FREE THOUGHT

PENSAMIENTO **LIBRE**

Free Thought/Pensamiento Libre

Journal of the Humanities Honor Society
Middlesex County College

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"Philosophy Glass" originally published in *Sonnets for the Ill at Ease from the Browning of America* (X Press, 1977), republished with permission of the estate of H. Ian Smith.

Essays by Members

Artwork

Tree Divided (2018) by Marisa Marino

Tree Divided is a diptych created by applying very wet gouache paint to one piece of matboard and quickly sandwiching the paint with another matboard on top. The two sides mirror each other and are further enhanced by adding more paint in different colors to enhance images that appear.

- Marisa Marino

Note of appreciation

Note of Recognition

The Humanities Honor Society aims at empowering its members' dreams and passions. Students' thirst for knowledge and ambitious goals is its inspiration.

For that reason, it is an honor to recognize Sitwat Syed, Co-President of Phi Theta Kappa Upsilon Gamma Chapter, and member of the Humanities Honor Society. Ms. Syed was a semifinalist for The Jack Kent Cooke foundation undergraduate transfer scholarship, 2019.

Congratulations, well-deserved.

In My Head (2018) by Marisa Marino

In My Head takes inspiration from medical images. This has been something I have done when I was young. I have always found everything about the human body beautiful. This is taken from an enlarged microscopic image of a mini-brain, lab-created to understand the development of premature infants.

- Marisa Marino

About the Humanities Honor Society

Created in 2015 as the History and Philosophy Honor Society, the organization hoped to open a space for students with an interest in teaching and researching memory and traditions of thought. As time progressed, it became evident that understanding humans required a broader approach. Addressing that need, in 2018, the organization became the Humanities Honor Society.

The Humanities Honor Society engages its members in the art of understanding humans as beings who feel, think, imagine and create. As importantly, members learn about the beauty of teaching others. Members accomplish this by working with a faculty mentor and volunteering at Middlesex County College Learning Center under the supervision of the Learning Center Coordinator.

Cristóbal Espinoza-Wulach and Joseph Pascale
Society's advisers

Sobre la Sociedad Honorifica de Humanidades

Creada en 2015 como La Sociedad Honorífica de Historia y Filosofía, la organización buscaba crear un espacio para aquellos alumnos interesados en el arte de enseñar e investigar la memoria y tradiciones de pensamiento. El tiempo transcurrió y se hizo evidente que entender al ser humano requería una metodología más ambiciosa. Inspirado por aquello, el año 2018 la organización se transformó en La Sociedad Honorífica de Humanidades.

La Sociedad Honorífica de Humanidades expone a sus miembros al arte de entender a los humanos como seres que siente, piensan, imaginan y crean. Los miembros desarrollan esas habilidades bajo la guía de un profesor/mentor. Además, nuestros miembros trabajar en el Centro de Tutoría de nuestra universidad bajo la supervisión del director de dicho centro.

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Cristóbal Espinoza-Wulach and Joseph Pascale
Society's advisers

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Faculty Mentors for Academic Year 2018-2019:

Terrence Corrigan: Besides teaching Western Civilization II, Professor Corrigan teaches courses on Modern African History and Holocaust and Genocide. He is the director of the Human Rights and Genocide Center and the faculty adviser for History and Human Rights Student Club.

Joseph Patrick Pascale: As the Learning Center Coordinator, Mr. Pascale manages tutoring and academic support programs at Middlesex County College. He is a published author of both fiction and nonfiction writing. He was excited for the opportunity to join the Humanities Honor Society as co-adviser in 2018.

Giuseppe Rotolo: Besides teaching Introduction to Philosophy and Ethics, Professor Rotolo teaches Social and Political Philosophy. Additionally, Professor Rotolo is the adviser for the Philosophy Club.

Elizabeth Shaheen is an instructor in the Department of ESL, Languages and Culture at Middlesex County College, where she teaches courses in ESL. Previously, she taught at Rutgers University and Rider University in NJ. She earned her M.Ed. in TESOL from Boston University and a B.A. in Spanish from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Cristóbal Espinoza-Wulach: Besides teaching History of the United States until and since the Civil War, Professor Espinoza-Wulach teaches History of the Twentieth Century and Student Success. He is the co- adviser of the Humanities Honor Society.

Faculty Collaborators:

Susan Altman is an Associate Professor in the Visual, Performing & Media Arts Department. Professor Altman teaches studio courses in the department as well as the Portfolio and Studio Seminar courses, where art majors learn professional practices and prepare for their careers as artists. She is pleased and proud to have student artwork included in this journal as students take the first steps in their professional lives as artists.

Charles Dolan is Technical Services Librarian at Middlesex County College, where his responsibilities range from collection building and cataloging to reference and instruction. He earned his Master of Library Science at Rutgers University. Mr. Dolan was the designer of Libguide for 2018-2019 Essay Contest.

Sallie Delvecchio is an associate professor of composition and literature at Middlesex County College in Edison, N.J. She has taught there for over thirty years and will stop when it stops being interesting. Her interests/obsessions include the Kennedy assassination, Jack the Ripper, and the Shakespeare authorship question, and she includes them in her courses. Her favorite pastime is writing stories about her travels and her grandchildren. Sallie has two children and four

grandchildren whom she adores. They truly are the inspiration for everything she does.

Humanities Honor Society members for academic year 2018– 2019

Members worked with a faculty and Joseph Pascale during the course of the academic year learning the arts of teaching and researching different topics associated with humanities.

Thomas Kozma is a Political Science major at MCC. Tom hopes to transfer to Rutgers—New Brunswick in Jan. 2020 to earn a B.S. in Public Policy. He hopes to build on both his education and experience working on a Congressional campaign to eventually become a policy analyst or auditor for an Office of Inspector General.

Nicholas Provenzano is hardworking college student continuously striving toward his eventual goal of receiving an Associate Degree in Liberal Arts. He hopes to transfer to another school in which he will pursue to major in History and minor in African Americana studies. His eventual long-term plan is to obtain his Master's degree and teach at the high school or college level.

Sitwat Syed is a second-year student at Middlesex County College. After graduating with her Associates in Liberal Arts – General, she aspires to further her studies in International Relations and Humanitarian Affairs

specifically global health. She is persistent about pursuing a career that will allow her to not only have a global outreach, but also give her the opportunity to give back to under-developed societies much like the one she was born and raised in. She currently serves as the Co-President of Phi Theta Kappa, a student representative on the College Assembly, and has led various initiatives on campus. In 2018, Syed was named "Coca Cola Global Leaders of Promise" and was also a member of the National Education for Women in Leadership graduating cohort. Her passion for humanitarianism has led her on many ventures including interning for the United Nations. Currently, she is leading a project through LRBT, a charity that works in rural areas of Pakistan to provide free eye care. After graduation, Syed hopes to continue her education at a university in New York City.

Transnational Voices

Alesar Harofush is a Psychology major. An immigrant, she moved to the United States recently. During her time at Middlesex County College, Alesar has been taking English as a Second Language as well as Psychology classes. Ms. Harofush hopes to continue her education until completing a PhD. As a long term career goal, Alesar hopes to join the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) and work as a psychologist.

Karen Saenz grew up in her country, Colombia. She came to the United States when she was 17 years old and is still learning the new things that are surrounding her in the United States. Ms. Saenz is majoring in Biology. In the future, she sees herself working in a hospital as a doctor helping kids. She would like to be a hero for those kids that are fighting to survive. Ms. Saenz has achieved her dreams thanks to the support of the people who love her and thanks to the faith she keeps in everything she does.

Beini Xu grew up in China and she completed her English Language Learning program at MCC in Fall 2018.

Winners of the 2018-2019 Essay Contest.

2018-2019 Essay Contest: Making Sense of Ourselves Have we lost our path or are we intrinsically evil?

Michael Daniewicz lives in Edison and is currently majoring in history at Middlesex County College. Michael is planning to later double major in secondary education. He wants to be a teacher, either high school or college. Michael also intends to become an author.

Mariel Ynoa was born in the Dominican Republic. At the age of 10, Mariel came to the United States seeking a better future and better education. She is attending Middlesex County College and her major is Liberal Arts – General. After graduation, Mariel wants to complete a Bachelor's degree in child education at Rutgers or Kean University. Mariel has always been passionate about children. She feels that becoming a teacher will give her a strong platform to teach children to spread love and tolerance in their surroundings, and to always love no matter the circumstances they must face in their lives.

Artist Biographies

Marisa Marino is completing her last semester at Middlesex County College, graduating with Associates Degrees in both Fine Arts and Psychology. There is a balance between the two areas, from art to psychology, and within their own respective disciplines. Art and science both have creative and structured elements. Many experiences she has had in Psychology have sparked an artistic counterpart. Photography is also an important component for both areas as well as her personal life. Without photography she could never keep track of all the wonderful things in life she comes across. For that reason, photography is another source of inspiration.

Haley Sklans is in her second year at Middlesex working to complete her Associate's Degree in Fine Art. After Middlesex County College, she would like to continue her education and work on getting her Bachelor's degree in Visual Arts. She intends to pursue a concentration in Drawing and continue to incorporate using Mixed Media. Her artistic influences come from diverse backgrounds. She is inspired by the work of many artists including Austrian artist Egon Schiele, Mexican artist Frida Kahlo, and American artist Mickalene Thomas. Her most important artistic influence is her mother, who enjoys painting and worked in Fashion Design.

Contributors' biographies.

Robert Giorgi is an Army veteran; an alumnus of MCC, and is currently in his final semester at Columbia University where he is majoring in Sociology with a concentration in American Literature. He is the 2017 MCC alumni of the year.

Alexander Lewis, student at Middlesex County College, aims to study Journalism at Rutgers after graduation. He is the president of the Philosophy Club and Russian Club, co-vice president of Honors in Action of the Phi Theta Kappa honors society. He was the former managing editor of *Quo Vadis* all of 2017. He interned at *Home News Tribune / Courier News / MyCentralJersey.com* over the summer and works there part-time as a staff writer. He is a former restaurant manager of 4 years and a server prior to that. Lewis also enjoys helping his community through volunteering, photography, astronomy, writing poetry and playing video games.

Justin Lotenberg is a Liberal Arts – History major. At Middlesex County College, he has deepened his interest in history and writing. As a career, Justin hopes to become a history teacher or a journalist.

Diptych by Haley Sklans, 2018

Diptych is a diptych created from two separate images composed together. The images are derived from two photographs I took. I was looking for images that have connections in color but differ in their composition and subject matter. In subject, the images explore the composition of the inside world and the outside world. I used images that both had window panes to explore the connection between the inside and outside.

- Haley Sklans

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Philosophy Glass

> Escape from Prism
> Subject colored views to a
> Philosophy Glass

You've seen the light, but is it white? Maybe.

Depends on attitudes inside your head.

For when white light's unlocked by prism's key,

The spectrum runs from violet to red.

And that's the visible spectrum alone!

Much more remains unseen or else unheard.

Despite the subtle instruments we own.

Much that remains unknown must be inferred.

Clearly, things are not as they may appear.

The origins of things remain obscure.

Philosophers and tourists hold most dear

Not final destinations, but the tour

So join the game, don't settle for arrest

Because it's not the quarry, but the quest!

By H. Ian Smith
Professor of History and Philosophy at Middlesex County
College from 1964 to 1986
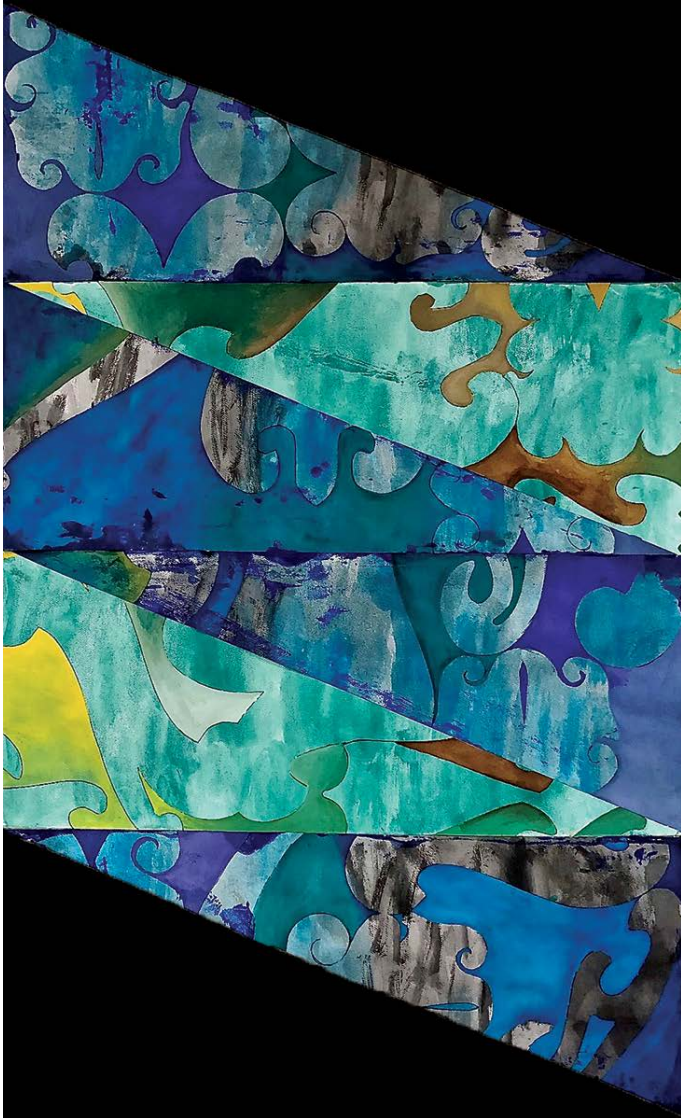
French Waves by Marisa Marino, 2018

French Curves are wonderful stencils that have movement and softness. Unlike childhood stencils, these can be incorporated to fine art and look mature. I laid out the French curves, used watercolor paint and ink, and then sliced the paper to distort the uniformity of the pattern.

- Marisa Marino

Peace through War: Preventive Wars in Theory and Practice.[1]

Thomas Kozma

Should nations try to prevent war through war? Advocates of "preventive war" argue that nations can benefit from launching a first strike in order to avoid an even worse threat later, while critics consider these wars ineffective, unnecessary, and aggressive. To determine whether preventive wars are effective and justified, we have to analyze both the arguments theorists and statesmen have made and some historical examples.

Analysis of "Just War"

"Just War" theorists have usually opposed purely-aggressive wars, but favored purely-defensive wars. However, that distinction still leaves a huge gray area in between. As importantly, a leader's official justification for war might differ wildly from their private justification.

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[1] Mr. Kozma completed this paper under Professor Espinoza's mentorship.

Unsurprisingly, several theorists have discussed the concept of "Just War."

13th-century Catholic theologian Thomas Aquinas saw three conditions for a war to be just. First, only the state could wage war. An ordinary subject had no right to declare war, "because he can seek for redress of his rights from the tribunal of his superior." But the monarch was not only responsible for the welfare of the entire kingdom, but he also was "God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil." [2] Therefore, he could wage war. Second, a "Just War" avenged some inflicted wrong. "When a nation or state has to be punished, for refusing to make amends for the wrongs inflicted by its subjects, or to restore what it has seized unjustly," war is just. [3] Third, a sovereign needed "a rightful intention," not just a rightful official cause. Quoting Augustine's writings, Aquinas argued that wars waged "for motives of

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[2] Aquinas, Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, (Cincinnati, Benziger Brothers), 1947

[3] Aquinas, Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, (Cincinnati, Benziger Brothers), 1947

aggrandizement, or cruelty" can never be just, no matter how convincing the official reason. This last condition is unfortunately open to interpretation, as even leaders with good intentions can wage war without good evidence to justify it.

Francisco de Vitoria, also a Catholic theologian, was another relevant philosopher. Although he slammed his native Spain's brutal conquest of the New World,[4] Vitoria was no pacifist. Vitoria considered it lawful "to draw the sword and use arms against internal wrongdoers," "external enemies," or "a wrong received." He even used the same Biblical reasoning that Aquinas used. In fact, offensive war and vengeance were necessary to win a defensive war. Without offensive punishment, the enemy "would only be emboldened to make a second attack." Today, this is called deterrence.

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[4] De Vitoria, Francisco, *On the American Indians*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press), 1991

Similar to Aquinas, Vitoria argues that some wars were always wrong: those for conquest, empire, personal glory, and religious bigotry. Vitoria broke no new ground here — in fact, he wrote it was "too well known to need proof" and knew "no one of the opposite way of thinking." [5] Sadly, although intellectuals supported the idea, it barely influenced reality; Spain and other states constantly fought for all of those reasons.

In the 1700s, Montesquieu justified first strikes "when one nation sees that a continuance of the peace will enable another to destroy her."[6] Since weaker states were "oftener in the case of being afraid of destruction,"[7] they would be most often justified in waging preventive war out of necessity. Interestingly, history shows that great powers have often waged war against weaker ones out of choice, not necessity. Different from predecessors, Montesquieu highlighted a humanitarian element to war,

[5] De Vitoria, Francisco, *On the American Indians*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press), 1991
[6] Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws, Book X*, (London), 1777, p. 175
[7] Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws, Book X*, (London), 1777, p. 175

calling conquest "a necessary, lawful, but unhappy, power" to repair the damage by the victors and ban any human rights abuse as a condition for peace.[8] For example, the King of Syracuse forced a conquered nation to ban child sacrifice before laying down his arms. Since the 19th century, many countries have intervened in the name of human rights; take Britain's war on the slave trade and colonial reforms in India.

Although he was a contemporary of Montesquieu, Emerrich De Vattel offered a different approach to understand a "Just War." First, war was an absolute last resort "when every other [option] proves ineffectual."[9] Second, wars could only be for the common good, and go "no farther than is necessary for their own defense, and for the maintenance of their rights." [10] These beliefs not only prohibited wars of personal glory, conquest, hatred, greed, revenge, or arrogance; but also humanitarian

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[8] Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws, Book X*, (London), 1777, p. 180

[9] De Vattel, Emerrich, *The Law of Nations, Book III*, (Indianapolis, Liberty Fund), 2008, pp. 315-8

[10] De Vattel, Emerrich, *The Law of Nations, Book II*, (Indianapolis, Liberty Fund), 2008, pp. 181-8

interventions against "enormous transgressions of the law of nature," — such as cannibalism or human sacrifice. According to Vattel, humanitarian intervention "opens a door to all the ravages of enthusiasm and fanaticism, and furnishes ambition with numberless pretexts." Civilized nations could spread their values through commerce and culture, but not conflict. Third, nations could "prevent the evil when it can be prevented" by "anticipat[ing] [the enemy's] machinations" while not "attack[ing] him upon vague and uncertain suspicions."[11] But if an untrustworthy neighbor started visibly preparing for war, preventive action might be just. Fourth, territorial sovereignty was sacred. "No state has the smallest right to interfere in the government of another." Fifth, civil war and revolution changed these rules. "If tyranny, becoming insupportable, obliges the nation to rise in their own defense, every foreign power has a right to succor an oppressed people who implore their assistance." (But the

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[11] De Vattel, Emerrich, *The Law of Nations, Book II,* (Indianapolis, Liberty Fund), 2008, pp. 163-5

people had to actually revolt first.) Finally, agreeing with those before him, Vattel believed that wars with reasonable pretexts but evil private motives could never be just. We can therefore say that Vattel was as cautious as reasonably possible in using force. Force was only to repel an invasion, anticipate an imminent strike, seek reparations for an inflicted wrong, or deter future attacks. Dealing with an untrustworthy state, preventive war might be allowed. But it was always a last resort.

Vattel's views heavily influenced early American foreign policy. In the 1840s, Secretary of State Daniel Webster protested Britain's strike on an American ship carrying rebels to Canada. While the British ambassador argued they had to prevent the threat from fully materializing, Webster demanded he "show a necessity of self-defense, instant, overwhelming, leaving no choice of means, and no moment for deliberation." [12] Similarly, during the Mexican-American War, then-Congressman

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[12] Webster, Daniel, "To Lord Ashburton," (New Haven CT, Lillian Goldman Law Library at Yale University), 2008

Abraham Lincoln saw prevention as a slippery slope. "Allow the President to invade a neighboring nation, whenever he shall deem it necessary to repel an invasion … and you allow him to make war at pleasure." [13] During the secession crisis over a decade later, the new President in his inaugural address pledged "beyond what may be necessary [to secure federal property and collect federal taxes], there will be no invasion, no using of force against or among the people anywhere." In other words, "you can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors." Only when the South bombarded Ft. Sumter did he fight. More recently, after World War II and Japan's preventive strike on Pearl Harbor, war-weary Americans helped create a new postwar order making force a last resort. The new United Nations disavowed unilateral preventive war, but allowed for "the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs." [14] For a

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[13] Lincoln, Abraham, "To William H. Herndon," (New York City, Library of America), 1989, pp. 175-6

[14] *Charter of the United Nations*, (San Francisco, United Nations), 1945, pp. 9-11

war to be "just," the United Nations Security Council has to approve it. Despite the enormous threat from the Soviet Union, American presidents from Truman to Reagan supported containment and deterrence of the Soviet threat over the risks of preventive war.

The most important theme over the centuries is war as a last resort. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld once remarked on the "unknown unknowns" of foreign policy — "the ones we don't know we don't know" which "tend to be the difficult ones." [15] War *can* be simple, but just as easily destabilizing and destructive. Due to this uncertainty, Vattel said it best when he called for war only as a last resort when "every other [option] proves ineffectual." Not only are there moral reasons to oppose unnecessary war, but such wars often backfire and fail to meet the attackers' goals. And while it's unrealistic to expect countries to be physically attacked before retaliating against clear threats, wars against "vague and

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[15] *News Briefing with Defense Secretary Rumsfeld et al*, (Washington D.C., Department of Defense), 2002

uncertain suspicions" open the door to wars of aggression justified with the pretext of prevention. Even theorists who support preventive war, like Montesquieu, support it in very limited circumstances: mostly for small states scared of destruction with no other way to defend themselves.

Preventive Wars in Practice

After analyzing the theory, it is important to see how successful preventive wars can be in achieving peace. This article analyzes three cases: Czechoslovakia and the Brezhnev Doctrine, Osirak and the Begin doctrine, and most extensively, Iraq and the Bush Doctrine.

Czechoslovakia: The Brezhnev Doctrine

Although in theory, the world united against preventive war, things were more nuanced in practice. Both the US and USSR regularly intervened in weaker states' domestic affairs to prevent either the establishment or collapse of Communism. Take the 1968 Soviet-led invasion of the

Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (CSSR). The reformist Czechoslovak leader Aleksandr Dubcek sought a middle course between totalitarian Communism and Western-style democratic capitalism. Dubcek argued that the Communist Party should not "become the universal caretaker of society," but instead allow for constitutional freedoms of speech and assembly. Despite his loyalty to the Warsaw Pact, his lax censorship led to people openly attacking Communism. [16]

This set off panic in the Kremlin and its hardline allies (East Germany, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Poland). For them, Dubcek's reforms represented a slippery slope, as they feared a progression from legalizing anti-Communism to anti-Communists taking power and ultimately to Czechoslovakia turning to the West. And "Czechoslovakia's going over to the capitalist camp would mean a heavy defeat of world socialism … and put

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[16] *Action Program of the Czechoslovak Communist Party* (Nottingham, Spokesman Books), 1972, pp. 6-7

into jeopardy the security of the other socialist countries as well." [17]

In the context of the Cold War and Domino Theories — if one country adopts a political system, neighbors will follow — "the defense of socialism in Czechoslovakia [was] not only a domestic affair," [18] but the interest of all Communists. The hardliners gave Dubcek a chance to resolve this peacefully, and in a Bratislava summit he agreed to mostly reverse his reforms in exchange for peace. Unfortunately for Dubcek, people were unwilling to give up their new-found freedoms, causing the hardliners to accuse Dubcek of backtracking on his promises. The communists responded in August 1968. Aiming "to prevent a dangerous turn of events" [19]

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[17] Letter from the Central Committees of the Bulgarian, East German, Hungarian, Polish, and Soviet Communist Parties Regarding the Warsaw Pact Intervention in Czechoslovakia," (Washington D.C., Wilson Center Digital Archive), 1968

[18] Letter from the Central Committees of the Bulgarian, East German, Hungarian, Polish, and Soviet Communist Parties Regarding the Warsaw Pact Intervention in Czechoslovakia," (Washington D.C., Wilson Center Digital Archive), 1968

[19] Letter from the Central Committees of the Bulgarian, East German, Hungarian, Polish, and Soviet Communist Parties Regarding the

from threatening world socialism, the USSR and its allies sent hundreds of thousands of troops into Czechoslovakia, killing hundreds and reinstalling a pro-Soviet government. They gradually marginalized Dubcek and his reformist allies, and eventually forced them to retire.

A few weeks later, Soviet political scientist Sergei Kovalev created an elaborate justification for intervention — the "Brezhnev Doctrine." [20] In fact, the Czechoslovak people's cries for "self-determination" "fundamentally contradicts the right of these peoples [in the CSSR and the Eastern Bloc] to socialist self-determination," [21] while Soviet intervention "is in fact a struggle for the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic's sovereignty against those who would like to deprive it of this sovereignty by

Warsaw Pact Intervention in Czechoslovakia," (Washington D.C., Wilson Center Digital Archive), 1968

[20] Kovalev, Sergei, "The International Obligations of Socialist Countries," (Moscow, Pravda), p. 4

[21] Kovalev, Sergei, "The International Obligations of Socialist Countries," (Moscow, Pravda), p. 4

delivering the country to the imperialists." [22] Peaceful political dissent was actually "the anti-socialist forces' offensive," from which the USSR was obliged to protect the CSSR's people "after exhausting all [peaceful] measures." In the end, Kovalev wrote that a Communist state only "retains its national independence thanks precisely to the power of the socialist commonwealth — and primarily to its chief force, the Soviet Union, and the might of its armed forces." [23]

In the Orwellian world of Soviet propaganda, war was peace, freedom was slavery, and independence was imperialism (and vice versa).

In the short term, the Soviets won. They averted a nightmare scenario with a Western-backed capitalist democracy right on the USSR's doorstep. But the costs of the "Brezhnev Doctrine" started adding up: open-ended occupations in Afghanistan and Europe led the USSR to

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[22] Kovalev, Sergei, "The International Obligations of Socialist Countries," (Moscow, Pravda), p. 4
[23] Kovalev, Sergei, "The International Obligations of Socialist Countries," (Moscow, Pravda), p. 4

dedicate hundreds of billions of dollars to the military each year, far more than the US as a share of GDP. In 1991, military spending was around 20-30% of the economy, according to the *Washington Post*. [24] It was unsustainable.

Osirak: The Begin Doctrine

In 1981, Israel announced a preventive war doctrine of its own. Saddam Hussein was building a nuclear reactor at Osirak, which Israel believed to be part of a nuclear weapons program despite others' doubts. Not wanting to risk a hostile Arab state having the power to destroy Israel, Prime Minister Menachem Begin approved a daring air-raid on the reactor. In a press conference, he announced "we chose this moment: now, not later, because later may be too late, perhaps forever. And if we stood by idly, two, three years, at the most four years, and Saddam Hussein would have produced his three, four, five bombs … Another Holocaust would have happened.

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[24] Dobbs, Michael, "Gorbachev Aides Target Military Industrial Complex," (Washington. D.C., Washington Post) 1991

… Never again, never again!" [25] He then announced a doctrine which Israel still adheres to today: "We shall not allow any enemy to develop weapons of mass destruction turned against us." [26]

Israel's strike drew instant condemnation, even from its close ally America, then under the Reagan Administration. Mere days later, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) unanimously blasted it as "a clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international conduct," and "a serious threat to the entire safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency." [27] It allowed Iraq to seek reparations for Israel's assault on a supposedly peaceful nuclear program.

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[25] *Press Conference with Prime Minister Begin et al*, (Tel Aviv, Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs), 1981

[26] *Press Conference with Prime Minister Begin et al*, (Tel Aviv, Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs), 1981

[27] *Resolution 487*, (New York City, United Nations Security Council), 1981, p. 10

Like the Soviet Union, Israel did not address an imminent threat. Moreover, contrary to their official justifications, neither power exhausted all diplomatic options. Similarities, though, end there. Israel had concrete reason to fear Iraq, given Saddam Hussein's (and other Arab leaders') open anti-Semitism. He regularly threatened the destruction of Israel, and under prior leaders Iraq had attacked Israel in 1948 and 1973. [28] Therefore, the Begin Doctrine wasn't really naked aggression against a weaker power, but an overreaction resulting from Israelis' fears of another Holocaust or invasion, and a lack of regional allies or support in the United Nations.

Iraq: The Bush Doctrine
Background

A new world order began in the early 1990s. As the Soviet Union collapsed, it left the democratic-capitalist United

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[28] Bard, Mitchell, *Myths and Facts: A Guide to the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, (Chevy Chase, American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise), 2017, p. 66

States as the only superpower. Accordingly, American foreign policy's focus shifted from the Soviets to less well-defined threats: international terrorism, Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) proliferation, "rogue states," and genocide. Initially, the United States combated these threats through the United Nations (UN), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and other broad coalitions and multilateral groups. For example, George H.W. Bush formed a UN-backed coalition to liberate Kuwait from Saddam's invasion. Similarly, the Clinton Administration worked with NATO on the interventions in Somalia, Bosnia, and Kosovo against genocide and civil war.

From this decade of relative peace and prosperity, a new strand of conservatives appeared. This new strand advocated for the unilateral display of American force as a mean to shape the world according to American values and interests. However, they did not yet control American foreign policy. George H.W. Bush left Saddam in power despite his aggression and atrocities, concerned about a bloody, chaotic quagmire. Instead, during the '90s the US

used international diplomacy — sanctions, WMD inspections, etc. — to keep Saddam "in a box." Bush wrote that "trying to eliminate Saddam, extending the ground war into an occupation of Iraq, would have violated our guideline about not changing objectives in midstream, engaging in "mission creep," and would have incurred incalculable human and political costs." [29]

Although Saddam Hussein sometimes cooperated with the UNSC, neoconservatives became increasingly skeptical of containment. And so began the Project for a New American Century, which called on Clinton "to embrace the cause of American leadership," "accept responsibility for America's unique role in preserving and extending an international order friendly to our security, our prosperity, and our principles," and "promote the cause of political and economic freedom," especially in hostile regimes. [30] This all required a massive military and

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[29] Bush, George H.W. and Brent Scowcroft, "Why We Didn't Remove Saddam," (Time), 1998, p. 31

[30] Abrams, Elliott et al., "Statement of Principles" (Washington D.C., Project for a New American Century), 1997,

a willingness to use it before anyone else can. "The history of the 20th century should have taught us that it is important to shape circumstances before crises emerge, and to meet threats before they become dire." [31]

Translated from principles into policy, the Project for a New American Century lobbied Clinton to push for "the removal of Saddam Hussein's regime from power." [32] They thought only regime change could work — "'containment' of Saddam Hussein has been steadily eroding," "we can no longer depend on our partners in the Gulf War coalition to uphold sanctions or to punish Saddam," and "it is difficult if not impossible to monitor Iraq's chemical and biological weapons production" even were Saddam to allow UN inspectors back in. [33] Failure to decisively act — now, not later, because later may be too late, maybe forever — would jeopardize the safety of

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[31] Abrams, Elliott et al., "Statement of Principles" (Washington D.C., Project for a New American Century), 1997,

[32] Abrams, Elliott et al., "To President Bill Clinton," (Washington D.C., Project for a New American Century), 1998

[33] Abrams, Elliott et al., "To President Bill Clinton," (Washington D.C., Project for a New American Century), 1998

American troops in the Middle East, Israel, moderate Arab states, and "a significant portion of the world's supply of oil." [34]

PNACers Bill Kristol and Bob Kagan wrote in the New York Times in 1998 that even "smart bombs cannot reliably hit and destroy every weapons and storage site in Iraq," making even sustained bombings ineffective. [35] Anything less than 100% security was 100% danger: "The United Nations inspection regime will have collapsed; American diplomacy will be in disarray, those who opposed military action … will demand the lifting of sanctions, and Mr. Hussein will be out of his box, free to terrorize our allies and threaten our interests." [36]

And so: "Saddam Hussein must go." [37]

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[34] Abrams, Elliott et al., "To President Bill Clinton," (Washington D.C., Project for a New American Century), 1998

[35] Kristol, William and Robert Kagan, "Bombing Iraq Isn't Enough," (New York City, The New York Times),1998

[36] Kristol, William and Robert Kagan, "Bombing Iraq Isn't Enough," (New York City, The New York Times),1998

[37] Kristol, William and Robert Kagan, "Bombing Iraq Isn't Enough," (New York City, The New York Times),1998

Deciding on War

Iraq was not a major issue in the 2000 election. But when George W. Bush won, he quickly staffed his Administration with PNACers: Dick Cheney — already his running mate — Donald Rumsfeld, John Bolton, Richard Armitage, Doug Feith, Condoleezza Rice, and more. Other PNACers like Kristol became cheerleaders for the new president. Over the next few years, these men and women would try to turn the dream of a "New American Century" into reality.

Even a few months after inauguration, now-Defense Secretary Rumsfeld was leaning towards regime change by military force in Iraq. In July, he wrote to National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice that "the broader subject of Iraq" was a significant problem. [38] He saw only three options: end containment, initiate contact with Saddam, or regime change. Ending containment without a new strategy would leave Saddam free to

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[38] Rumsfeld, Donald, Memo to Condoleezza Rice, (Washington D.C., National Security Archive at Georgetown University), 2001

develop WMD and threaten U.S. interests. And "the likelihood of Saddam making and respecting an acceptable accommodation of our interests" was small. But while regime change had its risks, "if Saddam's regime were ousted, we would have a much-improved position in the region and elsewhere." [39]

A few months later, everything changed. On September 11, 2001, Al-Qaeda killed three thousand American civilians in the Twin Towers Attack. President Bush used this attack to argue for ousting Saddam Hussein. More than once, the Bush Administration sought to link Saddam to Al-Qaeda and the September 11 attacks. It's important to note that the momentum for regime change was building for years prior. But before 9/11, the Bush Administration was still considering nonmilitary options. However, in the aftermath of the attack, anti-war sentiment in the Cabinet simply died out.

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[39] Rumsfeld, Donald, Memo to Condoleezza Rice, (Washington D.C., National Security Archive at Georgetown University), 2001

In a November memo, Rumsfeld asked, "how [do we] start" regime change. [40] Options included a "dispute over WMD inspections" or a potential "Saddam connection to Sept. 11 attack or to anthrax attacks." At the same time, the Bush Administration started to analyze the negative outcomes that Iraqi regime change would entail. Rumsfeld considered dozens of things: Iraq "could broaden into a Middle East war," "another rogue state could take advantage of US preoccupation," "the US might feel compelled to ignore serious proliferation," it "could lead to a conflict between nuclear armed states," the "US could fail to find WMDs," cause too many "Iraqi civilian deaths," "fail to manage post-Saddam Hussein Iraq successfully," alienate "countries in the EU and UN," increase "recruiting and financing for terrorist networks" or face "coalition deaths from Iraq's use of weapons of mass destruction." [41] (Most of these horror scenarios

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[40] Rumsfeld, Donald, Memo, (Washington D.C., National Security Archive at Georgetown University), 2001

[41] Rumsfeld, Donald, Iraq: An Illustrative List of Potential Problems to be Considered and Addressed, (Washington D.C., National Security

actually happened, except for the WMD-related ones, since Iraq of course had no WMD.)

Unsurprisingly, the intelligence community doubted the Administration's nation-building crusade. The Defense Intelligence Agency wrote in April 2002 that "managing rivalries will be a major challenge to the new regime," and that major "threats will emerge from the Ba'athists, the Jihadists and Arab nationalists who oppose any US occupation."[42] Beyond some potential "democratic building blocks," the intelligence community doubted that Iraqi culture could support democracy.

Nevertheless, the Bush Administration persisted.

Building Public Support

In 2002, the Administration started making the case for war in public. In his 2002 State of the Union address, Bush labelled Iraq as a "grave and gathering danger" part of an

Archive at Georgetown University), 2001

[42] Senate, *Report on Whether Public Statements Regarding Iraq by U.S. Government Officials Were Substantiated by Intelligence Information*, (Washington D.C., Select Committee on Intelligence), 2008, pp. 84-5

"axis of evil" with North Korea and Iran. [43] Over the course of that year, President Bush would make four major arguments that the risks of action — war — were less than the risks of inaction.

First, containment was outdated in the 21st century — unlike the USSR, rogue states and terror groups were not rational actors who could be deterred; they were fanatics who would stop at nothing to kill millions. In Bush's 2002 National Security Strategy, "deterrence based only upon the threat of retaliation is less likely to work against leaders of rogue states more willing to take risks," or a "terrorist enemy whose avowed tactics are wanton destruction and the targeting of innocents." [44] Bush explicitly linked terror groups like Al-Qaeda to rogue regimes like Iraq, despite a lack of credible evidence. "Weapons [of mass destruction] can be easily concealed, delivered covertly, and used without warning," so the US

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[43] Bush, George W., "State of the Union," (Washington D.C., United States Capitol), 2002

[44] Bush, George W., "National Security Strategy," (Washington D.C., National Security Council), 2002, p. 15

had to take out threats as early as possible without waiting for an attack (actual or imminent). Bush called his strategy "preemption," referring to a first strike against an imminent attack, rather than "prevention," which better describes his war of choice.

Second, Saddam could not be trusted to engage in good-faith negotiations, given his repeated defiance of UNSC sanctions and inspections. "Nothing in the last dozen years has stopped him," Vice President Cheney warned that summer, "not his agreements, not the discoveries of the inspectors, not the revelations by defectors, not criticism or ostracism by the international community, and not four days of bombing by the US in 1998." [45] Saddam viewed negotiations as a way to stall for "more time to husband his resources," develop WMDs, and take over the Middle East.

Third, America had a moral duty to spread American values — democracy, capitalism, and rule of

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[45] Cheney, Richard, "The Risks of Inaction Are Far Greater Than the Risk of Action," (Nashville, National Convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars), 2002

law — to oppressed peoples. In June, Bush compared the War on Terror to the Cold War: "now, as then, our enemies are totalitarians … seek[ing] to impose a joyless conformity, to control every life and all of life." [46] To those pointing to American aggression and human rights abuse, he retorted "Moral truth is the same in every culture, in every time, and in every place. … We are in a conflict between good and evil, and America will call evil by its name. By confronting evil and lawless regimes, we do not create a problem — we reveal a problem." [47] Bush later appealed to the "non-negotiable demands of human dignity. People everywhere prefer freedom to slavery, prosperity to squalor, self-government to the rule of terror and torture." [48]

And fourth, time was running out. The September 11 attacks were in recent memory, and no American

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[46] Bush, George W., "Graduation Speech at West Point," (New York City., West Point Military Academy), 2002

[47] Bush, George W., "Graduation Speech at West Point," (New York City., West Point Military Academy), 2002

[48] Bush, George W., "President Outlines Iraqi Threat," (Cincinnati, Cincinnati Museum Center), 2002

wanted to risk a repeat. Many saw another terror attack as a question not of 'if,' but 'when,' 'where,' and 'how deadly.' Bush exploited this understandable fear, proclaiming that "the only path to safety is the path of action," and "we must take the battle to the enemy, disrupt his plans, and confront the worst threats before they emerge." In Cheney's words: "the risks of inaction are far greater than the risks of action." [49]

To sum up: Saddam was a growing threat who could kill Americans at any moment (either directly or through Al-Qaeda). He could not be reasoned with; he could not be deterred; he could not be isolated. He could only be disarmed and destroyed with a "Coalition of the Willing." With Congress supporting regime change through the 1998 Iraqi Liberation Act and the 2002 Authorization for the Use of Military Force, Bush turned to the international community. On March 17, after failing to get UN authorization for a war, Bush gave Saddam an

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[49] Cheney, Richard, "The Risks of Inaction Are Far Greater Than the Risk of Action," (Nashville, National Convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars), 2002

ultimatum anyway: leave Iraq within 48 hours or face the wrath of the American military. Saddam refused, and the war began exactly two days later.

Aftermath

Bush decided on war. Now what? The initial invasion of Iraq went as well as it could have. Saddam's forces fell less than a month after the invasion. Bush's approval soared as Coalition troops liberated town after town. Iraqis seemed pretty happy to be free from a brutal tyrant.

But as Montesquieu argued, invaders had a "necessary, lawful, but unhappy power" to occupy defeated countries and repair the damage of war. The occupiers set up the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), a temporary government — UN-backed, but US-led. Initially, Iraqis only had an advisory role; Paul Bremer, a GOP politician with little knowledge of Iraq's culture or history, ruled by decree for several months. The US had planned extensively for the invasion, but not so much for the occupation.

The CPA under Paul Bremer issued many orders which backfired immensely, fueling an insurgency shortly after Baghdad fell. Bremer first cleansed Iraq of Saddam's ruling party, abolished the army and fired thousands of civil servants. In theory, this would enable democracy just like de-Nazification in Germany. But in practice, this hurt many apolitical Iraqis who had joined these institutions for better pay or security. Public services like schools, roads, power plants, courts, banks, and hospitals — already weakened by sanctions and invasion — ground to a halt. Unemployment topped 28% [50] and an awful humanitarian crisis became intolerable. Since the CPA granted Coalition troops and contractors total immunity from Iraqi law, ordinary Iraqis had few ways to peacefully express their growing anger at the US occupation.

The insurgency was a loosely organized mix of radical Islamists, Arab and Iraqi nationalists, disgruntled Ba'athists, and a few communists. While specific CPA

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[50] "Iraq Unemployment Rate: 1991-2018," 2018, Trading Economics, https://tradingeconomics.com/iraq/unemployment-rate

policies fueled the insurgents, their anger was directed at the occupation itself. By 2005, according to the British Defence Ministry, 82% of Iraqis strongly opposed the occupation and nearly half approved of anti-Coalition violence. [51] According to journalist Anthony Shadid who witnessed the occupation first-hand, the insurgents targeted not just Coalition troops but "Iraqi politicians, technocrats, professionals, and members of nascent security forces – anyone deemed cooperating with the occupation." [52] While they often had legitimate grievances and broad support from the Iraqi people, their disregard for international law, fanatical ideologies, and horrific violence against innocents stripped them of any moral high ground.

As the insurgency rapidly descended into civil war, American policymakers adjusted their strategy. They scaled de-Ba'athification back, granted Iraqis sovereignty,

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[51] Rayment, Sean, "Secret MoD poll: Iraqis Support Attacks on British Troops," (London, The Telegraph), 2005

[52] Shadid, Anthony, Night Draws Near: Iraq's People in the Shadow of America's War, (New York City, Picador), pp. 239-40

and sent more troops to stabilize the situation. This improvement in policy didn't lead to an improvement in the war's popularity, however: in 2006, the clear anti-war majority of the electorate overwhelmingly sent Democrats to Congress. Nancy Pelosi, who had opposed the war from the start, became Speaker of the House. [53] And two years later, the anti-war Barack Obama defeated hawks Hillary Clinton and John McCain to win the White House. His rapid troop withdrawal caused the same problem the initial invasion did: a power vacuum. Just as insurgents filled it after 2003, the Islamic State filled it starting 2014.

Analysis

In case there is any doubt, several memos and documents leaked since 2003 prove Bush was set on war. He rejected numerous diplomatic overtures from Iraq. He chose to cut short diplomacy through the UN. He deliberately demanded from Saddam complete and immediate

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[53] Kohut, Andrew, "The Real Message of the Midterms," (Washington D.C., Pew Research Center), 2006

surrender. Even Iraq's offer to allow in US weapons inspectors unconditionally, support the War on Terror, and hold internationally-supervised elections in two years faced stony silence from the White House. [54]

British intelligence as early as mid-2002 noted that "Bush wanted to remove Saddam, through military action," even though "Saddam was not threatening his neighbors, and his WMD capability was less than that of Libya, North Korea or Iran." [55] The issues of WMD and terrorism were viewed just as much as pretexts as they were actual reasons to invade. Despite deciding on invasion, "there was little discussion in Washington of the aftermath."

Certainly by March 2003, Bush believed "the time has come to get rid of [Saddam]. That's it." [56] Whether or

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[54] Whitaker, Brian et al, "Saddam's Desperate Offers to Stave Off War: Washington Dismissed Iraq's Peace Feelers, Including Elections and Weapons Pledge, Put Forward Via Diplomatic Channels and US Hawk Perle," (London, The Guardian), 2003

[55] Rycroft, Matthew, "Iraq: Prime Minister's Meeting, 23 July," (Washington D.C., National Security Archive at Georgetown University), 2002, pp. 1-2

[56] Danner, Mark, "The Moment Has Come to Get Rid of Saddam,"

not the UNSC authorized a war, whether or not Saddam complied with UNSC resolutions and destroyed some missiles, whether or not Saddam went into exile. Despite saying to Spanish Prime Minister Aznar that "I don't want the war," he asserted that "my patience has run out. I won't go beyond mid-March."

That was an arbitrary deadline. The rest of the world knew it was an arbitrary deadline even at the time. Saddam was increasingly cooperating with WMD inspections according to the International Atomic Energy Agency's director Mohamed ElBaradei, who "found no evidence or plausible indication of the revival of a nuclear weapons program" and called for patience and prudence. [57] And prewar US intelligence found that Saddam was unlikely to use WMD except "to disrupt US war preparations" or against an "imminent or unavoidable"

(New York City, New York Review of Books), 2007

[57] ElBaradei, Dr. Mohamed, "The Status of Nuclear Inspections in Iraq: An Update," (New York City, International Atomic Energy Agency), 2003

US invasion. [58] Even at the time, it was clear: war wasn't necessary.

(Postwar intelligence, of course, embarrassed the Administration even more. Saddam had no active WMD; he did want to rebuild them to deter Iranian and Israeli invasion, but could only do so if the UN lifted sanctions.)

Two things — and only two things — can be said in the Administration's favor. First, everyone from Bush on down believed Iraq had WMD, was a threat, and that Iraqis deserved democracy. Even in top-secret memos, officials like Rumsfeld worried about Saddam using WMD during a war. If the WMD were blatant lies, and not just faulty intelligence, then it's highly unlikely Administration officials would worry about that.

Second, Bush was set on war not because he enjoyed death and destruction, but because he legitimately doubted Saddam would stick to any promises

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[58] Senate, *Report on Postwar Findings About Iraq's WMD Programs and Links to Terrorism and How They Compare With Prewar Assessments*, (Washington D.C., Select Committee on Intelligence), 2006, pp. 113-24

or abide by any sanctions. Saddam was indeed extremely defiant throughout the 1990s, and only started rushing to comply with US and UN demands in late 2002 when he saw invasion as imminent. The White House publicly dismissed Saddam's decision to "allow the return of inspectors without conditions" to Iraq, only saying "we do not take Saddam Hussein at face value." [59] And given Saddam's unspeakable brutality, perhaps it was fair at the time to assume that any deaths from regime change would pale in comparison to deaths from Saddam's continued leadership.

Basically, American officials thought they were doing the right thing. Though good intentions are often necessary for good results, they're not sufficient (as shown by the occupation's many failures.) And Bush's self-righteousness made him unwilling to compromise and see value in diplomacy.

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[59] "Iraq to Allow U.N. Inspectors, U.S. Remains Skeptical," (CNN), 2002

Lessons

The history of preventive wars show that the further away a possible threat is, the less justified a war would be. Even honest and well-intentioned leaders might be reading faulty intelligence. First strikes against vague and uncertain threats can bring us back to the international anarchy of might-makes-right by encouraging others to use force to settle matters which don't require it. If we can attack a country because it *could* pose a threat later on, why can't other countries attack us for the same reason? Wagers of such wars by definition either consciously reject diplomacy, or impose arbitrary and shifting conditions for peace that make compromise impossible. They are wars of choice — they are crimes against peace.

It's important not to overreact to "new" threats like international terrorism, rogue regimes, or WMD. While 3,000 innocent Americans lost their lives on September 11, around 6,900 equally innocent Americans have died in the War on Terror overall — 4,400 in the Iraqi desert alone. [60]

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[60] DeBruyne, Nese, *American War and Military Operations Casualties:*

"Old" strategies like containment and deterrence have worked against hostile nuclear regimes before: the USSR, China, and North Korea. Sanctions followed by negotiations disarmed Libya without firing a shot and basically halted the Iranian nuclear program. Though hawks said these regimes were irrational and fanatical, everyone responds to basic incentives. Often, they developed WMD to protect their regimes from invasion, not for invading others themselves.

However, preventive wars work best in practical terms when they have good planning plus clear and achievable goals. Israel wanted to destroy the Osirak reactor, and they did. That was it. Unlike the US's intervention two decades later, Israel sought no grand ideological crusade to spread democracy or topple Saddam at all. As Bush learned, much more planning is needed to deal with nation-building, occupation, or counterinsurgency than a simple airstrike. Meanwhile, the

Lists and Statistics (Washington D.C., Congressional Research Service), 2017, pp. 11-29

USSR only sought to restore Czechoslovakia's old regime, not build a new one. However, their long-term occupation and intervention in Afghanistan drained their resources, contributing to their empire's downfall.

Preventive wars fall on a spectrum between pure aggression and pure self-defense, but are usually closer to aggression than pre-emptive wars or self-defense. Prevention is usually just one out of many factors leading to war, and many wars throughout history were at least partially preventive. What distinguishes a war with some preventive justification like the Vietnam War — fought to prevent all of Indochina coming under hostile Communist rule and threatening American interests in the future — from an actual preventive war like Iraq is who struck first. North Vietnam had invaded the South, violating its sovereignty (according to Americans) and requiring defense; we responded to no actual aggression in Iraq (nor Israel in Iraq, nor the USSR in Czechoslovakia).

Beyond Actual War

The logic and lessons of preventive war apply beyond "real" wars. Consider trade wars. The Trump Administration, at least officially, justifies its worldwide trade war through prevention. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross explained that during a hypothetical national emergency, "if the U.S. requires a similar increase in steel production as it did during previous national emergencies, domestic steel production capacity may be insufficient to satisfy national security needs." [61] To avoid a greater threat later on, the Administration levied 25% tariffs on foreign steel to subsidize American producers.

Initially, the Administration negotiated with our trading partners for exemptions and concessions. But Ross had "no intention of protracted extensions," warning "if we're going to impose it, we're going to have to do it pretty soon, or else people will start gaming the system." [62] President Trump's comments also confused foreign

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[61] Trump, Donald, *Presidential Proclamation on Adjusting Imports of Steel into the United States,* (Washington D.C., White House), 2018
[62] Pramuk, Jacob, "Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross: White House

leaders on why he was upset and what concessions he wanted. For instance, he described tariffs as a negotiating tactic to lower other countries' tariffs and renegotiate NAFTA — not for national security. Ultimately talks collapsed after the EU declared they would "not negotiate under threat." [63]

Like in Iraq, the Trump Administration has shifting goals in the diplomacy stage, worried about diplomacy dragging things out, and appeared to not accept anything besides economic surrender. Besides, President Trump has always favored tariffs and trade protectionism, all but guaranteeing that he would eventually levy tariffs. When he finally did, most US trading partners immediately retaliated. With dubious justifications, unclear goals and minimal planning, the Administration led the US into an open-ended worldwide trade war. While it's supposed to force trading partners into opening up their markets to

Won't Keep Extending Tariff Exemptions," (CNBC), 2018
[63] Serhan, Yasmeen, "We Will Not Negotiate Under Threat," (The Atlantic), 2018

America, there is little sign of that happening. Like in Iraq, there are few good options.

Conclusion

This is only a brief examination of a few theorists and a few examples, but it suggests a few things. First, preventive wars are rarely necessary — "new" threats are not so new, and "outdated" strategies are not so outdated. Second, they can be dangerous either in the short or long term by draining resources or destabilizing world order. Third, they need good planning and realistic objectives to succeed. Fourth, prevention is actually pretty common in history, and applies beyond actual war.

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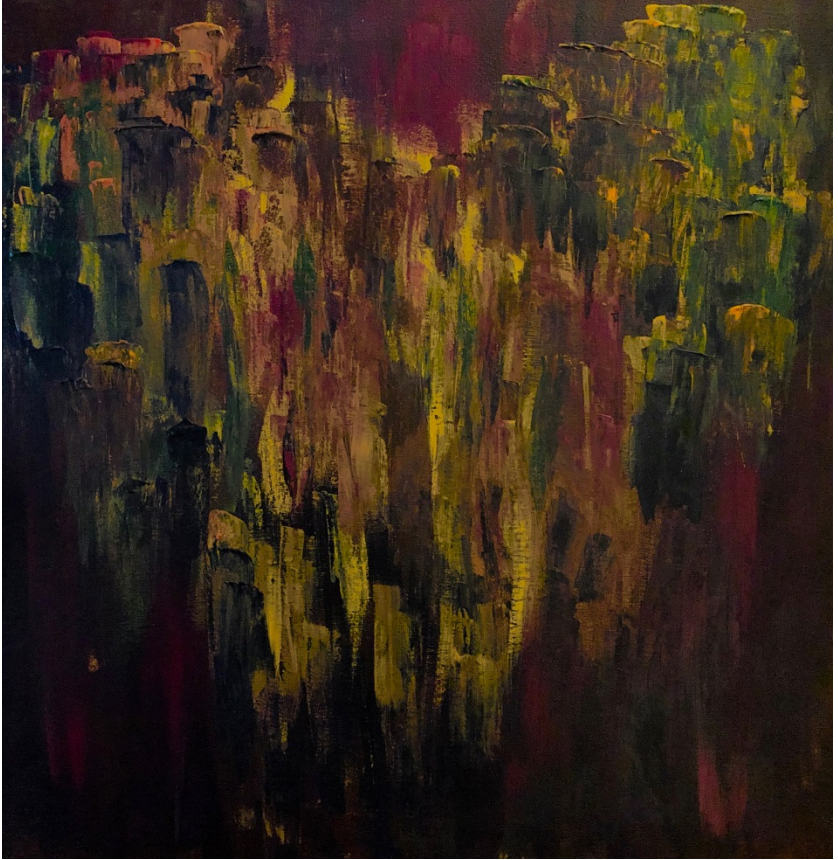
Broken Hearts by Marisa Marino, 2018

The Parkland School Shooting was devastating. Seeing the friends and families that were affected by the horrible event forced me to paint out my sympathy for them. *Broken Hearts* is made of acrylic paint layered with a palette knife over and over for each tear in their lives.

-    Marisa Marino

The Trail of Tears: America's Hidden Genocide.[64]

Nicholas Provenzano

According to the International Criminal Court, "genocide" means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) killing members of the group; (b) causing serious bodily harm to members of the group; (c) deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) imposing measures intended to prevent birth within the group; (e) forcibly transferring children of the group to another group (ICC 1998). Andrew Jackson made it known to the overwhelming indigenous American population that they would have to leave their homes and move west. Trail of Tears occurred due to Andrew Jackson forcing the natives from their lands to the territory that is now called Oklahoma. In short, the Native

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[64] Mr. Provenzano worked on this paper under Professor Corrigan's mentorship.

American tribes were never in a position, or held sufficient control, to ever ensure a fair deal with the U.S. government. The result of this imbalance of control and power showed itself within the form of genocide and the loss of human rights, and their homelands, for numerous indigenous peoples of North America. In the 1830s the US Court had orchestrated The Trail of Tears, and it should be considered a genocide because it unquestionably had violated parts a, b, and c of the legal definition and it should be recognized as such.

Only a year after taking office, Andrew Jackson implemented a new policy known as the Indian Removal Act of 1830. Jackson was given the power to arrange a treaty with the Indian tribes living east of the Mississippi River. The terms of this treaty forced the Native Americans to give up lands east of the Mississippi River and to relocate west to the new Indian Territory. Jackson had different attitudes toward the Native American people than the rest of the majority of white men. He thought of them as children in in need of guidance and

believed that the Indian Removal Act would be beneficial to Indians. Most white Americans could never have envisioned the United States could extend beyond the Mississippi (Jackson "On Indian Removal"). Jackson thought that, "By opening the whole territory between Tennessee on the north and Louisiana on the south to the settlement of whites it will incalculably strengthen the southwest frontier and render the adjacent States strong enough to repel future invasions without remote aid" (Jackson "On Indian Removal"). He also believed that removal would save the Indian people from the ruthless aggression of the white men. However, some Americans thought that this only paved the way for inhumane and brutal course of action.

Towards the start of the 1830s, almost 125,000 Native Americans lived on a huge number of sections of land in Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama, North Carolina and Florida– whom their predecessors had occupied and cultivated for ages and the area would later be known as the American Deep South. There were five main groups of

Native American tribes. They consisted of the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Muscogee, and Seminole tribes who made up the "Five Civilized Tribes." Before the decade was over, not very many Native Americans remained anywhere in the southeastern United States. Because they were chipping away at the benefits of white pioneers who needed to develop cotton on the Indians' property, the national government forced them to leave their homes and walk a huge number of miles to an exceptionally assigned "Indian Territory" over the Mississippi River. This hard and dangerous adventure is known as the Trail of Tears, (Coates *Trail of Tears*).

The Indian Removal continued in 1836 when the federal government forced the Indian tribe known as the Creeks out of their land for the final time. 3,500 of the 15,000 Creeks who set out for Oklahoma did not survive the trip. The Cherokee people were divided on the U.S. government's determination to get their hands on their territory. Some wanted to stay and fight while others wanted to leave in exchange for money and other

beneficial items. To the federal government, the treaty was set in stone, and yet many of the Cherokee people felt betrayed. By 1838, only 2,000 Cherokee had left their homes in Georgia for the new Indian territory. President Martin Van Buren sent General Winfield Scott and 7,000 soldiers to expedite the removal process, (Perdue "Legacy of Indian Removal"). Scott and his troops constrained the Cherokee into stockades at bayonet point while whites plundered their homes and took their belongings. Then, they marched the Indians toward the new territory. Whooping cough, typhus, dysentery, cholera and starvation were a number of obstacles in the way as historians estimate that over 5,000 Cherokee died during the journey, (Perdue "Legacy of Indian Removal").

According to the ICC definition, there are reasons to believe that Indian Removal Act would be under consideration of a genocide. Starting with the first part of the definition, killing members of the group, the US troops didn't exactly kill them at first. They were only supposed to force the Natives to migrate westward and not

annihilate them as a whole. (Coates *Trail of Tears*). However, the Native Americans became resistant as they didn't want to give up the lands that their ancestors have lived on and flourished for years. Because of this, the US government had no other choice but to infiltrate their homelands and forcibly move them to the new territory, and anyone who resisted would be killed.

Other parts of the ICC definition were also violated in the 1830s, thus making a strong case to apply the term genocide to the anchors of the U.S. These are parts b and c of Article 6, which is causing severe bodily harm to members of the group and deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part (ICC 1998). Forcing the Native Americans to move westward appeared to be a fairly easy task for the US government to accomplish. Unfortunately, moving about 46,000 Natives across 2,200 acres of land would not come without its hardships. Diseases would plague the Natives whom were forced on a journey without medicine, food, water, and

other essentials to continue life. Diseases such as whooping cough, typhus, dysentery, cholera, and terrible and life threatening illnesses, not to mention the lack of food needed to continue to on the journey. Starvation was a very real threat that claimed many lives during the migration. The US government put the Natives in this position in the first place, forcing them of out of their homes and creating an environment that would eventually lead to thousands of casualties. They constantly diminished the conditions necessary to survive the vigorous journey.

We can compare the Indian Removal Act to many other world massacres that could be considered a genocide. The most common and most known genocide that can be put into comparison is the Holocaust. There is obvious comparison in how the US government and the German government handled the deportation of the respective group they wanted to be rid of. The US government was forcibly moving the Native Americans out of the land they sought and intended to colonize. The

Germans, at first, wanted to be rid of the Jewish population as a whole, and so they envisioned plans to deport them out of Germany to other parts of Europe. In both cases, America and Germany had struggles ousting the groups from their societies. There is also a comparison to be made about the overwhelming population of each group. At both respective time periods, both the Native American population and the Jewish population were booming in numbers. Both the US and German governments didn't know how to handle the influx of population, so they thought the best way to eliminate them was to extract them from the lands they were already occupying. The Indian Removal Act of 1830 is an event in US history that is often overlooked because it occurred so long ago. This was one of the final steps in diminishing the population of the Native Americans. Due the cataclysmic events that transpired during the time period, coupled with the fact that in many similar events of killings in history also had very similar outcomes, the Indian Removal Act should considered genocide.

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Woodgrain and Bananas by Haley Sklans, 2018

In Woodgrain and Bananas, I explored bright colors and playful shapes that speak to me. I created this painting using a combination of stencils I made and drawing by hand. My personal style includes using eccentric, whimsical energy and luminous colors. I enjoy the ferocious energy this painting captured.

- Haley Sklans

Zoroastrianism: The Faith of Ancient Persia.[65]

Sitwat Syed

Often referred to as the ancient world's most prominent empire, The Achaemenid Persian empire extended its boundaries from Anatolia and Egypt through Mesopotamia and modern-day Pakistan. Lasting around 200 years, the empire thrived under its monarchs from 550 B.C till 330B.C (Department of Ancient Near Eastern Art). Not only did it manage to capture Alexander the Great's attention in 330 B.C, but historians today are still in awe of this ancient super nation. From its literature to its inhabitants, war tactics to government regulations, Persian Empire still manages to astonish history enthusiasts. Along with its influence in modern day art, poetry, and government, the overpowering religion set by Zarathustra, an ancient Iranian prophet, has also left its trace on many modern-day religions and customs today.

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[65] Ms. Syed worked on an earlier version of this paper on HIS 131: World History I with Professor Girard. Ms. Syed completed a final version of the paper in collaboration with Professor Espinoza.

Today, Persia is known as Iran, an Islamic Republic. But, Islam isn't the only monotheistic religion Persia has seen. During the epitome of its monarchical days, the empire was covered with Zoroastrianism. A religion brought forward by Prophet Zoroaster - his Greek name, or Zarathustra as he is referred to by his followers today. Zarathustra, in ancient Iranian, translates to "yellow camel." Animals such as camels and horses were essential and even sacred to the people of Zarathustra's age, and thus a name containing one of these animals marked a person as important (Ushtavaiti). Zarathustra was born during the rise of the Bronze Age culture and like his ancestors took on a polytheistic religion that very closely resembles modern day Hinduism (BBC). Although, Islam is considered the main reason Zoroastrianism lost its followers, it deems many similarities with Islam. Not only was it a monotheistic religion but the manner in which Prophet Zarathustra was enlightened resembles the way many prophets of Islam including Muhammed were enlightened. Though little is

documented about the ancient world's most prominent religion, it is said that around the age of 30 Zarathustra, an average family man, had a divine dream (Smart). His dream, as noted in books, was something along the lines of an angel named "Vohu Manah ("Good Thought"), taking him to the great spirit Ahura-Mazda ("The Wise Lord"), Zarathustra's name for God,"(Smart). This lays very close to the famous encounter Prophet Muhammad had when he visited the seventh sky to meet God (Allah). Once revelations had been made to Zarathustra, like all prophets, he faced extreme anger from the opposition as he tried to preach his new ideology. The polytheistic Persians, whose religion most closely resembles that of the Vedic people of India (Smart), continued to revolt against Zarathustra and his lord Ahura Mazda until the conversion of King Vishtaspa, of the Kayanian Dynasty. As modern-day Zoroastrian legend goes, Zarathustra and his few followers were chased out of their homes by the opposition and found refuge in Vishtaspa's castle.

The conversion of a king and his kingdom were more than enough to cause the new religion to spread through the region like wildfire. Due to its simple teachings and acceptance for all it managed to gain quick popularity amongst the average man. And it wasn't until the siege of Iran by Muslims that the pillars of Zoroastrian truly shattered.

Zoroastrianism Today

Today, the dictionary definition of Zoroastrianism is "a monotheistic pre-Islamic religion of ancient Persia founded by Zoroaster in the 6th century BC" (Dictionary). Although, the spread of Islam under its first caliph, Abu Bakr, is considered to be the cause of Zoroastrianism's downfall, it isn't the only factor. Before the Arab conquest, Alexander the Great had shaken the roots of this revolutionary religion. When Darius III was defeated not only was his throne over turned, but most of the literature was destroyed as well. What did manage to survive were the Gathas, which ironically consisted of the core of the

religion (BBC). In his lifetime after enlightenment, Zarathustra proclaimed that there were four main stages in the religion's history: the early faith as led by Zarathustra himself, the religion of the Persian Empire under Darius I (who ruled 521–486 BCE) and his Achaemenid successors, its renewal under the Arsacid (250 BCE–226 CE) and Sassanid (226–641) dynasties, and the late period: when the religion was swamped by Islam but continued as the faith of a minority, some of whom settled in India and are known as Parsis.

Once Muslims took over Persia, Zoroastrians - as they were the only other major religion in the area - were forced to convert. Unlike folklore, people were not threatened by sword to convert, but instead many societal pressures like higher taxes were bestowed upon them, leaving them with no choice but to convert. To gain freedom to practice their religion freely, heavy populations of Zoroastrians emigrated out of Iran to seek refuge out East in India. Zarathustra's religion first reached the gulf of Gujrat and from there spread slowly

across the region. Unfortunately, in the 19th century the religion was forced to urbanize their ideas in order to coexist with the Christian Missionaries. In modern day India and Pakistan Zoroastrians continue to exist today under the name of Parsis.

In fact, many traditions and cultures of Zoroastrian are still practiced just as dutifully. Not only do the Parsis in South Asia still follow the teachings of Zarathustra, but his ideologies are deeply engraved in modern Iranian culture as well. For instance, the celebration of Jamshedi or Nowruz occurs on the Spring equinox as the start to the new year. In Islamic Iran till this day Nowruz is celebrated by Parsis and Muslims alike by having big feasts and lighting fires. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier Zarathustra's biggest teaching was respect to the four elements: fire, water, earth, air. Unlike Muslims and Hindus, modern day Parsis do not believe in burying or cremating the dead as that pollutes the four elements. Instead, in modern day India, Pakistan, and Iran, "Towers of Silence" have been set up by Parsis where the openly

hang their dead to be devoured by vultures and other birds (BBC). The most famous Tower of Silence lies in Mumbai, India set within fifty-seven acres of forest gardens (BBC). As it is seen in cultures across the world, at a certain age. children go through a ceremony that brings them closer to God. From baptism to a Muslim child's first fast, Zoroastrianism has similar traditions for its youth. At the age of 7, in the modified version of Zoroastrianism, children are given a special shirt and belt (BBC). The belt is meant to be tied around their waist thrice in hopes to remind them of the three messages that make up the vision of Zoroastrianism: "Good Thoughts, Good Words, Good Deeds" (BBC).

Undoubtedly, Zoroastrianism has lost its distinction in the folds of history, but the lack of global presence has not hindered the following of Zoroastrianism. According to an article form the TIMES tittles, "The Last of the Zoroastrians" there are approximately 190,000 Zoroaster worldwide today and majority of them are born into the religion.

Zoroastrianism: A personal story

To learn more about contemporary Zoroastrian values and worshippers, I reached out to prominent Zoroaster organizations in the Northeast. Through the Zoroastrian Association of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, a religious organization that seeks to promote the study, understanding and practice of the Zoroastrian, I was connected to Mr. Cawas Desai. Here is the transcript of my conversation with Mr. Desai, a Zoroaster and New Jersey resident.

- *Could you explain how did you come to embrace Zoroastrianism?*

  I was born into the Zoroastrian religion, both my parents being Zoroastrian.

- *What do you think is the most fundamental aspect(s) of your religion?*

  To lead a righteous life. One of the three basic prayers translate as "Happiness unto him who does righteousness for the sake of righteousness".

- *What are the key figures and scriptures in Zoroastrianism?*

  There are too many key figures to recount! One of the best known is Cyrus the Great, who ruled Persia in 558 BC, freed the Jews from the Babylonian Captivity and gave the world the first Charter of Human rights. Cyrus is the only non-Jew to be named in the Old Testament as "Anointed of the Lord".

  The main scripture is the "Avesta" named after the language in which it was written.

- *What are some symbols that are associated with the faith? What do they symbolize?*

  The main symbol if Fire. It represents divine energy, the energy which created the universe.

- *Can you tell me about some of the rituals/traditions of your religion and explain why they are important?*

  The core ritual is the "Yasna" ceremony, without which no other ritual can be performed. It is the ceremony for induction into the Zoroastrian priesthood.

The Navjote ceremony is performed to initiate a child into the religion.

- *Can you describe a typical religious gathering? What is the goal of the gathering?*

Zoroastrianism is a highly personal religion. It has no diktats as to what one can and cannot do. Therefore, one can go to a temple and pray whenever one desires or pray at home and not go to a temple! However, there is a tradition to have six annual feasts, which represent the six creations of God. These seasonal festivals are open to the entire community and are sponsored by one or a group of individuals. In olden times the feast was always given by the king and everyone in the kingdom was fed.

- *Most religious practices change over time. Is there a contemporary version of Zoroastrianism that differs from ancient form of Zoroastrianism?*

Yes, there are contemporary movements to change certain religious practices, mainly pertaining to inter-marriage.

- *Issues such as premarital sex and homosexuality are a taboo in many mainstream religions. From a religious aspect, what are your views on such topics?*

The religion considers these as sinful acts. My own views are that one is free to do whatsoever one wants, the acts are between that person and his/her God and that the person will eventually get his/her judgement in the after-life.

- *Is there a specific concept of marriage and family within Zoroastrianism?*

Yes. In the "Gatha's" (The Songs of Zarathushtra, which embody the core beliefs of the religion and some of which are in the form of question and answer), God answers Zarathushtra that he prefers the married man to

one who is unmarried and prefers the family with children to the one which has none!

- *How does Zoroastrianism view non-believers? Is there a concept of heaven, hell, and afterlife?*

In the Gathas, Zarathushtra says that there will be five religions after him and that people will be born in one or the other as God wills. Therefore, every religion is to be respected.

Zoroastrianism is the first and oldest religion to have the concept of heaven and hell. After death, the soul will be judged according to the actions of the person during his/her lifetime, and thereafter assigned to heaven, hell or purgatory.

- *What do you think are some of the major misconceptions' outsiders have of your religion?*

There are too many to enumerate, because very few outsiders know of or anything about Zoroastrianism! The main one is that Zoroastrians are "fire-worshipers". This is not the case. Fire represents the symbolic presence of God. We worship God not fire.

- *As a practicing Zoroastrian what is a quote or mantra you live by?*

The "Ashem Vohu" prayer which translates "Happiness unto him who does righteousness for the sake of righteousness".

Although Parsis today are a very prominent minority in South Asia, at a point in history its followers soared through the extents of Himalayas to the bazaars of Anatolia. Through textbook readings, it is safe to claim that the faith that once practiced heavily throughout the South Asian Subcontinent has been narrowed down to much smaller concentrations throughout the world. Moreover, after speaking with Cawas Desai it is clear their strength is not in numbers, but in its principles.

Zoroasters today are steadfast when it comes to their faith and traditions. Notably, with Zarathustra's teachings and values resembling very close to those of both Hinduism and Islam, hints of Zoroastrianism can be seen in many cultures today. From cultural traditions in

Muslim Iran to ceremonies dedicated to fire in Hinduism, and the idea of one god like that of Islam, Zoroastrianism remains a very interesting contribution of the Ancient World.

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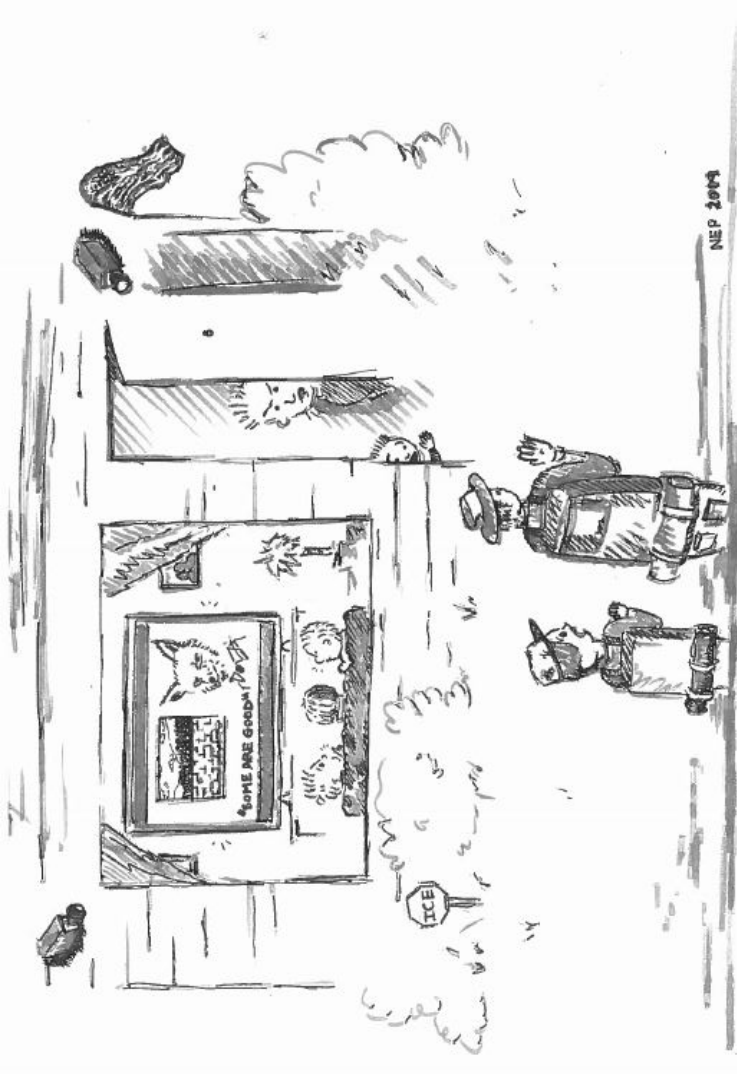
Some are Good by Michael Nepomich, 2019

Michael Nepomich, an immigrant from Moldova and a local artist, created this cartoon as a means to foster a humane understanding of immigration.
www.onlynep.com

Transnational Voices- The Beauty of the United States

The English Language Learners (ELLS) at MCC have come to the United States from many countries, with different native languages, and with various cultural and educational backgrounds. Yet, all of these men and women share the drive to learn English and to obtain new opportunities in their adopted country.

In many cases, ELLs have already earned one or more educational degrees in their home countries; here, they must adjust to an entirely new educational system as well as a new language. This process of adjustment can be immensely frustrating, but there are people and experiences along the way who welcome and show kindness.

I am so excited to introduce the work of our ELL students, so they can share their experiences with the wider college community and to express themselves in English in publication. They are an integral part of MCC, and their voices add a unique and vital perspective to our campus.

I will never cease to be awed by these students' drive, efforts, and accomplishments.

Elizabeth Shaheen

Alesar Harfoush

Moving from Syria to the United States was not easy for me, especially because I moved here when I was seventeen years old, at that age you cannot change yourself or adjust to the new cultures. So, it is challenging to get used to living somewhere new.

My older sister and I lived in Syria alone for more than two years. Nothing was challenging more than that where you must take care of everything and go to school. That period changed me. It tough me how to rely on myself and get everything done by myself. I would say it prepared me to be ready to explore the new culture and challenges here.

My family was already here waiting for my sister and me. That was a huge help to come here and be able to go home and be with your family. The first two months were the hardest. I started going to high school two weeks after I got here. My English was not very good; I was always scared to go to high school but, it did not stop me.

At home my dad speaks English all the time, his English is excellent because he had lived here for more than eighteen years. My mother used to be an English teacher back home, so she was always helping me with grammar, and my sister helped me a lot with my homework because it was hard for me to understand all the questions. During that time in high school, I meet Mariam who became my best friend. We started talking almost every day she understood how I felt about being new here. I used to be shy about my English since I did not know how to speak that much, so I used to be quiet most of the time until I started talking to her I felt more comfortable because she corrected me whenever I made a mistake. She made me feel welcome and happy to be in the United States and school.

My dad went through the same situation when he got her eighteen years ago, so he knew what would help. He encouraged me to start working which was so weird and surprising to me because in my country you should not work if you are young or people will think less of you.

I started working two days a week at a clothes store it was not a good experience for me because I did not know a lot of English and the people who worked there were not very nice it kept bothering me until I decided to quit. It was impossible to get used to their behaviors. It was a very hard time for me to be home all the time. A month later I found another job, it was during summer time, so I worked almost every day a week. After six months of being there, I left the country to go back to Syria. I stayed there for four months, everyone at work kept in touch they used to call me to tell me that they are waiting for me to come back. This place made me feel like I have a second family. I missed work as much as I missed my family while being away. When I came back I went back to my job after a few days; everyone welcomed me back my work friends were waiting for me. Everyone was very happy to see me. A few months later I got promoted to a supervisor. I still work there my job made me love being here, the people I met there helped me throughout

everything I made many friends whom I love, and now they are a part of my family now.

Everything can be hard at the beginning. Moving to another country is like being born again but when you have the right people around you who make you feel like you are home and you are welcome in the country makes everything easier. My family, my best friend, and my Job made this change a positive change for me. Now when I think of home, I think of here. Living here for three years was enough to make it feel like home.

Karen Saenz

"United States is a place to transform yourself into the person you want to be."

The beauty of United States is based on welcoming and transforming people who are looking for a change in their lives. That's what I learned when I came to this country, and I started to understand how it works. The United States is a dream for people who are looking for big opportunities and a change in their economic welfare. I came for another reason, which is based on the thoughts of my father about my education and my life. For a long time, the United States was a dream for me; it was my dream place to study and prepare myself in education. My father and my mom didn't agree about it, so I started to grow up and I felt more comfortable in my country, Colombia. I was building my own life, I had friends and I almost started my career there. I was in a moment where I wanted to stay there, because I got everything that I wanted without complication or work. Nonetheless, my

life started to change. I have always heard that the life is in a constant changing, everything can happens and surprise us with a purpose. I understood it when my parents decided to broke up their 20 years marriage. They took the decision about my sister and me to come to the United States and live with my father, who has lived in this country for many years. At that moment, I didn't want to change my lifestyle because I was so happy in Colombia and I didn't have obstacles there. However, I knew it was the best option for me, because my father is the only person who can help me to afford my education. Finally, I'm living in the United States with my father and sister. I came on January 2018, and my life has been transforming every day. In the first moment, I didn't want to accept my new life. I felt discomfort and nostalgia, I was clinging to my life in Colombia, where I had my boyfriend, friends, and everything that I wanted (money, no responsibilities, and an easy life). After, I started to study and work. Also, I left all my connections of Colombia in the past. I left in Colombia my kid personality and I started to think like a

woman. As a result, I started to see the beauty of United States. I began to see the reality of the world because this country showed me a place where people have to work to get what they need and want. Therefore, I became an independent and responsible person, the opposite of the person that I was in my country. I'm working to improve every step that I give to my future and the person I want to be some day. I think, the plans that God has for us are always perfect not matter the circumstances before the success. I was in Colombia living a fairytale life, where I couldn't see reality because I always had everything in my hands with just by saying "I want..." Then I came to the United States, when I started to see the reality of the world because I started to work for the things that I aspirate. I am focusing my mind in learn from every situation, and I am improving myself to be the person I dream based on these things. I am taking advantage of the opportunity that my parents are giving to me because I am converting to a better person that is working for her own things. The purpose that God has for me is indefinite for this moment,

but I know that he has a big and perfect plan for my life in a future that is going to make me be thankful with my parents and the opportunities this country gave me.

Beini Xu

The typhoon was approaching. It seemed like nobody was worried about that typhoon alarm in this karaoke room. My friends were still singing and chatting. They were really enjoying this moment, but after a whole day working at school, I was extremely tired. I felt like a limp dishrag. I didn't want to bother them, so I left without saying goodbye with one of my friends. It was 3 am in the morning. I was driving my friend home. The night of the typhoon was extraordinary quiet. I could even hear the wind outside the window. No one was on the street. It became daunting. Although my friend kept talking about how amazing tonight was, I still felt so sleepy. Then the most terrible thing of my life happened.

"Oh my god! Stop!" I was woken up consciously by my friend's screaming. I saw a wall in front of me. I slammed on my breaks, but it was too late. My car already rushed at the opposite sidewalk. Then we impacted the wall and crushed it. The airbags popped up, I smelt

something burning. My mind was blank, I could not think about anything at this moment. The only thing I knew was the car might blow up soon. After checking out my friend didn't get hurt, I told her get out of the car immediately.

When we got out of the car, we were shocked. All the front of the car was smashed, and the right side doors were sunk. I just felt so hurt on my left arm. It burned a big wound and kept bleeding. I never thought this kind of horrible accident would happen in my life. No one was here and the wind was getting stronger. We stood by the road and I could not stop crying. Suddenly, sirens were heard throughout the street from a far distance.

Three police cars stopped in front of us. When they got out of the cars, they checked out whether we were okay or not. They might not believe how could I drive across 6 lanes to the opposite street. Then they took a lot of different tests on me to make sure that I was not drunk. Sirens were full of the whole street, but it was so jarring in such a quiet night. It started raining and became heavily, just like my current mood.

Fire engines and ambulances also came here. They asked us to sit down under the roof and started checking my injured arm. They applied a lot of medicine to me, then bandaged up my wound. After all the inquiries done, the police called the tow company to tow my car away. It was 4 am in the morning. We needed someone to drive us home. We called a lot of friends, but no one answered. We stood on the street and drenched in the storm. We have been waiting on the street about an hour but still no one could come. The police officer persist waiting for us because he said it is too dangerous to left two girls on the street at that time since he could not give us a ride. I was shocked by his kindness behavior because I thought all the police are hardhearted before I came to the United Stated.

Finally, there was an old lady pass by us. She stopped her car and asked us what was happening. After I explained to her, she wanted to help us. She drove us to a nearby MacDonald and brought two cups of hot chocolate for us. When she drove us to home, she talked a lot with

us. When we got home, it was already 6 am. This whole night was like a nightmare to me. I swear that was the most horrible day of my previous 20 years, I have never felt so scared and helpless in my life. Fortunately, I met a nice police officer and a virtuous lady in this night. They gave me hope and warmth. Perhaps the action of the police officer and the old lady is a simplest action to other people; however, it was the most beautiful and warmest moment to me in my life. Not worth mentioning the icing on the cake, but for help in the snow.

Starwars Diptych by Marisa Marino, 2018

Canvas does not have to be used for paint alone. For *Starwars Diptych*, a diptych or two sided image, I used fabric secured with acrylic gel and metallic thread, in addition to acrylic, to add more dimension to the image. The difference between light reflecting off of paint vs fabric makes a big aesthetic difference.

-   Marisa Marino

Winners of 2018-2019 Essay Contest.

Making Sense of ourselves:
Have we lost our path or are we intrinsically evil?

For this year's essay contest, participants addressed a fundamental human contradiction. While we preach values such as love, solidarity and empathy, our actions reflect the complete opposite.

Michael Daniewicz and Mariel Ynoa offered the approaches to this contradiction. Enjoy reading.

Michael Daniewicz

Humans are complex organisms. We are able to write religious texts and laws based around the ideas of peace and equality but rarely do we follow them in their entirety. These texts are meant to be guidelines on how we are supposed to live, but somehow, we struggle to follow. If we can write it, we should be able to follow it, but it seems like we cannot. One could say, we lost our way. That at one point, we truly believed in what we wrote, and along the way, it had become undone and misinterpreted. However, that is not true. Bigotry, judgment, and persecution have always been a part of human society, even in those texts. If that's the case, humans must be intrinsically evil, and deep down everyone feels these dark things. That's also not entirely true. Humans can do well and treat people like equals; that's the complexity of humanity. There is one intrinsic thing all humans have: weakness. Everyone is intrinsically weak to something.

The seven deadly sins are all based on weaknesses that humans feel. The sins of lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy and pride are inside all of us. Maybe not on the same level of others, but they are there. We all give into them at times. They are so rooted in human emotions and connections. Lust is the longing for someone we are not in with. A glimpse at someone we find attractive could be seen as that sin. While that may not seem like a massive deal, especially not in today's world, it was long ago. That is a sin of lust. Adultery follows the sin of lust. Cheating has sadly developed into a commonality. It is wrong to cheat, but does that make us evil? Look at gluttony, the act of over-consumption. It may be wasteful, but is it evil? Greed comes hand in hand with gluttony. One could call it gluttony's uglier sister. Whereas gluttony is for food and drink, greed comes from the material. People are greedy for things like money or expensive items. In a capitalistic economy, that keeps the economy growing: increasing money into people's pockets to purchase expensive items. If an economy needs that, does that make everyone who

lives in that country evil? Take sloth, laziness. This is nothing more than just relaxing a little too much. Can that be on that same scale as a murderer? Or even an adulterer? A person who loses their cool and yells in anger: Is that person giving into wrath? Is exploding with emotion so wrong? What about envy, another one similar to greed? Rather than just being for the material, it's for anything that another person owns. Who would not want the luxurious car that the person next door owns? Does that make someone evil? What about pride in one's self? Too much can be self-destructive, but is the same type of evil that a corrupt politician uses as a weapon? No, these sins are based on human weakness. No one is infallible, and these sins prove that.

One fatal flaw all humans have is the need for ideals. We need something to look up to. Sometimes we use religious figures; other times we look at the people who shaped the lives around us. These people tend to be the ones who have impacted history. These figures, however, larger than life or not, are still human. Take, for

instance, presidents of the United States. These men have shaped the nation in many ways. While they are put in the top position in the country, they are still only human, and they have weaknesses inside of them. Andrew Jackson, the seventh president, could be seen as the literal embodiment of wrath. He was notorious for lashing out at people, and he had participated in numerous duels, and many of them ended in the deaths of his challengers. Not only that, he was outlandishly racist against Native Americans. His Trail of Tears that he forced upon them caused them to be pushed further in the country. A lot of Jackson's behavior can be traced back to his childhood. When he was a child, he lost his mother, as well as both of his brothers, to the British. Also during his second run at the presidency, his wife had died, and arguably it was because of the stress and scrutiny that she was given. With that in mind, is it that out there to see why Andrew Jackson was so angry? A president who is looked on more positively would be Theodore Roosevelt. Roosevelt had a lot of strengths as president. He was the towering

embodiment of masculinity; he was an outdoorsman with the presence of being large and in charge. There was a desire for strength that led to his big stick approach to leading the country and into an imperialistic state. However, this was due to a childhood of weakness. Roosevelt grew up as a sickly boy. His growth and wanting to be strong derived from that. This drive for strength made Roosevelt an effective president but, it did cause a lot of destruction in the long run. Humanity looks at leaders for strength. However, it does not like to acknowledge that our leaders are just as human as everyone else.

If everyone can give into temptation brought on by the seven deadly sins, even those who seem to be larger than life and above it all, where does that leave the people who society has considered evil—people such as serial killers who have taken the lives of so many without justification? They are not good people, however, does that mean they are intrinsically evil? That they were born evil and were destined to kill innocent people? Notorious

serial killer Jeffery Dahmer was one of the most disturbed humans ever. On the surface, Dahmer was a ruthless man who had butchered 15 men and would do horrible things after the murder such as cannibalism. If someone called him evil, they would not be wrong to do so, but was Dahmer born evil? Many factors contributed to Dahmer's killings and actions. He suffered from an anti-social personality disorder, something out of his control. On top of that, Dahmer's home life was not easy, his mother and father had a rough marriage that would lead to their divorce. He also developed an alcohol addiction in high school which further pushed him off the deep end. Along with that messing with his mind, there is evidence to support that he was a repressed homosexual. Repression can lead to wrath. His weakness came from his inability to healthily express himself. This could similarly be compared to the leaders of criminal organizations. These organizations need a strong figurehead, and it leads to numerous unnecessary murders to preserve this strength. But this falls back on the fact that they are weak to fear.

Fear of murder, fear of a coup, and fear of the law. These weaknesses push these people to destroy.

Humanity is morally complex with guidelines as to what would be deemed as good and evil. There are rules, however, and rules can be broken. Weakness leads to these rules being able to be broken. That does not make those who break them intrinsically evil. No one is born evil, as in those moments, they have no world concept. Basic instinct is all newborns would know. What they will be is weak, and how they will react to certain situations as they develop into adults dictates who they will become.

Mariel Ynoa

Who are we to point fingers to humans and say whether they are evil or not? That's not the right way to express, or describe, what's happening today in our society. In order for us to figure out what's happening to humanity today, we must know what is going on in people's lives. There's not a person who is born intrinsically evil. The actual reason why children, or even adults, become evil depends on people's nurtured development.

According to developmental psychology, we are born blank slates ("tabula rasa"). This means that our environment completely dictates who we are. It all depends how children are raised, their surroundings, the education they are given, etc. Society has stereotypes that shape the type of people we are. However, those stereotypes do not take into account what is going on in our minds and souls. Today, people don't even bother taking a few minutes out of their lives to ask their close ones how they feel. For example, in real life settings, there are children or young people that get bullied on a daily

basis. I used to stay silent about this topic, a topic which has impacted my life.

Similarly to many kids, bullying played a part of my life back in middle school and high school. For almost four years, I was in a place in my life where I did not love myself. I was going through a mental, emotional and physical breakdown. When I was younger, I was motivated to become a successful adult. In high school, perhaps that motivation went away. I had little motivation, encouragement, or dedication, and no self-love. I was 12 years old and wearing makeup to cover my "imperfections." I was at a point in my life where I wanted to commit suicide for being bullied. It will take a whole book to write my entire story.

I was a little girl surrounded with so much love, education, and financial support. But, when I got into high school, my life was miserable, and I had no reasons to keep living. One of my current teachers got bullied back in high school for being fat. He loved playing soccer, and

according to him, his teammates always picked on him and called him names.

It's been decades since the professor graduated high school, and he told me that after what happened to him, he would never be fat again, and still is planning to stay that way. The professor is in his late 70s, and he still runs 3 miles during his exercise routine to stay fit. This professor and I have two things in common: one, we were both bullied in high school, and two, as much as we try to get over and forget about the past, it is still inside of us.

That insecurity, I am sure, thousands of people are still living with today. We can try to forget about the past, but it is difficult forgetting what hurt us and destroyed our way of living, and viewing life how once it was like a garden full of beautiful roses. These are reasons on how we can lose our path. Our path to love one another, to continue living, to become successful, but most importantly our path to tolerate serious topics that make us get lost in our path of love and peace.

I have noticed humans have not learned one thing: to love each other no matter our race, color, religion, sex, or color. Humans enjoy judging without knowing what people are going through in silence.

My dream one day is to tell the world the more we love, tolerate, and accept each other, the more society will start accepting one another. Humans are losing their path through hate, neglect, rejection, and acceptance, when in reality, it should be the opposite. If people start doing the opposite, the world will be more at peace and love, and there will be less hate and violence.

Drawing of a Collage by Haley Sklans, 2018

Drawing of a Collage was based on a collage I created. In this adaptation, I explored using a different color palette and redesigned the geometric element I used. I enjoy using both fluid and geometric shapes when drawing. Reworking and redesigning concepts from a finished work I created became a large part of my process this year.

- Haley Sklans

Best Papers of the Year

'It's in the Game': The Oppression of Women in Video Games, an Analysis of the Oppressive Nature of Harassment and Sexism in Modern Gaming Culture. [66]

Alexander Lewis

Even though there have been several recent video games like "Horizon: Zero Dawn" and "Uncharted: The Lost Legacy" that feature strong female leads, current video game culture is still characterized by its oppressive nature towards women, in the form of harassment and sexism, typically seen in how women are represented in games and how they are bullied and harassed online.

To truly analyze this phenomenon, we first need to define what oppression is. To oppress is to crush or burden by abuse of power or authority; to burden spiritually or mentally; or to weigh heavily upon. But the archaic form of oppression, to suppress, is closer to the context we need here, meaning to restrain from a usual

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[66] Mr. Lewis presented a version of this paper at the 2018 Philosophy Symposium at Middlesex County College. Mr. Lewis worked on this paper in collaboration with Professor Rotolo.

course or action or to inhibit the growth or development of (Merriam-Webster) (Frye, 2013). Sexism is defined as prejudice or discrimination based on sex and harassment defined as to harass: exhaust, fatigue; to worry and impede by repeated raids (Merriam-Webster).

So, how can harassment and sexism be oppressing women when almost 48% of women play video games (Duggan)? They are both part of a larger system of oppressive forces which restricts and limits the choices women have. This system can only change through action, and in order to truly understand it, we must examine each part separately to see how it comes together to form the cage that holds women back, starting with the way women are represented in video games (Frye, 2013).

In several studies spanning from the late 90s to 2010, 28% of the time women characters in games were depicted as sex objects and 21% of the time violence was directed at women. Additionally, female characters were absent in 41% of games. Two follow-up studies found that games also have a negative influence on attitudes towards

women (Beck). A more recent study found that over 80% of women in games are depicted as either sexualized, scantily-clad, or a vision of a beauty, and more than 25% are depicted as all three at once (Dill and Thill). We can see example of this in how many fighting games have oversexualized physics for female avatars or by looking at the types of revealing armors available for female characters in role playing games. Exposure to these oversexualized representations of women causes men to be more tolerant of sexual harassment (Dill, Brown and Collins).

One also does not need to look far to see that this aspect of gaming culture has been promoted by the biggest names in the industry for a long time, specifically in the example of the E3 boothbabes – scantily clad women there to draw attention to the game booths at the yearly Electronic Entertainment Expo. After a 2006 decision by the Entertainment Software Association to fine any exhibitor $5,000 if a booth babe is semi-clad, booth babes still exist and continue promoting the treatment of

women as sex objects because to big publishers, $5,000 is pocket change compared to journalistic exposure for their game (Terdiman). When they are not depicted as sexual objects, women are typically portrayed as damsels in distress, but this trend has been decreasing in recent years.

Yet despite the positive strides video games have been making in depicting women, like Aloi in "Horizon: Zero Dawn," women are still represented in very few games compared to men. Out of all the games featured in E3 2015, 9% of games featured an exclusively female protagonist, compared to 32% for men (Sarkeesian). But in E3 2016, only 3% of games featured an exclusively female protagonist, compared to 41% for men (Petit); this grew to 7% and 26% in 2017, respectively (Petit, Gender Breakdown of Games Featured at E3 2017).

Some may say argue that the portrayal of women does not truly oppress them. How does it limit their choices or inhibit their growth in video game culture? The negative portrayal of women reinforces negative attitudes towards women, leading to general and sexual

harassment. In one study, women's experience with online sexual harassment resulted in decreased participation in gaming. Women used several strategies like gender masking to combat sexual harassment. But because of gender masking, women may be dissuaded from participating in cooperative games that require more vocal communication. This also reinforces the perception that women are a minority in the gamer population (Fox and Tang). Several other strategies do not work: speaking up or defending oneself results in additional harassment; being more skilled at the game encourages women to quit if they cannot keep up with the game's skill ceiling; and adopting more aggressive personality traits gets women accused of being emotional. These strategies are themselves part of the oppressive system, forcing women to constantly monitor their behavior and putting the fault of online sexual harassment on the victim. This limits women's option to the only truly viable option – leaving the online place (Cote). Additionally, the anonymity of online video games makes sexual harassment relatively

consequence-free (Fox and Tang), thereby the repeated sexual harassment creates a hostile exclusive environment that limits or restrains women from being active members of online gaming communities.

Further analysis of what causes some male gamers to sexually harass women reveals several similarities with the place women are afforded in society; their function defined as subservient to men, depicted as weak, and only pushed into 'pink-collar' occupations. Video games are typically perceived as a male-dominated arena, and any intrusion by women, who are considered outsiders in this area, may be perceived as an attack on the masculinity norms of the environment.

From this view, we can see that women are defined as the other, used by men as a way to define themselves and in this way, pit themselves against them – reinforcing their masculinity, power and showing a lack of inclusion in gaming culture. Women are picked on by male gamers for being women, not for any other characteristic, unlike the way men are discriminated against based on their

race, ethnic background or other characteristic (Beauvoir, 2015).

Additionally, the violent nature of some video games reinforces hypermasculinity which promotes greater sexism towards women (Fox and Tang, Sexism in online video games: The role of conformity to masculine norms and social dominance orientation). This hypermasculinity can be seen in the depiction of male and female adventure game protagonists, specifically, Nathan Drake and Lara Croft. Both star in games of a similar type, yet in the newest iteration of Tomb Raider, Croft, while fully clothed, is depicted as weak, and feeble, dying quickly from only a few bullets. Drake, on the other hand, sometimes seems like a bullet sponge. And even though Croft becomes stronger, comparably, even at her strongest, she is never as strong as Drake.

Gaming has historically been a patriarchal, male-dominated domain, similarly to how technology is still linked with masculinity, exemplified in Silicon Valley's ongoing diversity problems. This sociological perception

discourages women from pursuing careers in tech as well as video game development and currently only 21% of video game developers are female (Weststar, O'Meara and Legault).

This is an industry-wide problem, and current trends show that there is much resistance to change, embodied in the 2014 #GamerGate controversy. #Gamergate masquerades as promoting ethics in gaming journalism but promotes misogyny and uses harassment, bullying, and threats to silence their opposition, mainly toward women who work in the gaming industry. Gamergate began when game developer Zoe Quinn was falsely accused of trading sex for a positive review of her game, "Depression Quest," but even after the accusation was proven to be false, Quinn was harassed with death threats, rape threats and had her personal information released online (Freed).

Gamergate represents a resistance to the diversification of the "masculine" gaming industry, against women, who they see as "outsiders." But despite

being labeled as outsiders and treated like pariahs, women gamers describe their identities and gaming experiences as vibrant and intricate (Easpaig), yet because of harassment, most are pushed into becoming the silent majority, reinforcing the stereotype that gaming is not for women.

I deliberated whether or not to talk about this subject for a long time, especially since even academics doing research on the video game industry had been targeted and harassed by Gamergaters for spreading so-called 'feminist' propaganda (Freed). But to be silent is to do nothing, and even Gamergaters themselves help expose these issues by keeping a focus on them in the media.

Games themselves are not the only issue; the publishers and developers of video games also contribute to this culture. At 2017's E3, there were only 6 women speakers in all the large publisher press conferences (Webber and Brewster). Today, more women than ever are entering video game development, even though

women are typically socialized away from STEM subjects. But more than that, many female game developers are either put off joining or leave the gaming industry due to general or sexual harassment in the workplace. The type of values ingrained in game development also typically put off women, specifically 'crunch time.' This time comes at the end of a game's development cycle, when employees are expected to put from 50-80 hours a week, often sacrificing personal or family time and their weekends (Allan). Since women typically pursue careers that are family-friendly and offer flexibility, 'crunch' time could dissuade many women from pursuing game development (Council of Economic Advisers 6).

So, how can we break out of these norms or try to change them? As philosophers, we should put a bigger emphasis on feminist philosophy as opposed to the more traditional, more 'masculine' western philosophy. Feminist ethics place a bigger emphasis on personal relationships and have a greater respect for emotions. Additionally, feminist ethics reject the principles of

impartiality and do not try to reduce all of morality to a single all-encompassing moral rule, embracing the fact that many circumstances are different and affected by the people in them and our feelings toward them (Vaughn).

We should also be more vocal, especially in the gaming industry, to ensure that women do not remain a silent, hidden majority. If we stay quiet, the developers and publishers of these games will assume there is no issue and through inaction implicitly reinforce the belief that women are not of importance in this industry and that the industry does not need stricter policies against harassment.

Gaming culture is still filled with many manifestations of harassment and sexism: the way women are represented, and either silenced or shut out in games and gaming culture and the lack of proper anti-harassment measures – all these come together to limit the choices women have if they want to be active members in the gaming scene, oppressing them until they have almost no other choices, no freedom to choose … no freedom.

As more and more women pursue STEM fields and enter game development we must keep a vigilant eye on how women strive toward greater freedoms and opportunities. Because the true measure of freedom is how one is able to strive and achieve greater freedoms without oppression (Beauvoir, 2015).

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Work Clothes by Marisa Marino

Work Clothes came from the assignment was "create an image incorporating fabric". My original thought was to use loose fabric, like a curtain that would flow. I then thought of incorporating a mirror. This image of the clothing I paint lay against a full length mirror reflects me.

- Marisa Marino

From Hopeful to Destructive: Understanding the Modern Human.[67]

Justin Lotenberg

The modern-day human was a product of a generation that thought the future was going to be bright, a future that would only mean happiness for all. That however would change due to World War I and the aftermath of it. This changed how the modern-day human would be. They went from believing in happiness to having none at all. Humans became hopeless. Humans had nothing to believe in, and when a man like Hitler came along and told the people to believe in him, the people found some hope in him. The modern-day human was destroyed by a World War and lost hope that humanity would ever be as happy as it was before the war.

In the time before World War I the world in the eyes of Europeans was a happy place. Everything was going right for the Europeans during this time period.

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[67] Mr. Lotenberg produced this paper on HIS 256: History of the Twentieth Century, Spring 2019.

"Never was average man, his soul, more energetic, more like a god."[68] This feeling would be spread throughout Europe. At this point everyone had something to be hopeful for. Europe was going through a lot of changes during this time and everyone living there was hopeful for the future. But, no matter how many things they were able to change in this time period; one major thing did not change.

The one thing that did not change was the quest for more land. The United States and European countries would participate in Imperialism. This is the process where the United States and strong European countries would go into another country and claim it as a territory in order to have access to their country's resources. "His daring foot is on the land and sea everywhere."[69] The Europeans and Americans had influences all over the

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[68] Walt Whitman, "Years of the Modern": Weisner, Wheeler et.al. (Eds.) *Discovering the Global Past. Look at the Evidence*. Volume II, since 1400. (Wadsworth, Boston) 2014. p.296
[69] Walt Whitman, "Years of the Modern" Weisner, Wheeler et.al. (Eds.) *Discovering the Global Past. Look at the Evidence*. Volume II, since 1400. (Wadsworth, Boston) 2014. p.296

world, trying to force other countries to follow the European way of life. While doing this however the United States and European countries would also take all of the natural resources in the country and sell them. This process would mean the growth of the United States and European powers for years. There is a major problem though; there is only a limited supply of land. Once all the land is claimed then these countries will be forced into wars. The war that came after imperialism though was not what these countries were expecting.

World War I was the product of a generation that peaked during the Industrial Revolution and Imperialism. These countries had so many new means of destroying people that they would put to the test during World War I. "There is a rumour that the enemy are going to put tanks over and use low-flying planes for the attack. But that interests us less than what we hear of the new flame-throwers."[70] These were weapons that the soldiers never

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[70] Erich Maria Remarque, "All Quite on the Western Front": Stearns, Gosch et. al.(Eds.) *Documents in World History, Volume 2. The Modern Centuries to the Present* (Pearson, Boston) 2012. p. 215

saw before. The new weapons were a product of the Industrial Revolution and made this war very different from all the other ones to come before and after it. The soldiers did not think this type of technology existed until they got there. What makes World War I even worse was that there was not an actual reason to be fighting.

There should always be a reason for war. When there is not a reason, then why fight? The soldiers of World War I were never given a reason for the fighting; this resulted in a very different war than what many were expecting. "Of course, fighting continues, but somehow it loses its fierceness and takes more and takes more the form of a sport, each side being eager to get the best of the other. One still shoots at his opponent, but almost regrets when he sees him drop."[71] These soldiers felt regret for taking a shot that killed an enemy. No other war can say that the soldiers regretted taking the shot. Soldiers would talk to each other while on the opposite side of the field.

[71] Fritz Kreisler, "Four Weeks on in the Trenches" Stearns, Gosch et. al.(Eds.) Al. *Documents in World History, Volume 2. The Modern Centuries to the Present* (Pearson, Boston) 2012. p. 213

This resulted in a dynamic where soldiers were not killing their enemies; they were killing their friends. When the soldiers left for World War I they hoped to come back soon and be victors but, when they actually came back, they were hopeless. The war destroyed all hope for them as they were not killing enemies; they were killing friends.

This feeling of hopelessness would be felt throughout all of Europe after the war ended; but it would be felt the hardest in Germany. Germany was blamed for all the destruction that took place during World War I. This led to the destruction of the economy and resulted in the unemployment rate going up. "Now, with unemployment swollen to 208,000, there are only 32,143 on the first category dole, and 62,456 on the second category dole. The balance not eligible for payments in either of these classes now numbers over 100,000 families."[72] (Hamburg 121) These numbers are staggering and happened directly after Germany took the blame for

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[72] Tiltman, H. Hessell, "Slump! A Study of Stricken Europe Today" Overfield, James (Ed.) *Sources of Global History since 1900*, Wadsworth, Boston) 2013. p. 121

World War I occurring. This did not happen in one city though as it spread throughout Germany.

In Berlin the government was able to figure out how many people were unemployed. "In June, 1932… forty-four out of every hundred were workless. Spread over all Germany, that figure means, in the words of a famous Trade Union leader with whom I talked in Berlin, that there are to-day 6,000,000 families, totalling at least 18,000,000 men, women, and children, existing on unemployment."[73] Those numbers are terrible. The German people were being punished with unemployment and there was nothing the government was going to do about it. The German people felt hopeless. They needed to find something to believe in. "Of the fact that whatever else Adolf Hitler has, or has not, done, he has enabled a large number of Germans to keep up their spirits… at a time when Germany's spirits were in danger of sinking to

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[73] Tiltman, H. Hessell, "Slump! A Study of Stricken Europe Today" Overfield, James (Ed.) *Sources of Global History since 1900*, Wadsworth, Boston) 2013. p. 122

zero."[74] Hitler was going to give the German people something to believe in.

Adolf Hitler was a man who knew how to capitalize on a situation. Germany was at a point where the people did not have hope in anything. They were unemployed and hungry. Those who were unemployed a lot of them were soldiers who felt betrayed by their government. This gave Hitler his moment to bring hope to the German people. "We National Socialists therefore march into every election campaign with the single commitment that we will, the following day, once again take up our work for the inner reorganization of our national community. For we are not fighting for elective posts or ministerial positions, but rather for the German man and woman, whom we want to, and will, join together once again into an indivisible community of destiny."[75] Hitler was a man who knew his crowd. The

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[74] Tiltman, H. Hessell, "Slump! A Study of Stricken Europe Today" Overfield, James (Ed.) *Sources of Global History since 1900*, Wadsworth, Boston) 2013. p. 123
[75] Adolf Hitler, *Appeal to the Nation Speech*, July 15, 1932.

German people wanted somebody who could bring Germany together again. A person who could fight for the people and who could actually make things happen in the government. Germans saw this in Adolf Hitler and put all of their remaining hope into him.

When people are hopeless, they need to find something to believe in. As soldiers left for war, they had hope that they would be back soon. When they came back all their hope was gone. It was destroyed by people who could not give them a reason why they were fighting. Germany collapsed after World War I; the soldiers, the men, the women, the children, everyone was hopeless. Hitler was able to take that hopelessness away by appealing to his audience and promising them he would fight for the people. Hopelessness was brought to these people from a war they should never have been in. Had there been a reason for the fighting, maybe the modern human would not have felt hopeless.

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In the Shadows by Marisa Marino, 2018

Recently, I have been experimenting with adding different things in to my paints. Depending on what I use determines what kind of finish and texture the paintings take on. I cannot divulge my secrets, but what I added to *In the Shadows* gave a very matte finish and very rough texture.

- Marisa Marino

Alumni Essays and Creative Work

Man Loves, Men kill.
Baptized in Conflict, A Contrarian Cultivates His Garden

<div align="right">Robert Giorgi</div>

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I

<u>The Book of Rob</u>

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Papa never loved this Bambino, at least the first one didn't. In 1984, I was born James Robert Rosa, destined to be one of those in-between babies who would only use his first name on paper, while his middle name would stand-in for his first. However, three years later, after the prodigal father with no follow-through finally gave up his claim, I was born anew and watched my sister come into this world with my adopted father—a man who most assuredly loved his bambino and whose name I proudly wear today. Ironically, because of my first-name last name—and a baneful nursery rhyme—I would have to suffer the same in-betweenness, alternating between names depending on the context of the situation and politely correcting those who were under the assumption

that my *real* name wasn't the one they knew me to have. I learned early how easy it is for one to be misunderstood, but it was a lesson I would often forget.

The first victim, perhaps fitting considering the context, was Job. At the time, I had just moved in with my grandmother, fifteen-years-old and shaken by a tumultuous childhood to which she attributed my defiant nature. Feeling the church would help center her grandson, she dragged me to Mass, ignoring my protests and vowing not to take communion—not to eat her object of worship—until I had been reached by a higher power. Quickly bored, I decided to peruse the literature of the Saved. Settling on the Book of Job and dog-earing the corner of the current page when the congregation stood or postured on the cushioned hide-away benches in front of them, I read the Word. In the story, God puts Job through traumatic tribulations just to prove that his faith would remain unshaken when stripped of the earthly pleasures bestowed upon such a righteous and faithful subject. Perhaps I didn't get it (perhaps I still don't), but God

seemed like a child with a magnifying glass, setting the helpless ablaze to cater to his own arrogance. *[And I can't let fate dictate what's best for me/got to take control of my own destiny/You can't relate, you think there's no escape/but I got everything at stake here just to prove you wrong!][1]* To her credit, after I had given it a shot, Gram understood that Catholicism would never appear on my menu of identifiers and she dropped the hunger strike, donning her cross and returning to her community as I slipped into my Bad Religion tee and found mine.

"Nice shirt," my neighbor Pat said as I rode by his house (for the second time) on a rusty Schwinn I found in the garage, "Shitty bike." It turns out, Gram's neighborhood had way more of *us* than the public housing I came from; where if you weren't Rap, you were Country, and no one wants to be country in the 'hood. Aaron was a first-generation Sikh, American as his Dad is Indian-American, and grew up two houses down from Pat. The three of us quickly became the punk rock triptych of Radtke Lane. Aaron's father spoke with a thick accent,

his house smelled like curry (as mine did garlic), and we laughed at the cultural ignorance of his step-mother (and ignored our own) the time we walked in, he greeted her with: "Sup, G;" and she followed with "You want some Ghee?" None of us thought we were all that different. We had alternative means for identical ends, sneaking booze on Diwali and Easter or heating up late-night meatball sandwiches when the munchies kicked in, but we never subscribed to the cultural and religious traditions of our parents, we only experienced them. We were together that day, when the second plane hit, watching the smoke billow across the Hudson from the safety of higher ground, too young to understand how complicated the world would become and too punk to care.

II
<u>Sikh 9:11</u>

[*Looks like witches are in season/you better fly your flag and be aware/of anyone who might fit the description/diversity is now our biggest fear. Now with our conversations tapped/and our*

differences exposed/how ya supposed to love your neighbor/with our mind and curtains closed?][2] "But you're not even Muslim" I told Aaron, after he had recounted to me the details of his experience. "Doesn't matter," he responded, "I'm brown and I have a beard." Three years after 9-11, Aaron had just graduated college and was working for a publishing firm in Hoboken, NJ, when he was escorted from the train by transit police just for looking like *them.* It never occurred to me that he would have to suffer the humiliation of being the Other. Until that moment, I thought the world saw two silly boys, one brown and bearded, the other white and in full compliance of military regulations—not bad guy, good guy. Surely never terrorist, hero.

We were the same in nearly every way. We dressed the same, had the same accents, watched the same TV, cheered on the same sports teams, kissed the same girls, ate the same pizza. We liked the same bands, smoked the same weed—we rolled the same eyes at the traditions of the past, and shook the same heads at the tragedy of our

present. And yet for two superficial differences, we were seen as entirely different entities, objects of scorn and worship—mistaken ascribed statuses, overvalued achieved ones—sharing the same origin of fear, to demarcate and overrate as the public sees fit. How could anyone think Aaron was a Jihadist? Dude never even made his bed. *[We are Marie Antoinette/we are Joseph McCarthy/We've finally become the divided states/A nation built on freedom, fear, and hate/the denotation of Irony.*][3]

It had always existed, of course, the scapegoating of sociocultural minorities to reaffirm the majority's self-worth. It allowed us to pass the buck to anyone who lived a different life, who looked different or thought different, to blame someone else for the outcome of their ignorance while never really addressing our own. It gave police the right to remove brown scruffy boys from trains simply because someone decided to say something, allowed rent-a-cops to stand their ground and murder little black boys without spending a moment in detention. Arrogant actors preyed on blind insects, helplessly marching away from

salvation. [*What are we left with? A nation of God-fearing, pregnant, nationalists/who feel it's their duty/to populate the homeland/pass on tradition/ how-to-get-ahead religions/and prosperity via simpleton culture. The idiots are taking over*.][4]

III
Balal 11:9

[*I don't know why you beg for forgiveness/just before you do it again. Is it more altruistic to worship/ or actually help fellow man?]*[5] I was never good at playing soldier, my aversion to authority never abated, and the military command structure is as rigid as it is hierarchical. If my dear old grandmother, whom I fiercely loved, couldn't break my will; you think I'm going to give you the satisfaction, Drill Sergeant? Bring on the mind games—the propaganda, pomp, and patriotism. The snuff-stained spittle of forced anger painted a blank face throughout Basic Training, Advanced Individual Training, and the years leading up to my first deployment to Afghanistan. The comradery appealed to me, I was able to foster

friendships with Born Again Christians from the Midwest, Jews from the Northeast, and other punk rockers like *me* who had little need for a savior. We had different value systems, held different metaphysical beliefs, home-of-records. We all came from different places, literally and metaphorically. Nevertheless, we all found ways to connect to one another—to build bridges that would allow us to operate at peak efficiency—and maximize our chances for survival as we shipped out to war. Through it all, my stereotypes were sometimes reinforced, but more often they were broken. No one is born with an open mind, it must be cultivated as one cultivates their self. The error is not in assuming, but allowing those assumptions to ossify into truisms and value judgments, creating an Us vs. Them mentality. [*An eye for an eye/and blood for Texas Tea/At the call to prayer/Al Queda's on its knees/Isaac vs. Ishmael/Allah vs. Christ/Zarqawi's on the offense/picking up the beat]*[6]

Our Afghanistan deployment had been cut short, we returned home to train before finding ourselves a few

months later in Baghdad, Iraq. Part of my duties were to oversee local nationals who had come to the FOB (Forward Operating Base) to act as groundskeepers, helping the Joes (low-ranking soldiers) fill sandbags and clean the AO (Area of Operation). The Army loves its acronyms, it saves time by reducing poly-syllabic signifiers to more digestible abbreviations. These workers often spoke English, wore western clothes, while their Afghani counterparts only spoke Pashtun and only wore Kurtas. Two of the more verbose individuals were cousins, and preferred I call them Playboy and 50 Cent. Most would point to this as a triumph for Western culture, two Iraqis adopting the names of popular Western Icons. Still, I wonder if years of men with assault rifles butchering your given name makes it easier to accept a new one without much protest.

The rest of my time in Iraq was spent at a Patrol Base near Babel, a historical landmark of great religious and cultural significance. Sporadic pops of gunfire interrupted an overwhelmingly serene landscape, but a

heavy fear loomed. There were no Playboys here, the only locals were interpreters—brown, bearded heroes who patrolled with American forces, saving the lives of their foreign brothers and sisters while praying five times a day. They were like my friend Aaron, as much as they were unlike him. They put their lives on the line to build a better future as they saw it, in the best way they knew how. In return, we offered them sanctuary in the States when they completed their time in service—at least we used to. [*Well madness reigned/and paradise drowned/when Babel's walls came crashing down/Now the echoes roar for a story writ/that was hardly understood/And never any good*][7]

IV

<u>Two Heratis Walk into A Bar…</u>

"Don't worry. The Ambassador is married to an American woman, he will not be late," said our Uber Driver, Ahmad. "Are you Afghani?" Miles, a deeply religious Jew from Brooklyn sporting both Yarmulke and Tzitzit asked him from behind me [*Stop the Hate/Don't*

Segregate][8]. Ahmad replied that he was, he had been an interpreter in Herat, came to the U.S. after receiving his Special Immigrant Visa in 2015 and had been living in D.C. for three years. We had just spent the day on the Hill, urging our congressional leaders to advocate for refugees and foreign nationals that fought alongside U.S. troops overseas as interpreters. [*Stop the fighting/We're all dying]*[9] We were on the way to dinner with about seventy Veterans—American, Iraqi and Afghani—community leaders, and human rights activists. We told Ahmad we knew people who could probably help get his wife here from Herat and would be honored if he joined us for dinner. He was introduced to a thunderous applause. [*Pull together/make this system better]*[10].

As the night went on, introductions were made, and the story of our chance encounter was told and retold. To some, it was divine providence. To me, it was a lucky break. But when I introduced Ahmad to Sami, a former interpreter who had come to D.C. as part of our NY-NJ team, I had a moment of doubt. Sami had taken a different

route, spending three months traveling through India and Africa, stowed on a cargo ship to Mexico, crossed the border and immediately gave himself up. "Where was I going to escape to?" he told me, "I had already escaped." Sami spent 14 months in an Alabama state correctional facility before he was finally granted Asylum and now lives in Queens. When he heard Ahmad was from Herat, his eyes grew like saucers. "I am Herati, too" he said. Later, finding no acceptable corner and surrounded by the intoxicated and loud, Ahmad invited Sami to his car. Kneeling on their jackets, they prayed.

They are Us. We are Them. Curiosity begets love. Isolation begets Hate. Yet sadly we remain, curiously isolationist. But it would be a mistake to think that our voice is not there simply because it is unheard; a mistake to assume hope is lost because it is unseen. A stone cast into a pond causes a ripple that will distort our reflection until the water calms, a temporary alteration of both subject and object. However, when one casts a stone at a

mirror, they have destroyed themselves to erase the other — and what kind of man is that?

So the fences fall

Will you redefine them all?

Will you choose shelter or empathy?[11]

[1] H2O, (1999) "One Life, One Chance" *F.T.T.W.*

[2] NOFX, (2003) "Regaining Un-consciousness," *The War on Errorism.*

[3] NOFX (2012) "Wolves in Wolves' Clothing" *Wolves in Wolves Clothing.*

[4] NOFX (2003) "The Idiots Have Taken Over" *The War on Errorism.*

[5] NOFX (2004) "Pods and Gods" *45 or 46 Songs That Weren't Good Enough for Our Other Records.*

[6] Bouncing Souls (2006) "Letter from Iraq" *The Gold Record.*

[7] Bad Religion (1996) "Skyscraper" *Recipe for Hate.*

[8] Bigwig (1999) "Falling Down" *Stay Asleep.*

[9] Ibid.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Lagwagon (2003) "Never Stops" *Blaze.*

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