has never been challenged. For these people, the best approach is to expand their knowledge on the circulating affairs of our world.

Being quick to cancel these people will often result in an ingenuine apology due to fear of public backlash. Instead of

hurrying to "cancel" these people, some are convinced that focusing more on the issue rather than the one who spoke on it will discourage them from repeating the same mistake. Alexandra D'Amour emphasized this in her article called "*Cancel Culture: The Good, The Bad, & It's Impact on Social Change*" saying "We live in an era where we expect "wokeness" from our peers, the cultural expectation to be socially aware, particularly in what we speak up against. If you aren't "woke," you're at risk of being "cancelled," or experience a certain level of "woke bashing."

A key reason why cancel culture is so prominent today is due to the lack of accountability celebrities and public figures take. Amanda Marcotte, a political writer expresses this question in her writing, "If we had a justice culture, would we even need to worry about cancel culture?". Whether you agree or not, there is some truth in her words. Take Harvey Weinstein for instance, a successful Hollywood movie producer, who has been accused of more than 80

sexual assaults. For two decades the producer was able to get away with his dubious crimes; and it wasn't until the height of the #MeToo movement when the justice system finally decided to act. Nonetheless, this is a pivotal reminder that the power of the people will always be greater than the people in power. The aftermath of canceling an individual generally results in the downfall of he or she's career as well as suspension or termination by their employer. Although, in many instances, a great number of public figures continue with their career despite the wrongdoings they have committed.

A CNN article called, "*It's Time to Cancel this Talk of 'Cancel Culture'*" written by AJ Willingham analyzes whether this movement is even valid or present in the modern world. Willingham's main point in the article argues that cancel culture is not a real thing, he states: "Cancel culture, as it's understood today, isn't real. Not only do people and things allegedly "canceled" by this imaginary movement often

prevail in the end, but the whole concept is also a smoke screen to distract from actual systemic forces of suppression".

He then goes on to give examples of public figures who have appeared to have been "canceled", but, their careers have not plummeted, and if anything, they have escalated even more in terms of social power. One example is the well-known children's book author, Dr. Seuss. His company announced that they will no longer be publishing multiple books due to racist illustrations. Although this statement had been made public, dozens of people still own these books, and it is not considered illegal to possess them. Furthermore, libraries still carry his books.

Another case deals with country singer named Morgan Wallen, who said a racial slur. The aftermath of this not only resulted in a heavy amount of backlash, but it also followed with radio channels ceasing to play his songs. Even though the public went to great lengths to cancel the singer, listens on Wallen's songs on Spotify still

escalated, as well as his social media following.

Feasibly, one of the largest public figures to get called out is J.K Rowling, author of the well-celebrated *Harry Potter* book series. Rowling faced intense disapproval after she publicly revealed transphobic beliefs. Despite this situation, the author's book sales continue to rise, especially in her home country, the United Kingdom. Willingham makes his points valid by concluding the following:

> Is it someone getting fired for harassment or problematic views? No, that's a workplace doing its job. Is it a popular figure losing fans or affiliations because of their past actions? No, that's the power of public opinion. Is it a company choosing not to publish a book, or a group of people boycotting a brand? No, that's just the free market at work.

Willingham is creating a dichotomy between cancel

culture and real-life issues. He wants people to reframe the concept of the movement. Willingham ends the article with one goal in mind and states: "These are the real problems that exist. It's not cancel culture."

Now having a solid understanding of the background of cancel culture, it is safe to move on to the negative side of it. Perhaps the ongoing debate about this topic centres around its tendency to dehumanize individuals. People often argue that anyone should be allowed to make mistakes without the fear of being judged. After all, no one is perfect. The opposing side of canceling public figures lies within the community of people who are more gracious and merciful. The ones that provide a sense of leniency and who believe that anyone is capable of change, growth, and transformation. An article written by Maadhu Krishnan named "*The Cons of Cancel Culture*" elaborates that, "A negative theme of cancel culture is how it implies the need for perfectionism on all public figures. The need to be

unproblematic has been found to outweigh the need for growth".

Inevitably, the consequences of cancel culture have placed a lasting effect on the individual's mental health. The perfect illustration for this is the popular singer, Madison Beer. She received large amounts of hate and death threats due to her behaviour encouraging fans to embrace their natural beauty when she herself has had plastic surgery. The fans communicated that there was nothing wrong with getting plastic surgery, but Beer's dishonesty was what caused an uproar. Not only was Beer called-out for being a liar, but she also received negative feedback for romanticizing her apparent favourite novel, *Lolita*. The book is centred around a toxic and taboo relationship. Beer then made a statement on her twitter saying, "I love u guys & I'm sorry. I misspoke and would never condone inappropriate relationships of any kind. I'm sincerely sorry for it seeming like I do. Let me make it clear—I do not."

The negative impacts of "cancelling" someone can take a

deep mental and emotional toll. From a different viewpoint, this can be categorized as cyberbullying. Another example is famous Beauty Guru and YouTuber James Charles. In 2019, Tati Westbrook, another Beauty Guru/Youtuber made efforts to cancel Charles claiming that he had been sending inappropriate messages to minors. After Westbrook's YouTube video which withheld detailed explanations, Charles was then labeled as "cancelled" and lost over three million followers on his YouTube channel. Charles then made a video responding to Westbrook defending himself where he revealed that he had been struggling with his mental health due to the public dispute between him and Westbrook.

Now after delving into the toxic side of cancel culture, let us explore its logical viewpoint. The other side of the spectrum does not just deal with simple matters such as the right to free speech but claims that certain individuals should have their public rights removed and

should face the consequences of their actions legally.

Conceivably, one of the greatest demonstrations of cancel culture is the infamous American singer, R. Kelly. His most popular single “I Believe I Can Fly” received multiple Grammy Awards. If heard playing on the radio, it would be effortlessly recognized by the public. But things are not always what they seem. Behind all his success, lies something sinister. The R&B singer has been indicted with multiple accounts of sexual charges (most of them involving minors) that began circulating in the early 90s. It has been confirmed that often Kelly would go as far as bribing his employees to help execute his devious tasks.

In 2017 citizens along with public figures began to jumpstart a movement called #MuteRKelly, which then started a trend on huge social media platforms, most notably Twitter. The purpose of the campaign was to boycott his career; companies such as Spotify, Apple, and Pandora removed the singer’s music from featured playlists and

ceased to promote his songs. The awareness culminated in 2018 when the #MeToo movement peaked.

Perhaps the efforts to overthrow Kelly reached it summit when a Netflix documentary was released called “Surviving R. Kelly”. The series involved interviewing five of the women who were victims of Kelly’s crimes. The case is still ongoing until now and the singer is due for sentencing on May 4, 2022.

After exploring both the advantages and disadvantages of cancel culture, it is evident that this topic will always cause dispute. It will always be binary; either people will stand with it, or against it. In spite the dispute of dehumanizing individuals and producing little to no clemency in people making mistakes, cancel culture can be a useful tool. Possibly, cancel culture is the new form of boycott. As massive celebrities such as Bill Cosby, Ellen DeGeneres, Lea Michelle, and countless others take advantage of their power to prey on the vulnerable, cancel culture can be deemed significant in today’s culture.

Works Cited

‘24, Idera Laifa. “Escalation of Cancel Culture.” *The Talon*, gctalon.org/5145/news/5145. Accessed 7 Apr. 2022

Alexander, Ella. “Cancel Culture: A Force for Good or a Threat to Free Speech?” *Harper’s BAZAAR*, 14 July 2020, www.harpersbazaar.com/uk/culture/a33296561/cancel-culture-a-force-for-good-or-a-threat-to-free-speech

Arkin, Daniel and The Associated Press. “Timeline of the R. Kelly Allegations.” *NBC News*, 27 Sept. 2021, www.nbcnews.com/pop-culture/celebrity/timeline-r-kelly-allegations-n1280065.

BBC News. “R. Kelly Found Guilty in Sex Trafficking Trial.” *BBC News*, 28 Sept. 2021, www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-58714203.

Breakey, Hugh. “Is Cancel Culture Silencing Open Debate? There Are Risks to Shutting down Opinions We Disagree With.” *The Conversation*, 10 July 2020, theconversation.com/is-cancel-culture-silencing-open-debate-there-are-risks-to-shutting-down-opinions-we-disagree-with-142377.

“Cancel Culture.” *Wikipedia*, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cancel_culture. Accessed 7 Apr. 2022.

“Cancel Culture and Its Mental Health Effects.” *Verywell Mind*, 1 May 2021, www.verywellmind.com/the-mental-health-effects-of-cancel-culture-5119201.

Celentano, Donna. “Cancel Culture: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly.” *The Science Survey*, 20 Apr. 2021,

thesciencesurvey.com/editorial/2021/04/20/cancel-culture-the-good-the-bad-and-the-ugly.

Closson, Troy. "R. Kelly Is Found Guilty of All Counts and Faces Life in Prison." *The New York Times*, 20 Oct. 2021, www.nytimes.com/live/2021/09/27/nyregion/r-kelly-trial-news.

D'Amour, Alexandra. "Cancel Culture: The Good, The Bad, and Its Impact on Social Change." *On Our Moon*, 3 Apr. 2020, onourmoon.com/cancel-culture-the-good-the-bad-its-impact-on-social-change.

Doria, Matt. "R. Kelly Seeks Acquittal or New Trial in Racketeering and Sex Trafficking Case." *NME*, 21 Feb. 2022, www.nme.com/news/music/r-kelly-seeks-acquittal-or-new-trial-in-racketeering-and-sex-trafficking-case-3165745.

Fire. "National FIRE Survey: Cancel Culture Widely Viewed as Threat to Democracy, Freedom." *FIRE*, 31 Jan. 2022, www.thefire.org/national-fire-survey-cancel-culture-widely-viewed-as-threat-to-democracy-freedom.

Gerstmann, Evan. "What Is Cancel Culture?" *Forbes*, 10 Dec. 2021, www.forbes.com/sites/evangerstmann/2021/03/22/what-is-cancel-culture/?sh=372d9946bd55.

Haag, Emma. "The Toxic Rise of Cancel Culture." *Portola Pilot*, portolapilot.com/the-toxic-rise-of-cancel-culture. Accessed 7 Apr. 2022.

James. "Pros and Cons of Cancel Culture." *The Purist*, 6 Nov. 2020, thepuristonline.com/2020/08/pros-and-cons-of-cancel-culture.

Journal, Wednesday. “The Downside of ‘Cancel Culture.’” *Oak Park*, 25 May 2021, www.oakpark.com/2021/05/25/the-downside-of-cancel-culture.

Juarez, Sierra. “Singer Madison Beer Has Been Canceled for Saying She Romanticizes ‘Lolita.’” *The Daily Dot*, 16 June 2020, www.dailydot.com/unclick/madison-beer-canceled-lolita-blm
.

Krishnan, Maadhu. “The Cons of Cancel Culture.” *White Station Scroll*, whitestationscroll.net/5966/opinion/the-cons-of-cancel-culture. Accessed 8 Apr. 2022.

Lennox, Carol. “Cancel Culture Could Be The New Boycott - An Injustice!” *Medium*, 15 Dec. 2021, aninjusticemag.com/cancel-culture-is-the-new-boycott-f0633a288d65.

Lorenz, Taylor, and Valeriya Safronova. “Why James Charles Has Been Demonetized by YouTube.” *The New York Times*, 21 Apr. 2021, www.nytimes.com/2021/04/21/style/james-charles-youtube-demonetized.html.

“Madison Beer Shares Her Thoughts On Cancel Culture.” *Madison Beer Shares Her Thoughts On Cancel Culture | Madison Beer : Just Jared Jr.*, 1 Feb. 2021, www.justjaredjr.com/2021/02/01/madison-beer-shares-her-thoughts-on-cancel-culture.

Mishan, Ligaya. “The Long and Tortured History of Cancel Culture.” *The New York Times*, 3 Dec. 2020, www.nytimes.com/2020/12/03/t-magazine/cancel-culture-history.html.

Penguin, Argumentative. “Is Cancel Culture The New Boycott? - The Arctic Circular.” *Medium*, 22 Dec. 2021, medium.com/lucid-nightmare/is-cancel-culture-the-new-boycott-4843e7d2defe.

Price, Grace. “The Benefits of Cancel Culture.” *The Eyrie*, eyrieonline.org/7536/opinion/the-benefits-of-cancel-culture. Accessed 8 Apr. 2022.

“Pro and Con: Cancel Culture.” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, www.britannica.com/story/pro-and-con-is-cancel-culture-good-for-society. Accessed 8 Apr. 2022.

Romano, Aja. “What Is Cancel Culture? How the Concept Has Evolved to Mean Very Different Things to Different People.” *Vox*, 5 May 2021, www.vox.com/22384308/cancel-culture-free-speech-accountability-debate.

“What Is Cancel Culture? Why We Keep Fighting about Canceling People.” *Vox*, 25 Aug. 2020, www.vox.com/culture/2019/12/30/20879720/what-is-cancel-culture-explained-history-debate.

Rosner, Elizabeth, and Patrick Reilly. “Prosecutors ‘strenuously Oppose’ R. Kelly’s Bid to Delay Sentencing.” *New York Post*, 5 Apr. 2022, nypost.com/2022/04/05/prosecutors-oppose-r-kellys-attempt-to-delay-sentencing.

Savage, By Mark. “R. Kelly: The History of Allegations against Him.” *BBC News*, 28 Sept. 2021, www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-40635526.

Sossi, Dino. “Can We Cancel ‘Cancel Culture?’” *The Conversation*, 21 July 2021, theconversation.com/can-we-cancel-cancel-culture-164666.

Special to Global News. “COMMENTARY: Cancel Culture Isn’t about Denying Freedom of Speech, It’s about Consequences.” *Global News*, 19 Apr. 2021, globalnews.ca/news/7733843/cancel-culture-freedom-speech-consequences.

The Associated Press. “R. Kelly Found Guilty on Racketeering, Sex Trafficking Charges, Faces Lengthy Jail Time.” *Global News*, 28 Sept. 2021, globalnews.ca/news/8224591/r-kelly-guilty-court-jury-jail.

Willingham, Analysis Cnn By Aj. “It’s Time to Cancel This Talk of ‘Cancel Culture.’” *CNN*, 7 Mar. 2021, edition.cnn.com/2021/03/07/us/cancel-culture-accountability-reality-trnd/index.html.

Sarah Seroy: Indigenous Resistance, Infrastructure Projects, and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women

Sarah Seroy is currently completing an Honours B.A with a Major in Rhetoric and Communications. She is a second-degree student who returned to UWinnipeg to pursue her passion for reading, writing, and editing. Sarah is interested in Indigenous representation and reconciliation and hopes to incorporate that into her future career.

In July 2019, a 33-year-old man from Wet'suwet'en First Nation in British Columbia finished an 8,275-kilometre walk - an incredible journey in honour of his aunt, Frances Brown, who went missing in October 2017 while mushroom picking ("B.C. Man Finishes Walk across Canada for MMIWG, but Says His Work Isn't Over"). Brown's case is just one example of many in the larger issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (hereafter referred to as MMIW). This is not the only issue that Indigenous groups face. In fact,

Wet'suwet'en, Brown's home community, recently made international headlines due to large scale protests and blockades of the Coastal GasLink pipeline project (Brown & Bracken). Again, this is just a single example that highlights a much larger issue: the contentious debate over environmental rights, land rights, and infrastructure projects involving Indigenous communities. Additionally, it appears these two issues are linked. Recent Indigenous resistance movements in protest of infrastructure projects have made a point of addressing the topic of MMIW, and have called for consideration of this issue when projects like the Coastal GasLink pipeline are being planned. This paper will explore the link between infrastructure projects in Indigenous communities and the issue of MMIW, and examine how Indigenous resistance to such projects serves to protect Indigenous women in addition to land rights and the environment.

Background

Indigenous Resistance to Infrastructure Projects

The debate over Indigenous environmental rights and infrastructure projects has always been a contentious issue. There are numerous cases of Indigenous resistance movements that exist in North American history; three examples of resistance movements involving Indigenous communities which will be discussed in this paper include Standing Rock First Nation, Wet'suwet'en First Nation, and the Bakken oil fields.

In 2016 and 2017, members of Standing Rock First Nation in North Dakota and their supporters protested an expansion of the Dakota Access Pipeline. The planned expansion would run under the community's main water source, and the community maintained that it could potentially cutting off their most vital natural resource. The protesters were forced to leave in February of 2017. However, the event stands out in Indigenous history because it "turned out to be a massive gathering – a world-wide

gathering" (Brady). Standing Rock brought numerous Indigenous communities together, inspired Indigenous activists and supporters around the world, and brought attention to the fact that the Dakota Access Pipeline and other infrastructure projects involving Indigenous communities often occur without proper prior consultation.

In 2020, Indigenous activists and supporters protested the development of the Coastal GasLink pipeline in the community of Wet'suwet'en First Nation in British Columbia, arguing that the project could contaminate the land and prevent access to traditional food and medicines (Brown and Bracken). The blockades were shut down later in 2020. However, there are currently new blockades set up in Wet'suwet'en to prevent Coastal GasLink from continuing their drilling, and protestors say they will stay there until the project is shut down permanently (Partridge). Members of the Wet'suwet'en community are determined to protect their land from the environmental

degradation this infrastructure project could bring.

The Bakken oil fields cover a wide area including parts of North Dakota, Montana, and Alberta. The fields have been associated with the Keystone XL and Enbridge pipeline projects. In 2008, the fields brought an oil boom to North Dakota and significantly impacted Fort Berthold First Nation, located in their midst (Crane-Murdoch). The Bakken oil fields have been linked to a high rate of violence and crime and with several MMIW cases.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW)

The issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous women is widespread across North America. A number of risk factors including poverty, economic disparity, racism, marginalization, systemic discrimination, and issues with law enforcement and data collection put Indigenous women and girls at an increased risk of violence. In Canada, Indigenous women are three times more likely to be victims of violent

crime and seven times more likely to be victims of homicide than non-Indigenous women (Amnesty International 2). In the province of Alberta, Indigenous women account for nearly two-thirds of cases involving missing women, despite the fact that they only account for 6% of the province's population (Amnesty International). A recent RCMP report cited 1,181 unresolved missing person and homicide cases involving Indigenous women across Canada (Royal Canadian Mounted Police). Other reports have put the number at over 4,000 (CTV News). This problem extends to the United States, too, where it has been reported that "more than four in five American Indian and Alaska Native adults (83 percent) have experienced some form of violence in their lifetime" (US Department of Justice 1). It has been difficult to determine the actual number of cases, but even if the lower estimates are taken, these statistics are alarming – especially when you consider that each of these women is someone's daughter. Each case brings grief and pain to

family,friends, and loved ones. Something needs to be done to prevent further tragedies. Numerous Indigenous communities, supporters, and organizations, including Amnesty International and the Native Women's Association of Canada, have demanded governments take action to address this issue (Amnesty International). However, there has been little response and there is still much work still to be done to address the link between infrastructure projects and the issue of MMIW in North America.

Protecting more than land

Land, environment, and knowledge

Contention over infrastructure projects in Indigenous communities typically stems from concern over potential land and environmental damage in traditional lands. This is the case for the communities discussed above. Protestors of Standing Rock expressed concern that the pipeline could cut off the

community's water supply and damage sacred sites (Herscher). Opponents of the Coastal GasLink pipeline in Wet'suwet'en argue that "it could contaminate land that is a part of who they are and that they rely on to harvest food and medicines and draw water" (Brown and Bracken). Indigenous communities fighting the Enbridge pipeline have argued that it could affect water supplies as well as "habitats for culturally important species including walleye, trout and wild rice" (Beaumont). By defending land, communities protect water and natural resources, which is beneficial for everyone. Maintaining traditional lands allows people to live traditional lifestyles, harvest food and medicines used in ceremonies, and pass knowledge on to younger generations. Defending land protects Indigenous culture.

Addressing the issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women

Recent Indigenous resistance movements of infrastructure projects, including protests of the

Keystone XL and Coastal GasLink pipelines, have acknowledged the issue of MMIW. In Wet'suwet'en, protestors hung red dresses along the pipeline's intended route to remind people of what is truly at stake. Karla Tait of the community's Unist'ot'en Healing Centre explained that they "put a call out for red dresses to be sent here, inviting anyone to send red dresses in honour of any missing and murdered Indigenous women in their lives and to help us raise awareness and visibility" (Linnitt). There have been numerous calls from Indigenous groups and local and international organizations to consider this issue before approving infrastructure projects. This is essential because there appears to be a dangerous link between MMIW and infrastructure projects.

Infrastructure projects endanger Indigenous women

Statistics and cases of MMIW

While there is a limited amount of research that investigate the issues of MMIW cases and infrastructure development, a few

studies have taken place that highlight the link between the two. A study by the Women's Earth Alliance and Native Youth Sexual Network analyzed crime statistics across the United States and found that more assaults on Indigenous women and girls take place in areas where pipelines and infrastructure projects are being constructed (Women's Earth Alliance 30). Another study found higher numbers of missing person cases and homicides involving Indigenous women, including several unsolved cases, in North and South Dakota, Montana, and Nebraska - four of the states the Keystone XL Pipeline is being constructed in (Sovereign Bodies Institute). This study found 411 cases across these four states of Indigenous women who were murdered or who went missing and were never safely located. Of these "69% occurred since 2000. From 2017 through 2019, approximately 30-40 cases occurred annually" (Sovereign Bodies Institute 3). Additionally, the number of crimes in Fort Berthold Indian Reservation in North Dakota has significantly

risen since work began on the Bakken oil fields in 2008. In 2012, “the tribal police department reported more murders, fatal accidents, sexual assaults, domestic disputes, drug busts, gun threats, and human trafficking cases than in any year before” (Crane-Murdoch). These statistics help illustrate the dangers infrastructure projects can bring to Indigenous communities.

Crime statistics show that infrastructure projects are putting Indigenous women at risk, as do reports of individual cases from Indigenous communities. For example, the Enbridge pipeline project has been linked to several crimes and cases involving Indigenous women. In 2020, two Enbridge workers were arrested in Minnesota on charges of human trafficking (Rieger). While it was not mentioned whether any of the victims were Indigenous, this case does show how the pipeline project indirectly endangered women in the community. The Bakken oil fields have also been directly linked to several cases involving Indigenous women from Fort

Berthold reservation. For example, in one article a tribal officer discussed a case in which a local woman was offered a ride home by three oil workers, who "drove, instead, to the reservation's desolate center, raped her, and left her on the road. They returned several times before morning, and each time, they raped her again" (Crane-Murdoch). These cases show the human impact of infrastructure projects on Indigenous communities, and demonstrate how vital it is for action to be taken to address this issue.

Man-Camps

When infrastructure projects take place in Indigenous communities, workers "from all over the country—and sometimes the world— are attracted by the jobs and large paychecks, and are housed in temporary accommodations typically referred to as 'man camps'" (Women's Earth Alliance 32). These camps are a contributing factor to the higher rates of violence against Indigenous women in communities where infrastructure projects are taking

place. The influx of workers combined with rotational work shifts leads to an increase in crime, drug and alcohol use, and violence. This makes sense because man-camps often "bring 1,000 or 4,000 men into a small location where they have nothing to do when they're not at work, they have plenty of money, and there's always going to be predators and bad actors" (Bleir and Zoledzioski). Man-camps have also been associated with an increase in a demand for sex work, which puts women in the community at an additional risk (Woman's Earth Alliance). The influx of high volumes of workers is also rarely combined with an increase in emergency and public services, which means that nearby police departments can easily become overwhelmed and simply unable to handle the higher rates of crime and violence. The fact is that when high volumes of temporary workers are placed in man-camps near Indigenous communities, "they do not have the infrastructure, leadership capacity, or expertise to respond to the rapid social changes and

population growth" (Finn et al. 8). This is something that needs to be considered before such infrastructure projects are approved.

Racism and Contentious Attitudes

The lack of action when Indigenous women and girls go missing sets a dangerous precedent and reinforces cultural narratives that Indigenous women and girls are inferior. When cases involving Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women are not solved, or when perpetrators are allowed to walk free, this "lack of accountability helps to maintain a culture of violence, where Indigenous women and girls are made to be easy targets, predominately by men, and especially by white men" (Sovereign Bodies Institute 16). Indigenous communities have reported raised incidents of racism and contentious attitudes when man-camps are placed nearby. For example, an Indigenous woman protesting at Standing Rock described how she was compelled to join because during the Bakken oil

boom “oil workers had harassed her, her family and friends with racial slurs and threats multiple times.” (Bleir and Zoledziowski). She and other protesters wanted to prevent history from repeating itself and help Indigenous women and girls feel safe in their own communities.

Racial tensions also endanger women during protests of infrastructure projects. There have been reports of activists and supported being harassed by law enforcement and by supporters of the pipeline projects, and many of these attacks are racial in nature. For example, protestor Angeline Cheek described how she feared for her life while protesting the Keystone XL pipeline, when “residents threatened to scalp Cheek, while local farmers watched the marchers with guns pointed to the sky” (Bleir and Zoledziowski). Additionally, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination issued a statement following protests at Wet’suwet’en, making clear that it was “disturbed by forced removal, disproportionate use of

force, harassment and intimidation by law enforcement officials against Indigenous peoples" (United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 1). Racist attitudes combined with the contentiousness of Indigenous resistance to infrastructure projects creates a dangerous climate for Indigenous women involved, and may contribute to the issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women.

The issue of systemic discrimination is also something to be concerned about in communities where the issues of MMIW and infrastructure projects are linked. In their investigation of MMIW cases in four Keystone XL Pipeline states, the Sovereign Bodies Institute found that it "is widely understood in communities across the four states of study that police may not only be negligent, but may be perpetrators of violence themselves" (Sovereign Bodies Institute 17). If Indigenous women and girls believe they are unable to trust law enforcement, they will have nowhere to turn

for help. This amplifies the danger that infrastructure projects bring to Indigenous communities.

When infrastructure projects are being protested, the danger to Indigenous women and girls can extend beyond the community itself. For example, when the Wet'suwet'en protests were taking place, people across the country discussed it and participated in protests of solidarity. In Winnipeg, when a bus was delayed due to one of these events and passengers complained, an Indigenous women attempted to explain the reasoning behind the protests. She was then verbally assaulted and insulted with racial stereotypes by four men for the remainder of her ride (Bergen). It is unfortunate that she was made to feel threatened simply for speaking her opinion on the subject. The heightened levels of animosity and the increased risk of racial attacks when infrastructure projects are protested need to be considered when governments choose to approve them without proper consultation.

Reproductive and Bodily Health

Infrastructure projects that impact the environment can lead to detrimental effects on the lives of people in Indigenous communities. The long-term effects of infrastructure projects and environmental degradation may not be seen until it is too late. The Indigenous community of Wet'suwet'en has expressed concern over 1,000 litres of contaminants that were spilled into their traditional territory by a Coastal GasLink work camp (Follet Hosgood). And they have reasons to be concerned. Environmental contaminants could lead to numerous reproductive and health issues, including "high levels of toxins in breast milk, placenta cord blood, blood serum, and body fat, as well as infertility, miscarriages, premature births, premature menopause, [and] reproductive system cancers" (Women's Earth Alliance 22). When infrastructure projects are approved, the potential impacts on the health of community members, both short-term and long-term, should be considered.

Emotional Trauma

The loss of women and girls is something that will impact a community forever, especially when they are violently attacked or go missing, leaving family and friends to wonder what really happened. As Natu Bearwolf, a MMIW support worker in B.C., not far from where Frances Brown went missing, explains, "It doesn't matter how much time has passed since a loved one has gone missing in that the community, the families, the friends are still hurting," (Bellrichard). It is a loss they will carry for the rest of their lives.

In addition to the grief and trauma of lost loved ones, Indigenous women must deal with fear and anxiety that they might be next. It's hard to be an Indigenous woman and know that you are at an increased risk of violence. As one Indigenous woman described, "growing up as an Indigenous girl… you know you're not safe. As a teenager, being following, having white men approach you, there's that fear" (Hylton). Living in a community where infrastructure

projects are occurring, where man-camps have increased the incidents of violence and sexual assault, means knowing that you are in danger. It is a weight that no one should have to bear.

Conclusions and Implications

The research available on this topic reveals a link between infrastructure projects in Indigenous communities and the issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. Projects such as the Coastal GasLink, Keystone XL, and Enbridge pipelines put Indigenous women at risk. There are higher rates of violence and sexual assault and more missing person and homicide cases involving Indigenous women in communities where these projects occur. Man-camps bring an influx of crime, violence, and drug and alcohol and put community members at risk. Racial tension and animosity surrounding these projects increase the likelihood that attacks will occur. Women in affected communities must deal with fear, anxiety, and trauma. Additionally, environmental

degradation can lead to long term health impacts. The impact of infrastructure projects on Indigenous women must be considered before projects are approved.

Future studies could aim to investigate the link between man-camps and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women directly, so the urgency of this issue could be better understood. Studies could also investigate whether pre-employment training courses, such as anti-racism awareness training, provided to temporary workers before they enter Indigenous communities could help to reduce racist attitudes and the negative impacts associated with these projects.

It is clear more pressure is needed to address the link between infrastructure projects and MMIW, yet the government has failed to take steps towards ending this issue. Infrastructure projects continue to occur without prior consultation or consideration of the findings of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. Until this

changes, and because of all that is at stake, it is easy to understand why Indigenous groups feel the need to organize protests and blockades. They want to make their voices heard and make sure the issues are understood when infrastructure projects take place in their communities. Indigenous resistance movements protect more than land and environmental rights – they also help to protect Indigenous women and girls.

Works Cited

Amnesty International. *Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls in Canada: A Summary of Amnesty International's Concerns and Call to Action.* 2014. https://www.amnesty.ca/sites/amnesty/files/iwfa_submission_amnesty_international_february_2014_-_final.pdf

B.C. man finishes walk across Canada for MMIWG, but says his work isn't over. *CBC News.* July 9, 2019. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/matthew-jefferson-wetsuweten-bc-mmiwg-1.5204004

Bellrichard, C. 'We haven't done enough:' grief along the Highway of Tears 1 year after MMIWG inquiry hearings. *CBC News.* Sept 29, 2018. https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/jessica-patrick-smithers-highway-of-tears-1.4841697

Bergen, R. Winnipeg women asks why nobody spoke up to racist bus riders. *CBC News.* Feb 14, 2020. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/indigenous-racism-winnipeg-violet-baptiste-1.5464202

Bleir, G., & Zoledziowski, A. The missing and murdered: 'We as Native women are hunted'. *Indianz.com.* 2018. https://www.indianz.com/News/2018/08/27/the-missing-and-murdered-we-as-native-wo.asp

Brady, J. 2 Years After Standing Rock Protests, Tensions Remain but Oil Business Booms. *NPR.* Nov 29, 2018. https://www.npr.org/2018/11/29/671701019/2-years-after-standing-rock-protests-north-dakota-oil-business-is-booming

Brown, A., & Bracken, A. No Surrender: After Police Defend a Gasline Over Indigenous Land Rights, Protestors Shut Down Railways Across Canada. *The Intercept.* Feb 23, 2020. https://theintercept.com/2020/02/23/wetsuweten-protest-coastal-gaslink-pipeline/

Crane-Murdoch, S. On Indian Land, Criminals Can Get Away With Almost Anything. *The Atlantic.* Feb 22, 2013. https://www.theatlantic.com/national/archive/2013/02/on-indian-land-criminals-can-get-away-with-almost-anything/273391/

CTV News. Inquiry deems missing and murdered Indigenous women in Canada a 'genocide'. *CTV.* May 31, 2019. https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/inquiry-deems-missing-and-murdered-indigenous-women-in-canada-a-genocide-1.4447212

Edwards, K.. MMIWG's Findings on 'Man-Camps' Are a Good Place For Government to Get Started. *Macleans.* June 3, 2019. MMIWG's findings on 'man camps' are a good place for government to get started - Macleans.ca

Finn, K., Gadja, E., Perin, T., & Fredericks, C."Responsible Resource Development and Prevention of Sex Trafficking: Native Women and Children on the Fort Berthold Reservation". *Harvard Journal of Law and Gender, vol.40,* 2017.. https://scholar.law.colorado.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1671&context=articles

Follet Hosgood, A. Coastal GasLink Spills More Contaminants in Wet'suwet'en Territory. *The Tyee.* Aug 17, 2021. https://thetyee.ca/News/2021/08/17/Coastal-GasLink-Spills-Contaminants-Wetsuweten-Territory/

Herscher, R. Key Moments in the Dakota Access Pipeline Fight. *NPR.* Feb 22, 2017. https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2017/02/22/514988040/key-moments-in-the-dakota-access-pipeline-fight

Hylton, S. How Canada's Indigenous Families Grieve the Loss of Their Loved Ones. *Vice.* April 4, 2018. https://www.vice.com/en/article/8xkxpz/how-canadas-indigenous-families-grieve-the-loss-of-their-loved-ones-v25n1

Linnit, C.. B.C. Failed to Consider Links Between 'Man-Camps', Violence Against Indigenous Women. *The Narwhal.* Feb 8, 2020. https://thenarwhal.ca/b-c-failed-to-consider-links-between-man-camps-violence-against-indigenous-women-wetsuweten-argue/

Partridge, K.. Wet'suwet'en members prepare for winter, plan to say until Coastal GasLink work halted permanently. *CBC News.* Nov 4, 2021. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/all-out-for-wedzin-kwa-wet-suwet-en-cgl-pipeline-1.6235045

Royal Canadian Mounted Police. *Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women: A National Operational Overview.* 2014. http://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/national-operational-overview.pdf

Rieger, S. 2 workers in Enbridge's Line 3 pipeline arrested in sex trafficking sting. *CBC News.* July 1 2021. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/enbridge-line-3-sex-trafficking-arrests-1.6087743

Sovereign Bodies Institute & Brave Heart Society. *Honoring Warrior Women: A Study on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in States Impacted by the Keystone XL Pipeline.* 2016. https://2a840442-f49a-45b0-b1a1-7531a7cd3d30.filesusr.com/ugd/6b33f7_27835308ecc84e5aae8ffbdb7f20403c.pdf

US Department of Justice. *Five Things About Violence Against American Indian and Alaska Native Women and Men.* 2016. https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/249815.pdf

United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. *Prevention of Racial Discrimination, Including Early Warning and Urgent Action Procedure.* 2019. https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CERD/Shared%20Documents/CAN/INT_CERD_EWU_CAN_9026_E.pdf

Women's Earth Alliance & Native Youth Sexual Health Network. Violence on the Land, Violence on Our Bodies. *Land Body Defense.* 2016. http://landbodydefense.org/uploads/files/VLVBReportToolkit2016.pdf

Aanuoluwapo Aribilola: Black Cultural Appropriation (Blackfishing) in Popular Culture and Main Media

Aanu is a University of Winnipeg student pursuing an undergraduate bachelor's degree in Theatre and Film with a minor in English. While performing and visual arts are her primary interests, she has recently discovered her love for writing, with this article being her first published work. She hopes to gradually rule out ignorance about such societal topics through her future written works.

Appropriating Black culture (also known as "Blackfishing") was popularized by Wanna Thompson, deriving from a twist in the word "Catfish" (Cherid 359). Blackfishing is when racially non-colored people, especially women, feign Blackness by claiming aspects of Black culture such as clothing, make-up, hairstyles, music, slang, and dark tans to gain financial and social advantage from the mainstream media. These White women profit financially and socially from the culture and bully Black people out of achieving these benefits. As a result of the sensitive nature

and typical lack of understanding of cultural appropriation, many have been averse to discussing it – creating misunderstandings and less education on the topic. However, in recent years, movements advocating racial justice (such as the "Black Lives Matter" movement) have sparked more conversation surrounding this topic, leading to questions being raised to gain more insight into Black cultural appropriation. Why is cultural appropriation rampant in popular culture? What is so problematic about stealing from black culture? Are appropriation and appreciation of black culture different? This essay will explore and discuss the concept of Blackfishing and how it is portrayed in popular culture and main media.

While Black cultural appropriation, or Blackfishing, exists in various industries and aspects of society, there is no doubt that popular culture and the contemporary media are among the many platforms on which it regularly occurs. This is because Black culture is a significant part of popular culture itself; therefore, appropriators of

the Black culture can easily benefit financially and socially through being a part of the Black culture (that, of course, they do not belong to). Wanna Thompson highlights this issue as she states that social media has "become a breeding ground for White women who wish to capitalize off of impersonating racially ambiguous/ Black women for monetary and social gain" (“How White Women on Instagram”). Peter Parisi also claims that "whatever was popular at the time was modified to be Black" (126). It is important to understand that in whichever platform Blackfishing occurs, it has and will always lead to "the co-opting of resources, positions, and profits meant for Black people" (Cherid 359).

In some cases, some people justify their acts of Blackfishing based on their assumption that "it operates as an homage because it appears to honor Black style. In this case, they graft off of what academics have called the ‘esthetique de cool’ that attends Black culture" (qtd. in Karimi). Appropriators of Black culture might not know

that they are simply ripping off the culture by hopping on a trend that is part of the culture of a systematically oppressed group. This will further clarify the belief by many Black people that "people desire Blackness, just not on Black women" (Thompson, “How White Women on Instagram”). Some other people that may be blind to the issues of cultural appropriation or may view it as a trivial issue usually "believe that it is supposed to help the dominant culture learn, but that is not the case" (Jung-Allen, “Cultural Appropriation”). If appropriately examined, the problem stems from the fact that it is the people who do not own nor understand the Black culture that appropriates it, therefore, leading to a "misinformation about the culture" (Jung-Allen, “Cultural Appropriation”). This is harmful to the people who genuinely want to learn and appreciate the culture and the Black community itself: the owners of the culture being appropriated. Cherid adds that "it is an attack on the viability or identity of cultures or their members" (360).

Another problem that involves Blackfishing is that the appropriators, when "wearing or doing something that belongs to another culture, it is seen as trendy, hip, or even progressive and inclusive" (Jung-Allen, “Cultural Appropriation”). The praise from the society and main media that these appropriators receive allows them to gain a general likeness or social advantage, thus appealing to the Black audience and popular culture. On the other hand, when Black people who own the culture do the same thing, it is regarded as unprofessional or improper. For example, Jung Allen highlights how Zendaya, a prominent Black actress, attended the 2015 Oscars with faux locs (a hairstyle traditionally worn by Black people) and was shamed for it. However, "when Kylie Jenner (a White woman) wore the same faux locs in a cover story photoshoot in Teen Vogue…she was praised and described as raw, groundbreaking, fresh, and edgy" (Jung-Allen, “Cultural Appropriation”) . The problem to emphasize here is that "there is a

specific dynamic in American society that implies that aspects of racial culture must be validated by those with status for them to be considered positive or valuable" (qtd. in Karimi). This dynamic has affected the society, especially the Black community, as their culture is now being validated by non-Black people, to whom the culture does not belong in the first place.

The issue of power dynamics in the concept of Blackfishing comes into play when "whoever is engaging in this process can engage with the culture on their own term" (Cherid 359). It can be viewed this way: "I, a member of a dominant group, will steal from the culture of this oppressed group because I like the aesthetic and can fit in with what is in trend, and maybe even get popularity and money off of it". There is disrespect in the oppressed Black culture because of the power dynamics between the marginalized and the dominant group. The dominant group, the non-Black people (especially women), have the privilege to choose when to be

Black without having to deal with its consequences: "White women want access to Blackness but don't want the suffering that comes along with it" (Thompson, “How White Women on Instagram”).

This power dynamic evident in Blackfishing leads to another problem: the "infringement of legal property rights" (Cherid 360) owned by Black people. In situations like this, the Black owner is not given the credit of ownership before it is stolen or exploited by a non-Black person, who indirectly or directly claims ownership from the Black person. Therefore, the infringer benefits economically or socially while robbing the owner of all those benefits. This is very evident, especially on social media platforms like TikTok. Pruitt-Young states that "while TikTok has only been around since 2016, it has already emerged as an example of how new forms of technology are being used as a tool for cultural appropriation..." (“Black TikTok Creators”). White TikTok-ers appropriate dances made by Black creators on the platform,

without giving them any credit or recognition for creating those dances. Many of these White TikTok-ers are then celebrated and offered preferential treatment by the general public and prominent media (beyond small media platforms), as if they were the creators of the dance. Pruitt-Young explains that "Black art forms, Black dance forms have been appropriated, watered down, repackaged and used to make money by White folks…and so if you put it in that context of that longer history of basically stolen labor and stolen creativity, then you start to see why it matters to people and why it's important to people to be credited for the origins of these things" (“Black TikTok Creators”).

This is where the commodification of Black culture is most evident – "once questions of intellectual property and ownership are brought into play" (Cherid 361). Non-Black capitalists see an economic opportunity once Black people are exploited from their ownership rights. Cherid covers this issue, as she states that "the

commodification of Black culture is a superficial show of tokenized representation that serves to obscure the ways in which this process has not only failed to create deep social changes but has effectively enacted existing power dynamics" (360-361). She further argues that Blackness through its commercialized culture is associated with the past and continuous processes of racialization that are expressed through "voyeuristic consumption" (Cherid 361). This is a valid argument as power dynamics, as highlighted earlier, exist in the appropriation of a systematically oppressed race's culture.

It is also commodification that draws the line between appreciation and appropriation of culture. Appropriation involves disrespecting, ridiculing, exploiting, and copying the influences of Black culture and using it for personal (commercial and social) gains. According to Tina Charisma, "the important aspect of determining cultural appropriation is when borrowing becomes exploitation" (“Cultural

Appropriation vs Cultural Appreciation"). With appreciation of the Black culture comes understanding. If a culture is understood, it will not be disrespected or exploited for the reasons of capitalization or popularity. If the Black art form of dance created by Black creators on TikTok were appreciated by the non-Black TikTok-ers, Black creators would have been given their due credit. One question to be asked to determine cultural appreciation from appropriation is whether a culture, Black in this context, is being ripped off or respected (Charisma, "Cultural Appropriation vs"). It is essential to recognize that "Blackfishing situates that style as a commodity" (Karimi, "What 'Blackfishing Means"), while appreciation does not.

The appropriation of Black culture has become a rampant conversation around the primary contemporary media. Reasons include that Black culture has become a significant contribution to popular culture, and the media is an easy breeding ground for practices of cultural

appropriation. The commodification of the culture, misinformation about the culture, infringement of property rights of Black people, and power dynamics surrounding the concept of Blackfishing have also been discussed. When people are properly educated about Blackfishing (which is essentially to market from the culture), appreciation will replace appropriation. As more people of all races become aware and educated on this issue, appropriators can easily be recognized, called out, and corrected.

Works Cited

Charisma, Tina. "Cultural Appropriation vs. Cultural Appreciation: What's the Difference?" Harper's BAZAAR, Harper's BAZAAR, 30 June 2021, https://www.harpersbazaar.com/uk/culture/a36798089/cultural-appropriation-vs-cultural-appreciation/.

Cherid, Maha Ikram. "'Ain't Got Enough Money to Pay Me Respect': Blackfishing, Cultural Appropriation, and the Commodification of Blackness." Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies, vol. 21, no. 5, 2021, pp. 359–364., https://doi.org/10.1177/15327086211029357.

Ira, Petiri. "' Blackfishing' Is the Modern Day Version of Blackface." Medium, An Injustice!, 18 Aug. 2020, https://aninjusticemag.com/blackfishing-is-the-modern-day-version-of-blackface-233796ee74a6.

Jung-Allen, Otter. "Cultural Appropriation in the Media." Science Leadership Academy @ Center City, 9 Nov. 2015, https://scienceleadership.org/blog/cultural_appropriation_in_the_media.

Karimi, Faith. "What 'Blackfishing' Means and Why People Do It." CNN, Cable News Network, 8 July 2021, https://www.cnn.com/2021/07/08/entertainment/blackfishing-explainer-trnd/index.html.

Parisi, Peter. ""Black Bart" Simpson: Appropriation and Revitalization in Commodity Culture." Journal of Popular Culture, vol. 27, no. 1, 1993, pp. 125-126.

Pruitt-Young, Sharon. "Black Tiktok Creators Are on Strike to Protest a Lack of Credit for Their Work." NPR, NPR, 1 July 2021, https://www.npr.org/2021/07/01/1011899328/black-tiktok-creators-are-on-strike-to-protest-a-lack-of-credit-for-their-work

Thompson, Wanna. "How White Women on Instagram Are Profiting off Black Women." PAPER, PAPER, 14 Nov. 2018, https://www.papermag.com/white-women-blackfishing-instagram-2619714094.html?rebelltitem=6#rebelltitem6.

Sarah Seroy: *Ten Days in A Mad-House* by Nellie Bly (Report)

Sarah Seroy is currently completing an Honours B.A with a Major in Rhetoric and Communications. She is a second-degree student who returned to UWinnipeg to pursue her passion for reading, writing, and editing. Sarah is interested in Indigenous representation and reconciliation, and hopes to incorporate that into her future career.

Ten-Days in a Mad-House is an account of Nellie Bly's 1887 undercover investigation of Blackwell's Island Asylum in New York, an assignment for the newspaper *The New York World*. The book describes Bly's experience, stories of other patients, and the conditions at Blackwell's Island. Bly's investigation brought to light the institution's poor standards, cruel treatment of patients, and the way women's voices were stifled. The book concludes with Bly's report, a grand jury review, and the results of her

investigation. *Ten-Days in a Mad-House* was an important piece of reporting which gave voice to patients and significantly impacted the field of investigative journalism.

Summary

Bly recounts her experience chronologically. After receiving and preparing for her assignment, Bly entered a Temporary Home for Women, where she intentionally alarmed the other women so they would contact police. She maintained a story of forgotten identity with police, a judge, and doctors at Bellevue Hospital who evaluated her. Eventually, Bly was admitted to the women's asylum at Blackwell's Island. Bly then describes her time in the institution, focusing on significant details rather than a chronological record. Throughout her account, Bly shares stories from other women in the institution. What stands out are the poor conditions, the cruel treatment of the patients, and the way women's voices were stifled.

Bly describes the inadequate conditions and

abusive treatment at Blackwell's Island. Women were denied adequate clothing for the cold temperatures, only allowed to bathe once a week in cold water shared by multiple patients, forced to sit quietly on benches for entire days, given limited amounts of exercise, and fed spoiled and unpalatable food that was difficult to keep down. They were punished if they failed to comply. Accounts of different women illustrate the impacts of these conditions. For example, Bly describes how Tillie Maynard, a patient she arrived with, "was continually cold and unable to eat the food provided… at last she got a delusion" and began believing Bly was trying to pass herself as Maynard (Bly 80). She also describes witnessing patients being neglected, taunted, and beaten by staff on numerous occasions, and shares stories patients told her about the staff's cruel treatment.

Bly's investigation illustrated how the voices of women at Blackwell were stifled. Many were forced to enter the institution by family and friends, often without being told where

they were going. Some were sent due to debt or petty crimes, or even less than that. One woman was admitted after arguing with coworkers, asking "how can they say I am insane, merely because I allowed my temper to run away with me?" (Bly 77). Once patients entered Blackwell, they were unable to plead their case for freedom or even ask why they were there. This is highlighted in a story Bly shares about a German immigrant "confined most probably for life behind asylum bars, without even being told in her language the why and wherefore" (Bly 50). Women could not speak up about the institution's poor conditions; Bly "asked some of them to tell how they were suffering… but they replied that the nurse would beat them if they told" (Bly 67). The fear of punishment prevented women from advocating for themselves. This is why Bly's report was so essential.

The final chapters of the book detail Bly's release and a return visit to Blackwell with officials, where staff tried to make it appear that conditions were not as bad as she had

reported. However, a grand jury believed Bly, leading to positive changes at Blackwell's Island and in New York. Bly's work has had lasting impacts worldwide.

Background and Context

Nellie Bly (May 5, 1964-January 27, 1922), born Elizabeth Cochran, was a celebrated female reporter in the late nineteenth century (Vaughn 84). Bly published several pieces prior to this one, including a report of life under dictator Porfirio Diaz in Mexico (Maranzani). In 1887, she was asked by editors at *The New York World* newspaper to investigate conditions at Blackwell's Island Asylum.

Blackwell's Island, now known as Roosevelt Island, is located in New York's East River. Purchased by New York City in 1828, it housed a prison, workhouse, hospital, poor house, smallpox hospital, and an asylum throughout its history (National Park Service). Bly investigated the Women's Lunatic Asylum in 1887. At this time, it was overcrowded, with over 1,600 patients in a building meant for 1,000. Due to budget cuts, patient

care was lacking, and the site was staffed by only sixteen doctors (Maranzani). Bly's report highlighted the dismal conditions and the cruel attitudes of staff at the facility.

This report was written in a time when psychiatry was used as means to control women. Women did not have an equal position in society, and "between the years of 1850-1900, women were placed in mental institutions for behaving in ways male society did not agree with" (Pouba and Tianen 95). Bly's account helps illustrate this misogynistic attitude. Many of the women she met were sent to the institution for reasons that would not stand today.

Bly's report was taken seriously by readers for a number of reasons. Her previous experience as a reporter and the fact that editors at *The New York World* newspaper trusted her to report facts accurately helped. In addition, Bly's narrative was able to "invoke the inherent whiteness, purity, and respectability" of her position in society (Lutes 241), so the

newspaper's audience was more likely to believe her account.

Analysis

Ten-Days in a Mad-house is written in a first-person narrative style. Bly details her investigation in a straightforward manner. Because this is a personal narrative and Bly was not able to keep a written diary during her time at Blackwell's Island, it is reasonable that some may doubt her story. First-hand accounts on their own are not the most credible source of information, which Bly acknowledges, stating "in giving this story, I expect to be contradicted by many who are exposed. I merely tell in common words, without exaggeration, of my life in a mad-house for ten days" (Bly 68). However, Bly's previous experience and her status in society helped to ensure that a grand jury took her account seriously, which was a good thing because it led to positive changes.

Impact and Conclusion

Bly's investigation gave voice to multitudes of women who had

been silenced and alerted people to the conditions at Blackwell's Island. Her report had a positive impact on the institution. A grand jury believed Bly's account, and "a bill that was already under consideration, which would increase funding for mental institutions, was pushed through, adding nearly $1 million ($24 million in today's money) to the departmental budget" (Maranzani). Subsequent changes at Blackwell included firing abusive staff, hiring translators for women who spoke other languages, and transferring women who were not mentally ill to other facilities (Maranzani). Bly helped significantly improve the lives of patients at Blackwell's Island.

Ten Days in A Mad-House is historically significant because it is credited as one of America's first pieces of investigative journalism. Bly's bold tactics and undercover experience inspired others, and "led to the development of full-scale investigative reporting in the decades that followed" (Vaughn 82). Bly's report made her a household name and she

continued to write similar investigative pieces. She "inspired so many imitators that girl stunt reporting became a recognizable genre in the popular press of the late 1880s and early 1890s" (Lutes 218). Bly's work helped other women move into the reporting field and generated an interest in sensational investigative pieces. This ultimately helped move them "from the women's pages to the front page, from society news into political and criminal news" (Lutes 220). Bly's experience at Blackwell's Island helped her be a voice for women there, but also helped carve a place for women to make their voices heard in the news world.

Works Cited

Blackwell's Island (Roosevelt Island), New York City. National Park Service. https://www.nps.gov/places/blackwell-s-island-new-york-city.htm

Bly, N. *Ten Days in a Mad-House.* Nouveau Classics. 2017.

Lutes, J. Into the Madhouse with Nellie Bly: Girl Stunt Reporting in Late Nineteenth Century America. *American Quarterly,* vol.54,no.2, 2002, pp. 217-253.

Maranzani, B. *Inside Nellie Bly's 10 Days in a Madhouse.* Biography. 2018. https://www.biography.com/news/inside-nelly-bly-10-days-madhouse

Pouba, K., & Tianen, A. Lunacy in the 19th Century: Women's Admission to Asylums in United States of America. *Oshkosh Scholar*, vol.1, 2006, pp. 95-103.

Vaughn, S (Ed.). *Encyclopedia of American Journalism*. Routledge. 2008.

Anna Schaible-Schur: Star-Spangled Ratings: The Anthropocene Reviewed

Anna graduated from The University of Winnipeg in spring 2022 with a Gold Medal Honours degree in Rhetoric, Writing, and Communications, and a minor in Modern Languages. She spent the last year working as CBC Manitoba's Communication Assistant, The University of Winnipeg's Exchange Student Assistant, and an English Department creative writing Teacher's Assistant.

John Green's 2021 publication under Dutton Books, *The Anthropocene Reviewed: Essays On A Human-Centered Planet*, takes readers on a journey from Disneyland's Hall of Presidents to Scratch 'n' Sniff stickers. In his first foray into nonfiction, #1 internationally bestselling author John Green, reviews aspects of the Anthropocene on a 5-star scale rating system (Green "Bio"). Green is known for his award-winning fiction novels that are published in over 55 languages, with 24 million copies in print (Green "Bio"). On top of

his novel writing, back in 2007, John and his brother Hank Green started the popular YouTube channel *vlogbrothers* with videos that have been viewed more than 800 million times (Green "Bio"). In 2011, the brothers went on to develop and host the popular educational YouTube channel *Crash Course* (Green "Bio"). According to Green's website, "he was the 2006 recipient of the Michael L. Printz Award, a 2009 Edgar Award winner, and has twice been a finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book Prize" (Green "Bio").

What started as a podcast for Green's already established internet audiences grew into *The Anthropocene Reviewed* book. Green takes the writerly advice of "write what you know" to another level in this nonfiction piece that confronts humans' need to organize meaning and be aware of our surroundings. In the introduction to the book, Green quotes his wife saying that "in the Anthropocene, there are no disinterested observers; there are only participants" (*The Anthropocene Reviewed* 5). As a participant in the Anthropocene,

Green organizes his reviews in semi-chronological order to create a narrative of maturing, reminiscing, and living life for the little things. Green is also writing from a precise moment during the pandemic that serves as a time capsule of lockdown anxieties.

The podcast origins of many of the essays in the book lead to a conversational tone and accessible language. The essays average six pages long (the longest ten pages), which makes for an easy read to pick up at different points in the day. With forty-four different essays on a range of topics from art, philosophy, science, history and more, Green caters to the broad interests of his audiences. As Green reveals stories from his childhood, like watching Halley's Comet with his father to drinking Zima's with high school buddies, audiences can relate to the all too human emotions and nostalgia formed by the nonfiction format. Due to the story's relatability, the book makes for a suitable gift or holiday read.

The structure of the nonfiction novel also lends itself

to adaptation for class assignments or personal musings. Green's meticulous rating system and observations make you examine what you pay attention to in your life. Green quotes his personal friend and writer Amy Krouse Rosenthal when saying, "PAY ATTENTION TO WHAT YOU PAY ATTENTION TO," the all-caps phrase signalling that by becoming aware of what we focus on, our experiences become richer (*The Anthropocene Reviewed* 6). Green's introspective and detailed observations, like when he discusses marriage in the essay "Bonneville Salt Flats," make me want to have similarly complex conversations with my friends.

The Anthropocene Reviewed has a similar tone to Jenny Odell's trending nonfiction novel *How To Do Nothing*, which came out as Green was writing his book in 2019. *How To Do Nothing* calls on readers to adjust their attention, intersects Odell's personal experiences with narratives about social media, silicon valley and nature, and structures her arguments into

shorter essays. Green echoes Odell when he says, “marveling at the perfection of that leaf, I was reminded that aesthetic beauty is as much about how and whether you look as what you see… It is our attentiveness that is in short supply, our ability and willingness to do the work that awe requires” (*The Anthropocene Reviewed* 33). When looking at another nonfiction writer like Maggie Nelson, Green’s prose feels underwhelming compared to the lyrical narration in Nelson’s *The Argonauts* or the experimental structure of *Bluets*. Where Nelson is poetic, Green uses a more stream of consciousness style of nonfiction that cements *The Anthropocene Reviewed* as a good book, but not an exceptional book.

While some of Green’s fiction work has been adapted on screen, like *Paper Towns*, *The Fault in Our Stars*, and *Looking for Alaska*, *The Anthropocene Reviewed* works well in its book and podcast format (Green “Bio”). Having read the book, I was disappointed to find that the original *Anthropocene Reviewed* podcast hasn’t been updated

since 2020 at the book's release. I'm sure many readers would share my hope of hearing more episodes with Green's signature ratings in the future.

My largest issue with *The Anthropocene Reviewed* is that a lot of Green's narrative structure relies on other esteemed writers' quotes like the ones from Donald Hall, Margaret Atwood, and C.S. Lewis, to name a few. While many of Green's messages reignite passions for the people, places, and things around me, I underlined other people's writing more frequently than his. However, I will commend him for tying the quotes into his narrative. In the process, he introduced many brilliant writers to me. Green admits this weakness in the Postscript, saying, "It occurs to me that this book is filled with quotes - maybe over-filled with them" (*The Anthropocene Reviewed* 272). Although the comment is said in jest, it demonstrates that even the author is aware that the book is elevated by the words of others. Had Green been able to make his own poetic connections as often as he quoted others, I

would have found the book more compelling and rated it higher.

The Anthropocene Reviewed might be more aptly titled: *America Reviewed: Essays from an American's Perspective,* because of Green's experiences. Although he highlights humanity's temporal range and other larger human experiences like our capacity for wonder, I have difficulty separating Green's identity from his essays. For example, his stories of "Diet Dr Pepper," "CNN," "The Indianapolis 500," and others speak to such specific John Green memories, that as a reader, I have trouble balancing his notion of the Anthropocene with his selection of stories. If it were truly *The Anthropocene Reviewed,* I would have appreciated more essays on the topics of history. This is one of the downfalls of framing *The Anthropocene Reviewed* as nonfiction because most of the stories revolve around Green's lived experiences and lifetime. *The Anthropocene* might have been laid out like Yuval Noah Harari's *Sapiens* in a more traditional novel, with a timeline

of events. Instead, Green's work feels more like an ethnography of American culture than a unifying narrative about the Anthropocene.

My favourite essays from this collection came in the book's latter half. "The Hot Dogs of Baejardins Beztu Pylsur," and "The World's Largest Ball of Paint," which Green rated five stars and four stars, respectively, showcase his attention to detail and passion for life. In "The Hot Dogs of Baejardins Beztu Pylsur," Green's nonfiction style shines brightest as he recounts a trip to Iceland. He does not lean on other writers' words in this essay but instead engages the reader's senses in the delight and realities of travel, Icelandic culture, and hotdogs. In "The World's Largest Ball of Paint," Green takes something people might find comically useless, a ball of paint, and creates a story around the power of art. "Art is… picking a light blue for your layer of the world's largest ball of paint, knowing that it will soon be painted over, and painting anyway…" (*The Anthropocene Reviewed* 249). I

read the book over the course of a week and then set it aside for another week before coming back to review it, and these stories have remained poignant examples of Green's storytelling abilities.

I will be the first to admit that I am a harsh critic. Over the past two university terms, only four books have managed to get five-star ratings from me: *Emma* by Jane Austen, *Hamnet* by Maggie O'Farrell, *Animal Farm* by George Orwell, and *Don't Call Us Dead* by Danez Smith. But these also expose my biases toward fiction and the classics. *The Anthropocene Reviewed* gets the job done. The book allows readers to think about their own experience in the Anthropocene, making it a recommendable, if not a remarkable book. It successfully presents an American man's experiences as relatable and heartfelt while remaining diverse enough to appeal to various demographics. In my opinion, anyone can take something away from this book. We are not so far removed from the pandemic to make Green's worries feel irrelevant, and his

struggles with mental health ring true to many people's experiences. I am aware of the irony of reviewing a past reviewer's reviews, but in the end, my review reveals more about myself than perhaps it does the book. As Green's wife, Sarah, remarks: "when people write reviews, they are really writing a kind of memoir" (*The Anthropocene Reviewed*).

I give *The Anthropocene Reviewed* three and a half stars.

Works Cited

Green, John. "Bio." *John Green*, www.johngreenbooks.com/bio.

Green, John. *The Anthropocene Reviewed: Essays on a Human-Centered Planet*. Dutton Books, 2021.

Noah Douglas-McKay: Fisher River Cree Nation: A Story of Environmental Innovations and Economic Resilience

Noah Douglas-McKay is a third-year geography major from Winnipeg, Manitoba. His family background includes Scottish and Cree ancestry. He loves to write, and in his spare time he draws, writes creative fiction, and plays video games.

It's Thanksgiving Day, and I'm in the back seat of my grandparents' van, fighting off the sleepiness that turkey inflicts—a fight I know I'll lose. In brief moments of consciousness, I hear my grandparents talking. They're looking out the windows as we drive north, and I look too. We see parched brown fields of grain, and tired cattle; the mark of a dry summer, now turning to autumn. My grandmother laments for the farmers whose livelihoods are tied to these patches of land, and my

grandfather notes how few bales of hay there are—not enough to feed all the animals. The food coma defeats me, and I drift to sleep.

When I wake up, we're somewhere else. No more fields, just trees. Yellow-leafed poplars line the highway, and behind them loom tall, broad-armed evergreens. The last time I was here, the sky was clogged with smoke from the Bloodvein forest fires, on the other side of the lake. It's cleared a bit since then, and fleeting bits of rain in the past few weeks have given the trees what they need to survive. We stop at the Peguis COVID checkpoint; "Going to Fisher River!" my grandmother says gleefully, and they let us pass. We cut through Peguis, and head onward to Fisher River Cree Nation.

Ochekwi Sipi Cree Nation—or Fisher River in English—sits where the river of the same name flows into Lake Winnipeg. Compared to its immediate neighbour Peguis, Fisher River is on the small side, with about 1500 band members living on-reserve, and 2600 off-

reserve (Fisher River Cree Nation). My grandparents, my mother, my aunt, and my uncle are all members, though only my grandparents live in the community.

In 2020, Fisher River made headlines when it opened the largest solar farm in Manitoba. In the midst of a global pandemic, this news gave me a brief surge of hope and pride, but it also made me realize something: Despite my family connection to Fisher River, I know very little about its history, or its present for that matter. The solar farm inspired me to research Fisher River's economy and development, and try to understand the odds that this community overcame on the way to where it is now. I was hopeful to speak with my grandfather, a community elder, to get some context for where the story of Fisher River begins.

STAN'S STORY: THE HISTORY OF FISHER RIVER

I'm in my grandparents' living room, sitting on their long gray sectional. The walls and shelves

are lined with carvings, paintings, and statuettes; a mix of Indigenous art that my grandfather has brought home from travelling around Canada, and a great amount of frog-themed art that my grandmother adores. A large window looks out to the road, and beyond it, the rocky causeway that reaches over the river. Beside the window is a wood-burning stove, recently brought to the house; it hasn't been connected to the chimney yet, so it's become a temporary storage space for my grandmother's novels. My grandfather asks if I'm ready to start.

Stanley McKay Jr. is an elder of Fisher River Cree Nation, and the first Indigenous Moderator of the United Church of Canada. He received an Indspire award in 1997 for his work within the church, which contributed to the first formal apology from a Christian church for harm done in the residential school system (Indspire). On top of all that, he happens to be my grandfather. He's the kind of man who everyone seems to know personally, and he has a

joke or a line from an old movie to fit every occasion. He and my grandmother moved back to Fisher River last year after living away for many years. Since returning, he has been working with the community as an elder, offering his insight on a number of projects.

Stan begins to tell me the history of Fisher River Cree Nation: In the late 19th century, a group of people from the Norway House community travelled south to settle where the Fisher River opens into Lake Winnipeg. When they did this, he tells me, "It was for economic reasons." The people wanted space to trap, hunt, and fish as they had done for countless generations, but they also wanted to develop agriculture—this was something that couldn't be done in the North, so, as part of treaty settlements, they asked the Canadian government for permission to relocate somewhere further south.

When the people of Fisher River arrived, Stan says, they lived self-sufficiently. The land that they were permitted by the government was unsuitable

for large-scale agriculture, but small gardens—combined with hunting and fishing—were enough to keep the community fed. “The people made their living on the land and the water,” he explains.

At the turn of the 20th century, there was essentially no unemployment in the community, or any need for government welfare; if someone in the community didn’t have enough to eat, those who did would assist them. This interdependence is an integral part of Cree values, and Stan expresses it best with a quote from his father: “You only take what you need, and what you have you will share.”

However, these methods of self-sufficiency began to conflict with the policies that the Canadian government placed on reserves. “Legally, [the people] were confined to this land,” Stan says. To leave the reserve, community members needed to get permission from the Indian Agent. This became a roadblock for trappers, who had traditionally been semi-nomadic, and for workers seeking

employment down south in the prairies. The government also made school attendance mandatory for Indigenous children, which meant that they could no longer help on the traplines. Whereas trapping had once been a task that the entire family undertook, now only men were able to leave town, while mothers had to stay behind to care for their children.

That didn't mean that everyone obeyed the government regulations; "By the time I was in 6th grade," Stan tells me, "I was the only boy in class." By that age, most boys in the community would drop out of school—even though doing so was illegal—and work the trapline with their fathers. This was often necessary to keep families fed, but it also disconnected Fisher River's young men from opportunities for employment or post-secondary education. Those who did stay in school often did so at the expense of learning traditional skills, which had no value in the eyes of the Canadian government.

When Stan was growing up, Fisher River was "almost a

cashless society." There was very little money in the community; commercial fishing made up a large part of the local economy, but the vast majority of fishing enterprises on Lake Winnipeg were not Indigenous-owned, and only a small portion of the profits stayed in Fisher River. Even so, Stan tells me that hunger was generally not a problem. He grew up eating moose-meat, fish, and locally-grown vegetables—not a varied diet, he says, but a sufficient one. Community systems of bartering and food-loans ensured that even without money, people wouldn't go hungry.

Because Fisher River had so little monetary wealth, however, it was declared to be impoverished by the Canadian government. New policies were put in place, with the aim of meeting people's basic needs. In fact, my grandfather says, it did the opposite. Government rations of tea, sugar, rice, and flour replaced the community's food systems, undermining traditional ways of life and leaving many reliant on food from outside Fisher River. At the same time,

the introduction of "welfare payments" was further disrupting the local economy. Family allowances from the government gave larger households a basic income, provided that all their children attended school. With almost no young people learning to hunt or trap, the traditional industries died out, and more community members lost their source of food and income. "We suddenly had something called unemployment," Stan says. "We never had that before."

But despite all the hardships, the loss of traditional skills, and the issues of unemployment, Fisher River persisted. My grandfather explains that Fisher River owes much of its current prosperity to the industry that was consistent throughout the community's history: fishing. In the past, commercial fishers—particularly Indigenous commercial fishers—were frequently underpaid for their labour. Over time, however, Indigenous fishers were able to save up enough money to buy their own rods, nets, and boats. Having their own gear liberated these fishers from the enterprises

that retained profits and control by lending tools and supplies to their employees, and opened the door to wage negotiations.

Eventually, some fishers were even able to create their own Indigenous-led enterprises. This allowed Fisher River to keep a larger cut of the profit, and also marked the return of intergenerational traditions, where older fishers would pass knowledge and skills on to their children. Today, my grandfather says, the majority of fishing licenses on Lake Winnipeg are owned by Indigenous peoples, with about 140 licenses between Fisher River and Peguis. Fishing the lake—something that the Cree have done for centuries—has remained a unique source of economic stability amidst a history of struggles.

A TOUR WITH DOT: THE REALITY OF FISHER RIVER

It's the day after I interviewed my grandfather. My grandmother asks if I want to go for a drive around the community. She says that we'll go out to Fisher Bay—a Métis fishing community next

to Fisher River—and she'll tell me about the businesses we pass on the way back. I happily agree.

Dot McKay is my grandmother. She grew up in Gladstone, and has worked as a schoolteacher in a number of Indigenous communities across Manitoba, including Fisher River. She met my grandfather while both of them were working at a school in Norway House. She moved back to Fisher River with him, and they raised their children there. My grandmother is a friendly, caring person, with enough patience and wit to keep up with my grandfather's mischievous personality. Within Fisher River, she is quite well-known—many community members were students of hers decades ago.

As we drive to Fisher Bay, Dot explains that many of the people who live there are related to residents of Fisher River. It's a very small town—essentially just a line of properties on the lakefront—but I notice when we arrive that the houses here are quite elegant, with large windows and elaborate Halloween decorations.

According to Dot, the local fishing industry has brought a lot of income to Fisher Bay.

Looking at the houses, I remember something that Stan had said; with the success of fishing, Fisher River was able to invest in other industries, including carpentry and housebuilding. The on-reserve lumberyard was a particularly important development; now workers can get their supplies within the community, instead of waiting days for lumber orders from off-reserve. My grandfather also told me that, when he was a child, the vast majority of homes in Fisher River were log cabins, often hand-built by residents. However, the Canadian government offered the community partial funding for the construction of contemporary wood-frame houses, which proved less sturdy and more difficult to heat than the log houses they replaced.

On our way back, we pass by the school. Dot points out the residences next door where many of the teachers live, and reminisces about when she lived there herself. We also pass the

Verna J. Kirkness Institute of Higher Learning; Verna is a scholar and activist for education in Indigenous communities across Canada, and is also my grandfather's cousin. Dot tells me that the institute is a centre for adult education, where people can go to complete their schooling or develop skills that they didn't have access to as children.

In Fisher River, women make up the majority of the workforce in professions related to education, health, and social services. My grandfather told me the day before that in both the community's past and present, women have been consistent financial providers, working year-round as opposed to the men who trapped or fished seasonally. These institutions are vital to Fisher River's day-to-day functions, so it's no exaggeration to say that the contributions of women are integral to the community's prosperity and growth.

There are several small businesses in Fisher River, and Dot points each one out to me as we go: The grocery store and gas

station; the motel, developed only a few years ago; the local car wash; a brand-new fitness centre; the business centre, soon to have its own Chinese restaurant; and Loretta Lynn's, a restaurant that shut down during the pandemic, but whose owner began catering band meetings and elder gatherings to stay in business. Listening to the stories that my grandparents know about each business in the community, I start to understand something about the way that they fit into Fisher River's economy. These businesses aren't just providers of goods and services—they are vital parts of the community, almost like organs in a human body. I think again about what my grandfather said the day before, about the Cree philosophy of putting your community before your personal gain.

Eventually, we reach the destination that drew me into this project. Pisim Wastinohk Kistikewin: the solar farm. There's a raised wooden platform for looking over the fence, but even so the black panels stretch beyond my range of vision. I take

a picture, and admire the stretch of land, trying to imagine how much power it creates—I would later learn that each section of the solar farm can power approximately 500 homes. I know at this point that I want to learn more about the solar farm, and how it affects the community. Fortunately, I have an opportunity to speak with one of the councillors who approved the building of this green-energy plant.

BARRY AND THE SOLAR FARM: THE FUTURE OF FISHER RIVER

It's my last day in Fisher River—tomorrow, I'm going back to Winnipeg. But today, my grandmother calls Barry Wilson and asks him if the two of us could speak with him about his time as a councillor. Barry is my grandfather's nephew, and has lived near my grandparents since he was little. He agrees and invites us up to his workplace at the gaming centre.

The gaming centre is much smaller than the

commercial casinos that some other reserves have. It mainly serves the local community, offering the people of Fisher River a space to play VLTs and bingo. When we walk in, I notice that there are chairs and tables stacked up against a wall; due to COVID-19 regulations, the centre has had to reduce its capacity. Barry calls us over, and we sit down to talk in front of his office.

Barry Wilson is currently the proprietor of the Fisher River Community and Gaming Centre. Before that, however, he served on the band council for ten years, starting in 1999. Barry tells me that he was more or less nominated for the position "as a joke," but that when he won the election, he rose to the challenge of leading his community.

When Barry first took office, he says, "It felt like we were in water up to our necks." Fisher River was in a difficult financial position, and relied heavily on government investment. Over the course of his career, however, the community began to see some positive changes, as newer and

better infrastructure and businesses were created. Barry explains that having a self-sustaining economy is vital, not only to Fisher River's growth, but also to its identity: "We reference our community as Fisher River Cree Nation. To be a nation, we need to have an economy." By developing its economy, he argues, Fisher River will be more and more in control of its own resources, as it breaks free of dependency on the Canadian government.

"[The solar farm] was one of the last things I was able to be a part of," Barry says. While attending an energy conference, he and some of his fellow councillors noticed a booth with information on solar panels, and their interest were piqued. He tells me that Fisher River is an ideal region for accumulating solar energy, so the council decided to invest its resources, alongside government and industry grants, into building a solar farm.

While the solar farm has brought acclaim to the community, Barry says that the final result has not been exactly

as hoped for, partially due to government regulations. Whereas the initial plan had been to directly power Fisher River with the solar farm, the community has instead been placed in a situation where it must sell its power to Manitoba Hydro, and then buy it back. This was something I had spoken to my grandfather about before; he expressed some disappointment that the community couldn't find a way to directly utilize its own power.

Barry stresses that government regulations are a continuous roadblock for on-reserve development. In the case of the solar farm, layers upon layers of bureaucracy were piled onto the project, slowing down the entire process. According to Barry, setbacks related to bureaucracy have made it difficult to get funding from anywhere but the government, because private investors "get sick and tired of waiting" for approval.

It's the next day, and time to go home. I get back into the van with my grandparents, and we start driving south. I look out

the window, at the sea of poplars and evergreens—green turning to yellow, yellow turning to brown, as winter silently approaches. This time I stay awake until we reach the city.

MYSELF: THE IMPORTANCE OF FISHER RIVER

I'm back in Winnipeg, a few weeks after my trip. I've been typing away at this project on my laptop for a few days, listening to folk music, and while I work, I weigh the information I've been given. In Cree culture, there's a sort of sacred importance to the passing of knowledge. When someone—particularly an elder like my grandfather—tells you a story, you learn to find meanings that run deeper than the words spoken. So what does the story of Fisher River mean?

At first, I thought that my goal might be to uncover some universal truth about reserves across Canada. However, that proved to be a paradoxical task. On one hand, Fisher River has many things in common with Indigenous communities across

the country—struggles related to government policy are something that most reserves can relate to. But on the other hand, Fisher River's story is as unique as it is familiar; the people of Fisher River have faced particular challenges that are entirely different from those faced by other reserves, and vice versa. For me to summarize every Indigenous community in a single story, I would have to ignore the cultural distinctions that have long defined the First Nations of Canada.

So instead, as I try to put this story onto paper, I look inward. I think about the ways that I am shaped by my mother and my grandparents, and the ways that they were shaped by this community. I think about Fisher River Cree Nation, which held onto its self-sufficiency—and its identity—in defiance of harmful government policies. I think about what my great-grandfather used to say:

"You only take what you need, and what you have you will share."

Works Cited

"Community Profile." *Fisher River Cree Nation*, https://fisherriver.ca/community-profile/. Accessed 14 Nov. 2021.

"Stanley John McKay." *Indspire*, https://indspire.ca/laureate/stanley-john-mckay-2/. Accessed 14 Nov. 2021.

Ana Ilagan: Beginnings

Ana Ilagan is a Rhetoric, Writing, and Communications student. She migrated from the Philippines to Canada seven years ago and is interested in exploring Filipino-Canadian identity. In her free time, she likes reading books, writing, and listening to BTS's music.

In Joan Didion's essay called "Goodbye To All That," she writes: "It's easy to see the beginning of things, and harder to see the ends." Didion, writing in reflection of her early twenties in a new city, tells the readers a story of beginnings, of becoming lost, and eventually finding herself as she settles and evaluates what New York means to her. Didion's story made me think about my own beginning as an immigrant in Canada (or my family's beginning as immigrants in Canada?). It was a series of beginnings—of being homesick,

then excited, then curious, then homesick again—and that was why, as Didion says, it was hard to see the ends.

That was also true for my father, Chris, who flew to Canada from the Philippines back in 2014 with only $100 and a handful of hopes and dreams in his pocket. Now, several years later, he reflects on how he began, again and again, one job after another. Sometimes taking on multiple jobs all at once. The beginnings never seemed to end for him, once a poor boy who grew up in the slums of Metro Manila. He kept beginning and beginning for far too long.

I remember him telling the story of how he got to Canada. One autumn night, the chill of November pressed against the glass door behind him as he sat with us – myself, my two siblings, and my mother, around the dinner table and became the narrator of his story.

"Isang daan lang ang laman ng pitaka ko noon." he answers when one of his listeners at the dinner table asked about his Vancouver airport story. *I*

only had $100 in my wallet back then.

My dad migrated to Canada with my then 8-year-old brother, Miguel, back in December 2014. In the immigration office at Vancouver International Airport, the immigration officer, a stern woman in her 30s, interrogated my dad.

"How much do you have with you?" she asked.

"$100," my dad said.

She was dubious of him, her eyes moving back and forth from my dad who had cold sweat forming at the back of his neck, and Miguel, who stood beside him. I could imagine her thinking, *There is no way they can survive out there with only $100*. It was a reasonable thought. I can also imagine many other Filipino migrants, or migrants in general, coming into Canada with a severe lack of funds to survive off of once they get past the stern-looking immigration guards at the airport.

Migrating to Canada is expensive. Among the largest groups of immigrants arriving to Canada, Filipinos are said to

have the lowest amount of savings upon arrival. My dad was no stranger to this. He told us about having to borrow money from Chinese loaners back in the Philippines to finance the immigration process.

"Ang hirap mangutang sakanila noon, kasi mataas ang interes," he recalls with a grin on his face. "Pero salamat naman at bayad na lahat ng utang namin noon." *It was so hard to borrow money from them before, because they had high interest. But thankfully, all our loans from before have been paid*.

Immigrants spend about $6,000 to process their immigration papers with an immigration consultant back home. Application fees to migrate to Manitoba specifically, start at $1,325 according to Canada's immigration website. On top of that, a one-way plane ticket to Canada costs around the same price. In the current conversion rate, migrating to Canada would cost almost $300,000 in Philippine pesos. Philippine Statistics Authority reports that the average annual

income of Filipino families was $313,000 pesos in 2018.

One of the primary reasons why Filipinos leave the Philippines is that they want the proverbial “better life” that almost any other country in the West can offer. But before even having a taste of that “better life,” migrants face financial barrier upon financial barrier, beginning at the immigration process.

For middle income Filipinos, financing more than $5,000 to leave the country can be done in many ways. The safe and common way is to sell or mortgage assets like homes, businesses, or other land properties. We are a family of five, so we had to spend about thirty-thousand dollars to migrate to Canada. Other than borrowing from loan sharks, which puts you in a state of precarity, we had to sell many of our belongings.

The summer of 2015, the year when my mother Fatima, my younger sister Maegan, and I left the Philippines, was when we set up a huge garage sale that went on for a week at my maternal grandparents’ house.

We had lived there most of our lives. Years' worth of our stuff—from electrical appliances, to clothes, to textbooks from my mom's college days, to stuffed toys I got from my first birthday—were sold or given to random people in our neighborhood. I was fifteen years old when we had that garage sale. By that time, my family and I had already gone through all the bureaucratic processes required to migrate, but I had never felt the magnitude nor paid attention to the reality of our migration until I came home from a night out with my friends the same night my mother had finished the garage sale. The fluorescent light reflected brighter on the ceramic tiles in our living room because we had little furniture. I looked around the house, which somehow looked calmer while the crickets of the humid summer night grew louder. I felt panic seizing me. It was as if all the stuff that was once in that house hovered above me and compressed into a big, awkward ball of odd things. Then, like the gravitational pull of the sun, it fell upon me as I realize that that

was it. I was about to leave home for good. My grandmother, the person who was most pained by my family's choice to move out, laughed it off and said, "This is a new beginning."

The globalization of Filipino labor started in the 1970s, when the country was under the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos. The economy plunged, and Marcos saw an opportunity in exporting labor. Hence, migration was institutionalized. Even after the fall of Marcos, succeeding administrations continued to develop and strengthen labor migration policies that contributed to massive waves of Filipino migration across Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and especially the Americas. That said, the Philippines has been one of the top sources of immigrants in Canada. From 2011 to 2016, 1,212,075 Filipinos are recorded to have settled in Canada. In Manitoba, many Filipinos immigrated because of the demand for textile industry workers in the 1980s and 1990s. Not long after, many immigration policies promoted

sponsorship programs that allowed, not only individual workers, but families to migrate to Canada. One of these programs include the Manitoba Provincial Nominee Program (MPNP), where my dad applied to under a sponsorship from his sister Cristina, who had resided in Winnipeg for a several years with her family.

My dad and Miguel had stayed in our *tita* Cristina's home for six months before my mom, Maegan, and I finally arrived in Canada in June 2015. It was a short time apart, but my family was used to distance and separation.

Before my parents had decided to migrate to Canada as a family, my dad worked as an Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW) on and off for several years as me and my siblings grew up. He worked in Singapore for 2 years when I was in my early teens. Before that, he worked in the Philippines for a few years, but never held a position at one company long enough for me to finish a school year. Even though we were in the same country, he would be working in Metro

Manila, the big city, where there were more job opportunities, while me and my siblings stayed in the countryside with mama and papa, our grandparents. They were the parents that I grew up to recognize, which is expected, because my parents left me with them when I was just 2-months-old. They did the same thing to Maegan and Miguel, who are five and six years younger than me, respectively—except they were already 3 and 4-years-old when our parents left them to mama and papa.

Extremely poor socio-economic conditions in the Philippines push parents and families to sacrifice togetherness. Lack of job stability and low wages are the primary reasons that force low- and middle-class workers to leave the Philippines. As a result, migrant workers experience family separation. Fathers and mothers who leave behind their kids compromise their parenting, which migrant scholars have a fancy name for: cyber-parenting. In 2006, I was 7-years-old. Maegan was barely 2-years-old, and Miguel was a

newborn baby. The only way we could spend time with our dad back then was through Skype. 2006 was the year he left the Philippines for the first time to become a temporary foreign worker in Slave Lake, Alberta, where he worked as a bee-keeper.

"Sobrang hirap," my dad says with melancholy as he looks back on his early experiences of being an immigrant. "Nakaramdam ako ng matinding lungkot. Lagi akong umiiyak noon, kasi gusto ko kayong makita." The tiny break in his voice betrays his usual cool facade. *It was really hard. I felt extreme sadness. I was always crying, because I wanted to see you guys*.

I didn't know that my dad had worked multiple labor-intensive low wage jobs when he migrated to Canada in 2006—or that he experienced extreme homesickness that significantly impacted his physical and mental health. As far as I, a 7-year-old child, was concerned, I only worried about what he'd put in our *balikbayan* boxes (boxes of Canadian goodies, usually

bought from Walmart, the dollar store, or yard sales, that OFWs send back to the Philippines for their family and friends). Meanwhile, my dad quietly suffered through cold and lonely Canadian winters alone.

In 2008, my dad returned to the Philippines because his work visa expired. But soon after, in 2010, he left again for Singapore and worked as a cargo loader in Singapore Changi Airport. He went back home to the Philippines in 2012 and worked different jobs from being a hardware store manager, a sales representative for Coca-Cola, and a product distributor for my grandfather's private business.

I consider 2012 a new beginning for our family. During the time we spent with our dad that year after he lived in and out of the Philippines, I got to know him better as a person and as my father. It was the year our dad lived with us in our grandparents' house for a long period. It was novel to me: waking up in the morning to see my *actual* father's face. I was excited, elated even, to have him home. I watched him every day,

not through a screen, but right in front of me.

He owned a big green motorcycle back then, the ones that roar as they pass by. He had a big dragon tattoo on his right arm, and he wore earrings on his left ear. He looked like a thug and because of that my grandparents didn't approve of him. It didn't help that he couldn't keep a stable job.

I remember my stringent grandmother telling him, "Hahayaan mo nalang ba na mas malaki yung kinikita ng asawa mo kaysa sayo?" *Would you let your wife earn much more than you do*?

My grandparents looked down on my dad because he was poor. But I thought that he was the coolest person ever, zooming through traffic on his big green motorcycle—that I later learned was an imitation of a specific brand of motorcycle that he wanted to get—and dragon tattoo. He experienced so much humiliation from my grandparents, but he was stubborn and kept working and working, one job after another.

Beginning and beginning with no end in sight.

My mom, on the other hand, was the complete opposite of my dad. In 2012, while my dad kept starting new job after new job, my mom had been promoted multiple times in our local Coca-Cola plantation where she was in charge of sales and teams of people worked under her management. Coca-Cola paid her more than half a million pesos every year, which was well above the upper/middle-income range in 2012, according to Rappler. My dad earned significantly less than that. But eventually, everything changed when we moved to Canada. For the first time in a very long time, my family and I lived in a house without our grandparents in 2015. It was time to figure out our family dynamic, one that family separation and poor socio-economic conditions had deprived us of for so long.

I remember the awkward setting we had in Auntie Cristina's corner lot home on Lipton and Wellington. The concept of a basement was something new to us—there are

no basements in houses in the Philippines. But in Auntie Cristina's house, the basement was all my family could have. My parents and Miguel shared the queen bed, while Maegan and I slept on the floor, with only two layers of comforters to separate us from the cold carpet.

We were poor when we arrived in Canada in 2015. My mom, who before had people following all her orders, was now jobless. My dad worked as an emergency technician in a company called Priority Restoration, but his salary wasn't enough to afford our own apartment. But after half a year living in Auntie Cristina's basement, my parents had earned enough to move to a quadruplex on Ingersoll Street. I began to understand the weight of being an immigrant after we had an apartment of our own.

My dad took on multiple jobs while trying to stand up as a father to three children. During our times in that old, shabby quadruplex, we'd encounter our dad in distraught conditions. The bags under his eyes were dark and heavy, and his brows would

always be scrunched. Through the night, he'd work at his new job in Xerox Corp as a printer operator. During the day, he was in charge of driving us kids to school, and he'd pick up delivery gigs for DoorDash and KFC. He barely slept. It was a mystery to me why he'd work nonstop; but, like many other immigrants, I soon learned that my dad experienced deprofessionalization. This was a result of having no time or money to afford the Canadian standard training for most white-collar jobs.

My father holds a bachelor's degree in computer management and has years of experience in the field of sales. This was before he had a family. But that didn't seem to matter when we moved to Canada. Another major reason why he opted for lower wage jobs was the immediate demand of financial obligations both in Canada and the Philippines. Both of my dad's parents, who were in the Philippines, had cancer. He was the eldest son, so it fell upon him to help finance their chemotherapy sessions and their

medicine because healthcare was expensive in the Philippines. The easiest solution to that was to apply for blue-collar jobs, which didn't require lengthy training and were easier to get into. But my dad eventually realized that wearing his body down for labor was something he didn't want to do for the rest of his life, so he took up real estate courses provided by the Manitoba Real Estate Association (MREA) and took the test to become a realtor. Beyond his financial obligations to his family, he also wanted to be a homeowner, the aspiration of many immigrants in Canada. In 2017, we moved to our newly built home in the North End.

"Sobrang hirap parin ng buhay ko noon." he says when asked what he thought about our family being able to move to a brand-new home within two years of moving to Canada. *My life was still really difficult*.

He had become a licensed realtor by 2017 and was employed by Century21. For my dad, this was another beginning, one that would be the beginning of his life, even if it meant a continuation of suffering.

From 2018 to 2019, my dad gradually took on more and more jobs. He worked as a realtor, but still continued delivering food for DoorDash, KFC, and now Skip the Dishes. He also worked night shifts as a merchandiser for M30 and Pepsi. Because he worked so much, he developed gout, because of which he sporadically became immobilized for a week at a time. I asked him why he had to do that to himself. I learned that there was a large shadow of debt behind him and that his father was dying from cancer. He told me about how he was so broke during those two years.

One time, he was standing in line at a Tim Hortons after getting gas. He stared at the card machine that asked him to pay $3 for coffee. He fumbled for his debit card, because his credit cards had been maxed out. He tapped the rectangular plastic on the machine, but it answered disapprovingly with a heavy beep. His debit card got declined for $3 at Tim Hortons. He had to cancel the order because he had no money to pay for it.

"Walang wala ako noon," he shakes his head as he recalls this moment to me at the dining table. The shadows on his face seem to grow under the bleak fluorescent light. *I was so broke back then.*

"Pagkatapos ng libing ni lolo Bert, doon na gumaan gaan ng konti yung buhay ni daddy," my mom says, remembering the lowest moments of my dad's life in Canada. *After your grandfather Bert's burial, your dad's life improved bit by bit*.

Lolo Bert, my dad's dad, died of cancer in 2019. After living in Canada for five years, the first time my dad would come home to the Philippines was to see *Lolo* Bert in his coffin. To pay his respects, to say sorry he couldn't come home all this time, and to say goodbye.

Even though he was working multiple jobs at the time, my dad still couldn't afford a ticket going home, so I had to help finance it—I was a full-time university student back then, working part-time at a retail store. I remember that night when he asked me if I could help buy his ticket. He couldn't look at me in the eyes,

his pupils shifted from one place to another, to my feet, to the side of my head. It must have been painful for him to have to ask his daughter for money. But when he returned to Canada from that trip to the Philippines, my mom was right. Things started to change. The end of beginning and beginning was finally becoming easier to see.

"Masaya na ako ngayon. Hindi na ako katulad ng dati. Kung sinabi ng lola niyo saakin na umuwi ako, kaya ko na dahil may pera na ako ngayon," my dad's face lightens as he says this. *I'm happy now. I'm not like how I was before. If your grandmother told me that she wanted me to go home, I can because I have money now*.

In such a short amount of time, he was able to climb up to having a $100,000 annual income. He eventually quit all the extra jobs and focused on working as a realtor. Now, he works as a new home sales agent for a company called Qualico. He is the most stable he has been and has the highest-earning job he's ever had. My mom now also works as a realtor for Royal

LePage and earns nearly as much as my dad does. Soon, we will be moving to a newer neighborhood and live in a bigger house at South Pointe Park.

Sometimes I look at my parents and I'd remember how I'd catch my mom crying alone in her room in our old apartment on Ingersoll whenever she'd leave the door slightly open. Coins scattered on her bed. I'd remember how my dad couldn't talk or smile for a week when he got sick because of exhaustion and gout. Out of all the things I'd remember, what sticks out to me most is the one conversation we had in a car ride.

My dad would often talk sporadically about his life on our short car rides when he'd pick me up from work. One day, with the hum of other cars and people in the background, he sat in the driver's seat with a contemplative look on his face.

"They say life begins at 40 and this is when you're supposed to enjoy," he started. "I think I believe that now."

Though it may be easy to imagine a better, comfortable life when a migrant decides to leave

their country, it will be hard to see the ends of it because it is never an easy experience. My father's story is a testimony to this. Though it is an inspiring story, it reveals the hardships that many immigrants face. His journey was a series of beginnings, but I realize that it is a fruitful journey because he kept beginning. Now, faced with my own beginnings as an immigrant and as an adult learning new things, I will remember my father and keep beginning.

Alvena Ali Wasim: High Ceilings and Persian Rugs

Alvena is majoring in Rhetoric, Writing, & Communications and wants to become a writer in the nonfiction genre. She enjoys listening to Pakistani music. By learning the literary devices used in communications studies, she has a newfound appreciation for how these techniques are organically used in her native language of Urdu. She wishes to master both the language and the art of expressing yourself through beautifully constructed prose.

In the cobbled streets of the old city, two ladies jump out of a rickshaw. They are ready to spend the afternoon bargaining with street vendors and small business owners. These vendors sell all things needed. The bigger the storefront gets, the lower is the threshold for haggling. Which is why these women preferred going to the old city instead of the new malls that had opened closer to home. Here in the old town, they could catch someone selling imitation Japanese silk and call them out because they weren't out of their

depth. After a long day of sifting diamonds through dirt, my mother and aunt would feel satisfied with the day's catch. The children had learnt though, that these weekly hunts never bore anything of interest to them.

***

Below, is a picture of a museum, or as my mother would say, an accurate representation of how high the ceilings were in all the rental homes we had lived in. In my hometown of Lahore, Pakistan, most of the older constructions had high ceilings, big windows on the top with recessed archways. These remnants of the Mughal Era architecture were designed for people to seek refuge from the scorching heat of the summer months and regulate the indoor temperature through passive cooling. It is an 18th-century architectural technique which, according to some researchers, could be a solution to the world's growing energy needs. So far in the 21st century though, the people living in these cities can neither afford air conditioning nor keep the windows open. So, they are left at the mercy of

ceiling fans which are too high up to be of any use.

***

"I'm telling you, those curtains are wasted." My mother was talking about a neighbour she had recently visited.

"If you're not going to clean the window behind it, it will all be covered in dust in a week." She peeled a clove of garlic and rubbed it on her toenails.

Garlic strengthens nails. That is one of the many beauty tips I received from my mother. I never tested her tips on myself, probably because I never noticed a difference in her appearance before or after she tried it herself.

My father had given her the dreaded news last night. We will need to sell our house. Our own house, the one we had moved into a few years ago, the one she had saved for all these years. Something about the housing market not being what it once was.

"He always does that. Makes bad investments at bad times and now he thinks selling the home will solve everything."

She changed the topic as soon as she thought I was out of earshot.

***

Despite little utility, the fans in the high ceiling rooms were always left running. Mainly because the sound provided a psychological relief from the humid and motionless air. The slower the fan oscillated, the louder its metallic blades clanked. Like a wind turbine that is in a perpetual state of lethargic motion, impossible to tell whether it is speeding up or slowing down. In many ways, the occupants of these homes also live in a suspended state.

For years I had seen my mother cut corners everywhere she could. My father, on the other hand, would sit back and smoke his cigarettes no matter how hot it was.

I tried telling my father that I was writing a personal essay, but I didn't know how to explain it to him. I was barely able to explain to him why I was getting a degree in communications.

"What about your bank job?" was his first question, as expected.

"You know I tell everyone that you're going to be in the boss's chair in a few years."

His voice cracks when he gets emotional, one of the things I wish I hadn't inherited from him. I wish I could hold a charged confrontation without sounding like I'm about to cry. If I had to divide my family members based on who the "strong voice holders" are, my mother and sister would be in one corner, and easily able out-talk my father, brother, and myself.

It's almost like those dreams where you open your mouth, but no words come out. In real life, you can choose the words but can't always modulate the sound. And by the time you begin paying attention to your cracking voice you're already rolling down the hill. Your pharynx (the throat) dries out. Your larynx (the voice box) shakes. Suddenly you cannot control both. It's like the ground inside your throat is vibrating,

and sometimes you lose command over the tear ducts as well.

***

On my last trip home before my parents separated, my father showed me a blueprint of the house he wanted to build. I remember him brimming with excitement as he showed me the rooms that would remain empty until one of his kids visited. It made me realize how my parents were just different people. My mother was the practical one. She did not see any benefit in sitting on a piece of land instead of buying a smaller space that would serve her needs better.

When I visit my parents now, I'm glad to see my mother decorating her own home according to her priorities. She shares videos of every new item she buys for the house. Meanwhile, my father lives on rent. Visiting him in his dimly lit room, air filled with the familiar smoke, I noticed the house he rents still has high ceilings. I also realized that it was his place that felt more like home to me. Maybe that's what home had meant to him all this time as

well. I cannot separate my idea of a home from all the memories I have of my family and the places we spent our time together. My father might not get a chance to build a home again, but he instilled in me a sense of home which is in part, the need for a practical dwelling, yet a desire for high ceilings and Persian rugs.

Malaihka Siemens: Post-Secondary Imposter Syndrome

My name is Malaihka Siemens, I am in my first year of university, as well as my practicum. I am in Build From Within, a program for Indigenous students to receive their B.A and B.Ed. degrees. There is a concerning disparity between the number of Indigenous students to Indigenous Educators and other staff in the WSD. My passion is to bridge this gap. This piece is my truth.

From early on, I knew attending post-secondary was not optional. This fate was instilled in me that I would be going straight to university after high school, with no gap years to dampen my momentum. I had to prove that I was worthy and capable, but I didn't know who I was proving that to.

With my whole life ahead of me, I didn't hold much objection or opinion; I simply nodded my head and went back to being a kid. As I got older and watched time laugh in my face as I desperately tried to catch up to

it, I started questioning if this is really what *I wanted*. I felt like I couldn't decipher my true feelings from my family's. The guilt that knotted inside of me was almost too hard to stomach. I wondered; would it be wrong if I chose a different path? This daunting decision was baring its teeth in front of my confused, sixteen-year-old self. I had no clue how I would even afford university.

The pressure to be the first to graduate high school and go to university lumped itself into my backpack and I carried it with me from class to class. This weight wasn't only negative, I also felt honoured and grateful. I had opportunities, a safe school to go to, and a lot of love. When I thought about how time had to align, how life rippled with chance, it moved me. The work done by my family, and even ancestors, for me to be where I was felt humbling. This internal battle, like water and fire, clashed and collided within me. I had a choice to be calm and go with the flow, which was my usual approach to life, or conversely, I could embody the

passion of fire and chase whatever I wanted with ambition. At sixteen, it felt like I was in the eye of the storm that is adulthood. What I wanted was not the careers that parents typically coaxed their children into. I didn't want to be a doctor or a lawyer. All I knew was that I felt drawn to helping people, my culture, and art.

"Have you ever considered being a teacher?" That was the question asked by my Indigenous graduation coach that changed my world. I had just met her a few weeks prior. Being in a predominantly white school, I didn't know about an Indigenous graduation coach being available. I started popping by her room and was refreshed to see her abalone shell, ready with a ball of sage on her four sacred directions table. I confided in her about my confusion on what to pursue for my career. A few weeks went by, and I did my usual check in

with her, only this time she had an unexpected proposal. Her arm was extended out to me with a pamphlet in her hand, it had enticing images of smiley teens and bright colours all over. My grad coach smiled and said I should really think about this opportunity, a full scholarship for Indigenous students to get their B.A and B.Ed. degrees. It sounded too good to be true, and too good for *someone like me.*

After some time, I decided I was going to take a leap of faith and apply to the program. It truly was the opportunity of a lifetime. Time sped up as I went from writing the required essay, to sitting in the interview, to getting the news I was in. My mom was so proud and happy, my family threw a surprise party for me. I had that knot in my stomach, but now for a different reason. I was with completely new people but in a way, I was more comfortable

with them. We shared similar goals and came from similar cultural backgrounds. I could relate to them in a way I hadn't been able to at my original school. However, as I got further into the program, I started doubting myself and questioning my presence. I wondered if I was *Indigenous enough*, smart enough and worthy of this scholarship. I couldn't allow myself to feel proud. Thoughts like these are ones that can plague a lot of people, especially Indigenous people in academic and professional spaces. I had internalized many of the ignorant comments and stereotypes I had heard throughout my life. Like that Indigenous people get free education and aren't hard workers. Even things like lateral violence within my own community were impacting me, the feeling of inferiority around other native people. It was all so much to take in, but I didn't have time to grasp the thoughts that were whirling around me.

Upon returning to in-person schooling after quarantine, I was now 18 years old and had my Educational

Assistant certificate behind me. I started working in an elementary school for my practicum. I had a lot of emotions running through me, including this feeling of what I found out was called imposter syndrome. To my understanding, it's when you feel like you're just faking everything, and none of your success is actually because of you. My belief is that many BIPOC experience this because we are living in a westernized, Eurocentric world. One where our education is not structured in a way to fit us, and systems are created to suppress us. I realized my thoughts and self-image were exactly what colonialism wanted them to be. This is what colonization and cultural genocide intended; for me and many other Indigenous people to not be proud, to not take up space and to feel *less than.*

Now, I am 19 and have almost completed my first year of university and practicum. There will always be someone doubting us or questioning our worth, so we must believe in ourselves. That battle I had internally was the push and pull of what I knew I should believe

and what others believe about my people. I now know that I do not have to be sorry for being successful. This is something I want all Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth to know. That our existence is not by accident and our lives are not any kind of burden. I have learned to ground myself in my identity and not discredit any work I do. I am no longer in competition with anyone, and I have nothing to prove. I take my time and take up space as an Indigenous student who is operating in a society that wants me to feel like a fraud.

Deciding on what you want to do with your life is a complex, messy journey that is not linear. However, riddling yourself with guilt and doubt because of your identity should not be what makes it this way. To the Indigenous people who question themselves; you are doing the impossible, you're rising above in a world that intends on bringing you down. Trust in yourself and all that had to align in this world for you to exist that your Indigeneity is *not* something to be sorry for. You are not an imposter.