FREE THOUGHT

PENSAMIENTO LIBRE

Free Thought/Pensamiento Libre: Student Scholarly Journal of the Humanities Honor Society at Middlesex College. We publish nonfiction, fiction, poetry, and visual art. Editors: Cristóbal Espinoza-Wulach and Joseph Pascale.

Cover by Emma Kovalewich.

Free Thought

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Student Scholarly Journal of the
Humanities Honor Society
Middlesex College

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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 Emeritus

A New Beginning (2021) by Emma Kovalewich

Oil Pastel. 9x12in.

As I sketched in a landscape, I wanted to create some form of movement in the sky and throughout the bottom. Using purple and yellow, I made a path going towards the middle and in the sky, there are swirls of blue. I also wanted this piece to consist of both warm and cool colors, but keep the hues bright without them getting dull.

-Emma Kovalewich

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Artwork

American Goldfinch (2021) by Emma Kovalewich

Chalk and Colored Pencils on Toned Paper. 9x12in. American goldfinches are one of the most colorful birds and even the state bird of New Jersey. I used a mixture of green and yellow chalk in the background to create a blurred-out forest. I layered white colored pencils and used different shades of yellow to create value underneath the bird's stomach.

-Emma Kovalewich

Note of Appreciation

This publication could not have been possible without the support and contribution of President Mark McCormick, Vice President for Institutional Advancement Michelle Campbell, Acting-Director of Marketing Communications Joselyn Quezada, Manager of Printing and Communication Services Robin Hetzko, and Acting Assistant Dean of Student Engagement Ode Hoppie. We also extend our thanks to the Middlesex College Board of Trustees.

We want to dedicate a special thank you to Thomas Peterson, former Director of Marketing Communication. Tom's ideas and experience were essential to the success of this publication. We wish him the happiest retirement.

Many thanks to Gordon Smith and Hilary Goll, children of H. Ian Smith, for permission to republish their father's poem. Professor Smith taught History and Philosophy at Middlesex College until 1986. His Sonnets continue to inspire.

Congratulations...

Nathalia Allenza. Ms. Allenza, a member of the Honors Learning Community, was accepted at Princeton University with a full scholarship. Ms. Allenza co-authored "Achieving Academic Success and Family Well-Being for Students-Parents at Middlesex College to Make a Generational Impact." She worked on that article in collaboration with Professors Angulo, Espinoza-Wulach and Quillen.

Beauty Of A Hindu Bride (2021) by Mahek Ghai

Mixed Media, Glitter Glue, Cloth, Gems, Acrylic
Paint on Cardboard. 12x8.5 in.

-Mahek Ghai

Transnational Voices

I am so pleased to present this year's edition of Transnational Voices.

This section highlights the disparate perspectives and unique expressions of some of our talented English Language Learners at Middlesex College– students who have come to the United States from many countries, with different native languages, and with various cultural and educational backgrounds.

This year, our Transnational Voices authors have expanded the languages in which they share their work to include English, Spanish, French, and Haitian Creole in celebration of intercultural exchange and in recognition of the diversity of our learning community here at Middlesex. To me, these student works exemplify the invaluable contributions that ELL learners bring to Middlesex College's community, and I am excited to share them with you.

Elizabeth Shaheen

My Life During the Lockdown

Jing Lin

During the COVID-19 pandemic, I have learned that family is important, and family is the most important part of my life. I wouldn't have learned that if we hadn't had the pandemic. Since the outbreak of COVID-19 in the U.S., the cases were increasing very fast, and some people still did not realize how this virus is so serious, including my family. My grandma didn't want to wear a mask at that time, and I kept worrying about her, telling her to wash her hands and not to go out often. My mom was still working and closely touching people. When she got home the first thing I did is to use alcohol to clean up her stuff and let her go take a shower immediately. During the pandemic, I stayed home all the time, no socializing, no activities. I imagined: What if I went out and got COVID without knowing and infected my family? What would they do? On the contrary, if my family got infected, what would I do? Would I leave them?

The answer I gave to myself was NO. Family is my everything, I need to protect them from COVID, to take care of their physical health. I started to share with them the knowledge about COVID and how to prevent it. I don't want to lose them. Before the pandemic, I did not know how important family is to me, and I wouldn't even take care of them. From my perspective, they are adults who can take care of themselves very well. But as they are getting old,

and whatever they can, or cannot do, I have responsibility to take care of them as they took care of me when I was a kid. My family has given me everything they could and has always been my safe haven. As I grow up, I need to give all my protection to my family. They are an important part of my life. Perhaps, COVID-19 is far more terrifying than we thought; in the face of the pandemic, we seem so small. The fortune caused by COVID-19 is I understand family is important to me, and I should spend more time with them.

The Effects of Covid on My Life

Ahsen Nazir

The COVID-19 pandemic has greatly affected our families and our daily life. Many people have a bad view of the pandemic, but after some time some people started changing their point of view. When COVID-19 hit humanity, it made many countries go into health and financial crises, which led people to change their routines and habits. Some people have even said that the pandemic has resulted in positive changes for people. While COVID had a bad effect on society, it also had a good effect on our families and daily life. Due to the pandemic, we got a lot of time to spend with our families and making ourselves healthier.

In the COVID- 19 pandemic we got a lot of time to spend with our families and friends that we love. Many offices, schools, and businesses were closed, and people did not have anything to do in that time. As a result, people started to spend time with their families and started to appreciate each other. For example, in our family all of us were busy in our lives. I was also going to and studying in college. Moreover, we didn't care enough about each other, but after the pandemic, we got a lot of free of time.

Our college and business were shut down and we were not allowed to go outside. Therefore, we started to talk with each other, and it was a wakeup call for us people to reunite with our

families. I started to talk with my parents and siblings. Every night after dinner we used to be with each other and start talking about our personal life, issues, and other things happening around us. We also used to play cards and cannon board, which was very enjoyable. Perhaps we started taking care of each other, and this pandemic brought us closer.

In the Covid-19 pandemic people also got a break from their daily life. Many people were depressed about their job and school, but we got a lot of time to give ourselves. For example, I was having a very busy life and didn't have time to participate in other activities. As a result, I was upset and feeling weak, but after the pandemic, I started doing more exercise in my daily routine. I changed my eating habits and started eating healthier food. Perhaps I started to feel stronger and more energetic. I also looked fresher because I changed my sleeping habits. I cut down all those things that were destroying my health. Therefore, the pandemic was also a good time for me to improve myself.

In conclusion, COVID-19 had a lot of bad effects, but it also had great effects on our families and the daily routine that we were living. We got a lot of time to spend with our families and to know each other better.

The Positive Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Stephanie Perez

People commonly do not think about what will happen the next day and live only the moment without making plans for the future, and unfortunately, a pandemic like COVID-19 must come to change that situation. If that is true and the pandemic comes with a lot of painful moments, it also helps a lot of people to restructure their lives, and one of those people is me. When the pandemic started, all the things changed in my life, family, and my community. I didn't know what was going to happen the next day, everything was uncertain, and my life took a 360 degree turn. But day by day I learned many lessons from the pandemic because I asked myself one question: If people overcame the 1918 influenza pandemic, attacks like 9/11 or other bad moments in the world, "Why can't I"? My family and I decided to see the positive part at this moment and found many positive effects of the pandemic. The two most important positive effects were to learn to be a good member of society, family and the world and people taking more responsibility for their health.

First, one of the most important positive effects of the pandemic was learning to be a good member of society, our family, and the world. For example, people learned to be good people with their society when all the stores closed, and the people shared

their clothes and food with the poor people. However, we could also learn to be a good member of our families because all the families stayed in their houses and spent more time with their partners or kids. In my case, before the pandemic I did not have good communication with my husband, and the pandemic taught me to be a good wife. Furthermore, the people in general do not treat the environment carefully, but the pandemic taught us to be good people with our environment. People learned to care for plants and animals, and in the newspaper we saw that birds recovered spaces in the cities or bears walking on the France's streets, wonderful moments.

In addition, the second of the most important positives of the pandemic was people taking more responsibility for their health. For example, people learned about preventive health. Many people do not pay attention to their health and never go to the doctor for a checkup of the body, but the pandemic taught us to be alert with our bodies. Furthermore, with the pandemic, mental problems also started, but it was a good reason to take mental health more seriously and bring the necessary awareness of its importance. Also, for the young people the pandemic was the reason for thinking two times before starting with the sexual activity, and they started to control and prevent sexual disease.

In conclusion, the two most important positive effects were to learn to be a good member of society,

family and the world and people taking more responsibility for their health. COVID-19 was terrible for the people around the world, affecting the people of different ages, but also, we could learn to be strong people. After the COVID-19 pandemic the people cannot wait for another big problem, health issue, or natural disaster to change their lives in positive terms. We need to start right now; another chance won't come.

Work by Humanists

Legacy (2022) by Nathalia Allenza

Oil on Canvas. I was inspired by the concept of legacy and its impact on the world. The three represent life as a form of a legacy because it produces over the years. Among my favorite parts of the art piece is the universe because it captures our legacy as human beings, represented by the three, and explains our impact in a way that transcends our expectations.

-Nathalia Allenza

Achieving Academic Success and Family Well-Being for Student-Parents at Middlesex College to Make a Generational Impact

N. Allenza, J. Morales and K. Garcia[1]

Abstract

This study was conducted to maximize the success of student-parents and their families. After reviewing many articles, we decided to construct and submit a survey at Middlesex College (MC) dedicated to assessing the challenges and needs of student-parents (SP). 156 students at MC attempted to take the survey but only 80 of them were student-parents, thus these were the only participants allowed to proceed. Our findings show that student-parents have not been utilizing available resources at Middlesex College and are under an abundant amount of stress. The reason student-parents are not utilizing resources is still unknown. Additionally, we identify challenges like a financial barrier, and lack of childcare, among other factors that affect SP's academic success. As a part of this study, we would

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like to suggest solutions for increasing academic achievement at Middlesex College.

Introduction

The purpose of this research is to find ways in which we can maximize academic and familial success, as we aspire to raise awareness since there has been no record kept on student-parents at MC. Examining posted literature aids in the understanding of the phenomenon, by demonstrating, assessing, and improving the challenges of being a SP. Conducting our own survey investigation encourages the implementation of our findings at MC to produce a constructive generational impact. We ought to create accessible programming for SP and their families that facilitate integral and necessary human development, which will allow students to excel academically, achieving recognition for their contribution at an academic level.

Our academic investigation focuses on addressing the challenges of SP at MC. We began with a deep analysis of the different themes of the Honors in Action (HIA) Study Topic, where we identified Theme 1 as best suited for our project. Examining the challenges of SP led us to our research question: "How can we address the challenges of student-parents at Middlesex College to maximize the family well-being and academic success to make a generational impact?" It was

necessary to review research publications that included information about what SP confronts in higher education. After identifying the main challenges, we discussed our hypothesis: 1) SP face superior levels of stress that affect family well-being and their academic success, 2) SP involvement in higher education contributes positively to their children's legacy 3) MC resources are not targeted at assessing and identifying SP needs. Therefore, to develop our research further, we created a plan with the following steps: 1) identify the number of SP enrolled at MC, 2) identify some challenges that SP encounter, 3) develop projects and opportunities to strengthen the SP community and improve their children's legacy and success. We began reaching out to faculty members for guidance and clarity about our project. Since our college previously had no information about this population of students, we reached out to the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (IR), which became one of the pillars of the project. As a result, we developed a survey recording empirical data, considering IR requirements and permissions for data collection and distribution. At this point, our academic investigation became more significant. To continue, our questionnaire included questions that illustrated the challenges of SP. As we waited for the results, we reached out to Student Life and the administrative department to create awareness and enhance the understanding of this topic across our campus.

Likewise, we outreached the President of MC, who expressed interest in our project and was intrigued to hear of this specific population.

Literature Review

A major finding is that 70% of the SP population endorse higher levels of pressure and stress when trying to balance everything in their life. Despite this high number, 73% of SP expressed the importance of attending college to set a good example for their children. In accordance with our findings, Goldrick-Rab & Sorensen (2010) noted that "parents with more education commit more time to their children," enhancing family and personal life. One of our reviewed literatures showed that "parents' postsecondary education is associated with higher incomes, greater access to health care, positive mental health, positive parenting practices, and children's academic success" (Hout, 2012; Magnuson, 2007; Oreopoulos & Petronijevic, 2013, as cited in Dotterer et al., 2020). Meaning, if SP achieve a good balance in all areas of their life, they will be able to build a positive legacy for their children, influencing and promoting academic success, while also contributing to their legacy. SP not only leave a legacy in education but also a legacy of values, respect, perseverance, and responsibility. Even as our findings demonstrate the difficulties of SP, their resilience shines throughout their experiences. Peterson's (2016) study exemplifies that

"...adversity had become their fuel for determination," which went on to excel SP as "they developed creative solutions to their decision-making." Additionally, to develop our study on SP, we evaluated the following Peer-Reviewed Articles:

1.	**Social-ecological barriers to student-parents' academic success: A systematic review**	SP in higher education often faces challenges that restrain their academics. This systematic review highlights the social-ecological barriers that affect their academic performance. These factors include public policy, institutional, and interpersonal factors. These barriers have been shown to affect and influence employment, finances, academic achievement, and legacy. The article shows that every year, the SP population increases rapidly. This led us to initiate our research to figure out the SP population at our community college.
2.	**Perspectives on implementation: challenges and successes of a program designed to support expectant and parenting community college students in rural, midwestern state.**	Study shows programs on campus dedicated to college students with children can make all the difference. This study sheds light on how these programs can be created and facilitated. It also implicated future objections that we might encounter. Not only would implementing some sort of program like this help student-parents, but also the college's faculty and staff. One major concern that we came across not only in this study but in

		our own HIA project, was that no record has been kept of SP populations. Therefore, we incorporated all that we learned from this study to help us plan our next steps and contribute to our college's data, for the upcoming years.
3.	**Doing it all? mothers' college enrollment, time use, and affective well-being**	This resource discusses how the authors have dedicated studies to assess the correlation between mothers' college degrees and the success of their children. A deep analysis showed that mothers pursuing an education face a lot more challenges than other students. From this review, we learned that there may be some negative impacts of being a mother in college. Although this gives a clear impression, it shows mothers' dedication to their degree to better establish a pathway to their children's success. This study helped us think about ways to lower SP challenges at MC.
4.	**Unmarried parents in college**	The aim of this study was to address how college policies have a negative impact on SP success. They noted that even though more parents are entering college, completion rates are low. The study also enlightened the finding that parents with more education commit more time to their children. It is important for students to achieve what they have set in

		mind to be examples for their children, but as we know higher education leads to higher salary wages and more flexible hours in employment, and better levels of mental health and family life.
5.	**Stress and family relationships among college student parents: A mixed method of study.**	This article is essential to understanding the importance of SP academic achievements since studies show how it affects their legacy, enabling a generational impact. In addition, we learned that the SP population is more vulnerable and susceptible to suffering, stress, and worries associated with factors that combine caregiving and student roles, overall impacting their children's future.
6.	**Community college student-parents: Priorities for persistence.**	This study examines SP experiences and issues that affect persistence and completion of their degrees. The balance in different areas of life more than likely overlaps, causing SP to have to make sacrifices for their education and children. This study also addressed the perseverance of these students, expressing that SP admitted that adversity had become their fuel for determination. This source highlighted SP experiences with faculty at their college. The author recommends that schools increase the availability of affordable on-site childcare and hold

		workshops that are more focused on dealing with issues that SP are faced with.
7.	**Thinking beyond child-care: Supporting community college student-parents.**	This study hinted at the minimal support that student-parents receive, with the negative idea that one size fits all. As we have seen, just like a regular student, SP all have different needs that need to be met to excel academically. In accordance with our own research, SP weren't using nor aware of the resources available to them. This spoke volumes to us as we sought to find ways to make the resources more readily and easily available to this population of students.
8.	**Exploring the research and library needs of student-parents.**	This study emphasizes the correlation between SP and their difficulties with libraries. Title IX demands colleges to assist in the scholarly achievement, however there is a clear barrier. The research explained that corporal and policy modifications are needed to better this population. This is a result of students feeling pressured to manage and quiet their children when in a setting like this. This study was very influential, as we ourselves are mothers and we were able to relate to many of the situations and examples given in the research.

Method

In collaboration with IR, we developed a survey that was distributed via Canvas to all Middlesex College students enrolled in 2021. The questionary contained 33 statements/questions relating to the challenges and circumstances of SP at Middlesex College. There were 156 students at MC who took the survey, but only 80 of them were SP (N=80).

Results

The data collected and analyzed in our survey shows the participation of 156 students, but only 80 students were SP. To determine the subsample, we asked the following question: "Are you the parent or guardian of any biological, adopted, step, or foster children who live in your household full-time or part-time? Of which 80 students marked "yes" as their response. Our quantitative outcomes indicate that 84% of SP are mothers, 15% fathers, and 1% is unknown. Additionally, the qualitative data collected from our research supports our hypothesis.

1) According to the survey, 70% of the students reported high levels of stress and distress trying to balance family, work, and study.

2) SP academic success does contribute to academic achievement and family well-being, where approximately 73% of students highlighted "they are in college because they want to set a good example for their children."

3) MC provides resources to SP that maximize well-being and academic success; however, the college should incorporate measures annually to evaluate, identify, and analyze in-depth the student-parent community.

While it is true that each SP situation is unique, our results show that we can maximize the resources available at MC in a way that best suits this community.

Second, to answer our study topic and identify the issues faced by SP, we posed the following question: "Which of the following obstacles to completing your education do you experience?" The results show that 1) approximately 70% of student-parents "encounter pressure and stress of trying to balance everything" (family, work, and studies), being the challenge with the highest rate among this community 2) 56% of student-parents reported, "not having enough time" 3) 47% of student-parents

reported, "limited income" as a challenge to succeed in college 4) 44% of student-parents highlighted the need to work 5) 33% of student-parents express "the need to stay home to care for the child(ren)" 6) 26% of student-parents emphasize the lack of childcare. Furthermore, the results of our academic research reveal that MC provides resources and tools to help SP succeed and achieve their goals. MC provides childcare; however, student-parents reported the following barriers such as cost, schedules (do not work with the childcare center) and location. Many of these resources need to be best suited for SP.

Additionally, SP benefit from the different modalities in which the college offers courses, where 50% of students emphasized enrolling fully in online courses. Library, tutoring, academic, financial, and counseling services; show a neutral response among student-parents. The depth of our research will be to analyze the effectiveness of these resources among the community.

Discussion

The results allow approaching a community that is overlooked, in which there is a lack of essential

information to evaluate and identify the needs of SP. Through this investigation, we have gotten substantial responses, such as the challenges that SP faced; however, it has led to the discovery of additional questions that allowed us to understand the global challenge faced by the community. In addition, HIA helps to raise awareness of the efforts that SP strives to be professionals and leave a legacy for future generations. This project has brought us together as a community.

We not only identified gaps and challenges, but also obtainable solutions. Creating awareness about the SP community was one of our most significant achievements. Because of this project, many professors were influenced by our work. For example, a professor from the Social Science departments adapted their syllabus and policies to support student-parents. We believe that our project has shown that a challenge can lead to great unknowns that should not be ignored. We plan to hold workshops, panel discussions, create a room for SP and encourage system-level change. We want MC to adjust its resources to target the SP population. We also recommend that MC measure and record the SP enrollment because without a deep analysis we cannot understand the scope of this population. Thanks to the guidance of many

from MC we were able to make an impact. This project will continue to be a legacy for all students who follow.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we also have found that the academic success of SP is a system-level issue. This illustrates that barriers are being presented on a policy level. Throughout our examination of this population, we have found that many colleges have not yet adapted to the challenges of this community, making them vulnerable to stressors that jeopardize their success. The lack of policies that support and encourage this population is clearly visible and highly affects their academic performance, retention, and motivation. This research has raised several questions that were not previously considered, but also heightened significant knowledge to continue this investigation. The SP community is increasing rapidly, and academic achievement is the pathway for their children's success. We conclude that by promoting resources and making them more readily available, SP will be more likely to continue their education. At the same time, in correlation with this, we conclude that this will bring attention to MC administration so that more policy-level changes could be made. We now

can strengthen this community with proper support and guidance from our institution.

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Life and Death (2021) by Emma Kovalewich

Charcoal, Gouache Paint, and Acrylic Paint. 18x23in. I sketched my design with charcoal. I went in with gouache paint to add an underpainting and went over using acrylic paint. The skull represents how some may be afraid of death, but surrounded by the flowers are brand new life.

-Emma Kovalewich

A Restful Night

Matthew Dias

The old man sat on his rocking chair with his cat laying in his arms. Together they engaged in their favorite pastime, gazing at the stars outside their woodland house. It was just the two of them out this far in the woods, no one else they could see nearby. The old man can't find peace anywhere else but out here at night. His days have been anything but peaceful. He hasn't worked in years, and after four decades of work he felt he deserved time to himself. Yet, time has been cruel to him. Most of his life he felt a bitter presence wherever he went: A feeling he couldn't stop that haunted him throughout his life. This house was meant to provide him a place to rest after a life of regret and sorrow, but rest would prove harder than expected. He rocked back and forth with his beloved in his arms, looking up at the darkness with just a slight glimpse of light scattered across. Light was all he wanted, but he was caged in his past.

A young man drove his car in a panic. Restless and impatient, he was on the edge of unemployment. Another day he had let pass when he was unprepared to leave his cramped, filthy apartment for work. With his foot crushing the pedal, he sped down street after street. No caution in mind, the young man turned sharply across every turn. The time was only a minute before it was too late. He waited anxiously at the light, and when it

was green he would bolt to the left. His job was right in sight. Only a minute away and he was safe. Right on time, if he could drive there. The light was red, but the lane was empty. With no car as a threat, he made the illegal turn that haunted him for the rest of his life. He saw there were no cars down the lane, but he didn't see the man crossing the street. The sign had read cross, just as the light was still red when the young man made the fatal left. In an instant he slammed the breaks, an action done completely in vain. The car stopped only after the man crossing was hit with the force of a steel beast. The white surface of the car was tainted with this man's dark blood spread across its front. The young man lost so much that day, but the man crossing had lost it all.

The old man never felt the same after that dreadful day. Cold, detached feelings leeching away at him for decades. He never forgave himself. Every attempt to move forward fails, only reinforcing how he can't escape what he has done. His cat was at peace, asleep in the cradle formed by the old man's arms. After a long look at the night sky, he stood up, set the cat to bed, and prepared for bed himself. The old man twisted the nozzle and saw the water slowly fill the bathtub. He turned to see himself in the mirror, and just as he did for decades, stared in agony at the man he saw: A crippled, helpless man. But this view wasn't like the countless before. The old man screamed, fell back, and hit his back against

the bathroom wall. The mirror revealed two faces, one that wasn't seen since that horrid day. The man killed by the car. His pale, undead face was in the blurry coroner on the mirror. He returned to the old man again.

Horrified, the old man tried desperately to get up and run. His body was aching, sharp pain bursting all across his body. His back suffered the most, with pain like a thousand bladed tips piercing its surface. The old man's screams intensified. After a desperate fight with his own body, he ran out of the bathroom away from the terror. He ran toward his bedroom and shut the door behind him. His heart was racing. He was trapped, nowhere to run and no way to fight. In his dark room, he laid in tears, fear, and pain. He felt a rush of guilt. A feeling of self-hatred. This was retribution. The old man could feel how this was all pain crafted decades in advance. Agony that was dormant, building with every day passing by. The old man stared at the darkness. He knew all the feelings he was cursed with, all the years with a cold, hollow presence wherever he went. It was him. The ghost never passed, it haunted him since the moment he killed him. The old man yelled inside his dark room. He was convinced the ghost was right there with him, laughing at him regardless if he couldn't hear it. The ghost could always hear him, see him, torment him, and he would never know. The old man begged the ghost to kill him. To stop the pain, all the suffering, and end his miserable life.

Tears down his cheeks, he screamed inside his room. He knew the ghost was there. There was nothing he could see at all, but he felt it, the presence. That gut twisting presence he always felt. It was in his room, the ghost was there. It had to be. He begged to die. To let the ghost complete its vengeance against him. In the dark room, nothing changed, the old man was alive.

The old man was feeling a rush of emotions, but a new feeling had crept its way behind him. The bedroom door he was leaning on had water flooding through the small space underneath. The old man felt his waist touch the bath water that had overflown. He couldn't care about the water, there was a ghost in the house. He saw the pale white figure in the mirror. As the hot water filled his tub, he saw it in the mirror. With his own eyes, the face of the man. He's here to kill him for what he did. After decades of waiting, the ghost has come now. The old man saw the water surround him as he laid on the floor. He saw it spread past him and flow into the darkness of his room. The water had flooded the entirety of the house's first story. The old man didn't understand. Why didn't the ghost just kill him? What else did it want? What was it planning? Then he realized the unquestionable truth. The ghost wanted to flood his house as revenge. He let the old man turn on the water, only after revealing himself to him so he'd run away and be responsible for his house's destruction. This, all of this was part of his

revenge. The old man knew this truth, and accepted his fate. He laid on his floor motionless, accepting this as his punishment for what he had done all those years ago.

Suddenly, the old man heard a scream. From across the house, he could still hear the most precious thing to him, afraid. He was horrified, more than ever even in this moment, to hear his cat in harm. The man stood up, gripped the doorknob, and rushed to his cat. He accepted his fate, but his cat didn't do anything. To think this ghost would harm an innocent animal, someone that had no responsibility on what happened that day. The old man was disgusted at that thought. If this man would harm an innocent life as revenge, then he deserved to be killed that day. The old man's head was filled with thoughts like this. How his cat should be left at peace, and this ghost was cruel and should have lost his life that day. He felt justified, for once in over forty years, that he wasn't wrong for what he had done. The ghost was here to harm his beloved, innocent cat. The old man ran across the wet floor to his beloved. To save her. He saw how the water had flooded the entire first floor, with his cat in the damaged living room. But the old man couldn't save his beloved cat. As he ran across the flooded house, he lost his balance and fell after his foot slipped on the water. He hit his head and suffered a fatal injury in his head. The old man was bleeding inside his skull. There was no possible way

he would recover from this injury. Just as a man was put to rest forty years ago through a reckless accident, now a new man, an old one, would rest as well.

What Future?

Matthew Dias

School is rarely easy, and after a long day, it's always good to go and relax in a calm place. For this sixth-grader, this was the public library. She would always go to the room filled with desks and work on something before her mom picked her up. She looked around and found a desk with a notebook on top of it. She sat down and looked through it. The notebook was unused. No writing, no torn pages, nothing. She decided it would be pointless to pass up a free notebook, and decided to do her history homework on its blank pages. She sat down, pulled out a pencil with her textbook. "George Wasington" she wrote inside. She looked away from the notebook to open her textbook. "Spell Washington right and I'll consider" was written on that very page. She was confused, thinking *who wrote that?* She wrote down "Who is this?" She stared at the page, but nothing was being written. She turned her head to the window after hearing a car horn and a man screaming from outside. She looked back at the notebook and saw a new message.

"Quit starin'. I don't work well under pressure. Let's just say I can give you any answer you'd like, just give me somethin' to work with." She wrote down "history homework." She looked away for a second, and saw the message "Turn the page." She flipped the page and saw her entire history homework completed in front of her. "What else can

you do?" she wrote. Her phone rang; her mom was calling her. "Anything ya wanna know, write it and I'll answer." She wrote the first question she thought of. "How will my future look?" Her phone rang again, her mom was still trying to call her. The book had a new message written inside. "What future?" She couldn't understand what the message meant, so she wrote down "What do you mean what future?" Her phone rang again, and now she was starting to get annoyed. "Listen, everyone has a time they gotta go, but unlike everyone, your's is up soon." She wrote so fast her pencil almost broke. Her phone was still ringing, adding to her stress. "What are you saying?" she wrote.

"Your mom's outside. Make her wait any longer and she'll kill ya." was written in the notebook. She grabbed all her things and stuffed them in her bag. She grabbed the notebook and ran outside. She saw her mom waiting in her car. She did not see the reckless driver, speeding toward her from her left side. In one fatal second, the car stopped, and she was lying on the road; bruised, bloody, and lifeless.

Abstract Of Nature (2021) by Mahek Ghai

Acrylic Paint on Canvas. 18x24inch.

Forest Freight [2]

Evy Guzman

It was midnight when Valeria Zelle set out on her mission, already wishing she were home rather than on her way to a train that had boarded more souls than bodies. Her mother wanted her across the nation by morning to begin preparation for the ceremony in Exiló and no transport could do the task as well as the Forest Freight—the rumored train of terror that everyone knew to avoid if they could, because only the unspeakable happened there. In fact, taking the Forest Fright was barely safe during the day. At night, it was rumored to be even worse.

Yet, Val's focus was not on the train, but on the ceremony and whether she would pass the test for promotion. She only had one test left, The Test of Trust, and she had no idea when The Foundation planned on giving it to her. She only knew that her mother had been rather odd about it and seemed almost convinced she would not pass. But that's Valeria's mother for you, more of an enemy than a family member. Sigh. Valeria wondered if maybe The Foundation wanted to see if she could arrive on time? No, that was ridiculous. It's not like the train could stall her from arriving … could it?

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[2] This story is an excerpt from an unfinished novel.

Val shook her head of her frivolous thoughts. This year was *the* year, where she, and the other six children raised in the infamous laboratory by The Foundation, would graduate to the higher ranks their parents sat in. They had all finally made it through most of the trials and challenges. All of them, except, of course, *him*. She shuddered.

Valeria's feet shuffled down the single path that ran deep into the forest near the border of the city of Huelot, where the train station was, as she chewed on memories of her past. On her was a heavyweight book bag, filled to the seams with all her items and a piece of ore that yielded the necessary magic needed for the ceremony to work. Her responsibility. A single streetlight stood awkwardly in the depths of nowhere, dimly illuminating the fractured platform built on uneven dirt. The woods smelt heavy with mildew and rain, little droplets of water mourning as they clumped together with heavy fog at the bottom of the scattered trees.

In the distance, she could hardly make out a dark silhouette jogging towards the platform. Closer up, Val could see the figure's dark slacks and loose button-up that was barely buttoned, showing off a toned physique.

"Yo!" he shouted, and Val tore her eyes away from him. Why the hell was he yelling in the dark depths of nowhere? Was he an idiot? As he approached her, she stared straight on, tugging the straps of her book bag tighter, listening to the

horrendous wail of the train as it thundered up from beneath its underground passage into the dense woods. She had a mission to complete. One that did not involve ogling strange men.

So, you just gonna ignore me then?" He stood nearby, towering over her. His voice was rough, and something in Val caused her to freeze for a moment. *Why does he sound so familiar?*

"Is that an option?" She turned a little but couldn't see his face as it was overshadowed by the fog.

"If you try hard enough, maybe, yeah"

Valeria rolled her eyes and stepped onto the train, narrowing her thin eyebrows as she entered the cave-like cabin.

The Forest Freight, in all its glory, was a vivacious red with chaotic spikes like the thorns of a rosebush, decorating all sides of its monstrosity. Inside there was barely any space left to get through as men of all sizes gathered in their respective groups. Some wore finely tailored suits and slicked back hair that showed off their hideous hairlines. Others opted to be more honest with their choice of style, sporting musty dirt-stained clothes, and shoes that were so worn out they looked like they had been used to dig up dead bodies. She was out of place, truthfully, in her fitted black jumpsuit that contrasted against her auburn coils.

Nevertheless, she pushed onwards, ignoring the side commentary, and grabs for goods from the pack

of wolves crowding the aisles. They were all full of trash. Smelt like it, too. The stench of wet pennies and fermented socks stank up the room, but Val was not a quitter, so she shoved her way through despite the slow startup of the train moving against her steps.

Welcome to the Forest Freight. We will be riding through the nation from coast to coast, so hang on tight!

At some point, perhaps in cabin two, someone had come up behind her, surprising her as their gentle hands held her firmly and guided her through the burrows of men.

Remember to be alert of your surroundings at all times and never …

The loudspeaker continued to give information, but Valeria was no longer paying attention. Instead, she fell prey to the warm notes of floral wood now flooding her senses. A scent so unmistakable that she knew it could only come from one man. Asher. *But what was he doing here?*

Her mind muddled in the possibilities, unsure of the sudden presence of her childhood friend. Oh! He must be here for the ceremony, she thought, starting to feel hazy as her vision began to blur just a bit from the misty air. Yeah, he'd qualify to graduate with the other six of them, how could she have forgotten? Together, they stumbled awkwardly, trying not to

trip over the legs of others as they made their way into the last cabin, cabin eight.

By then, the Freight's fog had settled well within the minds of all the passengers.

She settled into the nearest seat, Ash, of course, taking the one next to her. Valeria tried to take comfort in the darkness of the scenery outside but couldn't see much, so instead she played around with the delicate rings adorning her fingers, shutting her eyes and thinking of how lovely it was that Ash had suddenly showed up to accompany her.

"Val"

"Hm?" She could feel the train vibrating through time and space, urgent to get across the nation in one night.

"Look, please," He moved closer.

"Sleepy…" Val let her mind become groggy as she listened to the train trample in and out of the forest. This nap she was about to take would be excellent.

"Valeria. Zelle. "

This time he was loud, louder than ever before, and the sound boomed into her ears. Her eyes opened and suddenly all she could see was Ash hanging onto a piece of the floor underneath her feet, ready to be swallowed by an endless black-pit. The train was moving fast, too fast for anyone's

good. The surrounding air tightened the way a snake constricts its prey. Valeria held onto her seat, hyperaware; her dinner was five seconds from flying out as she stared into the soft almost transparent eyes of her friend begging for help.

But it was of no use. The Forest Freight had become one with the forest, the violent red walls sprouting with treacherous trees. Dizziness conquered the little bit of stability Valeria had left. Soon she could feel nothing but the pressure of each of her curves glued to the seat from the sheer force of the train. Every shade of emotion ran over her, and she fought to grab hold of Ash, before it was too late.

"Grab on tight," she panted, "we can make it, don't worry, we'll—" her voice lost strength.

At that he grabbed hold of her hand, "Zelle please, hold on to me"

But she could not get her hands to move. It was like she was frozen in time. No, that's not it—it was more like she had become time itself and the edges of the world were tearing away from her.

Her sharp narrow eyes shut close from the pressure, a black screen of eyelids her only sight at first, till visions of death evaded her memory. Her past unresolved issues, utterly unshakable. Deep down, she wondered if she was any different from the other men she had criticized that had boarded this god-awful train.

Ash's hand tightened around her limp one, and soon her head began to pound the same three words over and over again.

"Don't let go … Don't let go, Don't let go — DON'T LET GO"

At that, she felt her cranium bang against the train seat. The soft cushion had turned into metal, causing her head to ache like never before. She whined, trying her hardest to tug Ash forward. Set him down so that it could stop, so that this could be over.

His hand tightened around hers with enough pressure to force her eyes open once more. This time his eyes mirrored the floor as they filled with black, causing her to scream.

"Ash?! What's going on?" She looked around trying to see if anyone else had been swallowed up by the train, but gasped when she realized there was no one else here but them.

She should have listened to the city folk. To the chitter-chatter of the children at Lake Park or the soft nagging of the old women at the knitting center where she'd always stop by after her shift at the library. They had said it, all of it, had spent all day warning her of this careless decision. They wouldn't have been disappointed in her, they would have understood. Her mother however…

"Please Zellie don't let me go." Blood began to flood in through the windows, and Val broke down in tears. She wondered if he had ever forgiven her. Then she thought just maybe, if she could, she'd take

a leap into the pit beneath her. Anything to avoid losing him. Again.

Soon, Ash's cries became quieter as the train started to slow down. The bloody walls, the bottomless pit, and the unbearable pressure all disappeared into the soft fog before them, revealing the rest of the passengers like a veil. Oddly enough, she was overwhelmed with blissful feelings, as if she hadn't been tormented all night long.

"Hey," She felt Ash's long fingers curl into hers and smiled. He was alright. Not bleeding or dying or anything of the sort like she had imagined. She could see them now, in the future, seated across the stage with the other six members, waiting to receive a few words of honor from their parents. He was going to get his second chance.

You have arrived in the City of Exiló, Home of the Forest Freight and other famous magick. Hope you enjoy!

"Hurry up Zellie. Let's get outta here." Ash scrambled all over the place picking up whatever was near him and pulling Val along. Her mind felt groggy still, but she tried her best as she wobbled her way out, breathing heavily. She guessed everything must have been just a nightmare, because Ash was all fine and dandy, right? But she'd never had one so vivid though… As she exited the Forest Freight, most of the other men on the train stayed back, leaving her a bit curious. She'd have to investigate another time, she figured.

Outside she could see Exiló, the forest-buried city that had been long forgotten after the war and somewhat rebuilt from vines of ivy. As they exited out the back, she realized they were still on the outskirts of town. In fact, she could only slightly make out the greenery that covered the previously abandoned magic city.

"Ash?" She now noticed he wasn't next to her anymore. *Was he messing around with me?* She looked through the forest to see if he was hiding somewhere, playing a prank on her. But he was nowhere in sight. They had made it out together alive, right? A part of her wanted to tell him all about her nightmare, have him comfort her and then head to their favorite little restaurant, for old times' sake. They couldn't talk on the train due to the circumstances, but now they'd have plenty of time.

"Ash!" She called, once more, walking around in circles, "If you're playing some sort of game it's not funny!" She sighed frustrated. Did he run off? Why bother coming in with her if he was going to run off? He didn't even warn her that he was going to come along…

It was at the large gates of Exiló when she finally realized, as the sun had just made it above the forest, removing any traces of fog still lingering. She stood solemnly, paralyzed from head to toe, feeling like an absolute idiot. How could she have been so stupid? Ash was never there in the first place.

He couldn't have been, if he had died ten years ago when they'd been standing a couple inches too close to the ledge of a cliff at the coast of Exiló.

Panic spread throughout her body. What a moron she was to believe such a ridiculous hallucination. When she started patting herself to see if she had arrived all in one piece and wasn't missing anything, she realized she had made another huge mistake. She no longer had any of her things. The only thing she could remember was the brief image of Ash running off with her things as he pulled her along…and it battered her inside and out. *How?* The gate before her had opened, and now she could see the slight smirk on her mother's face as she stood on the other side, staring at her.

She knew, then, that whatever test she was supposed to take had already happened. And she had failed.

Uncertainty

Evy Guzman

As dead as you stay I still wonder
My dear echeveria what went on down under?
A sweet little succulent, mother of four
round, plump and fluorescent, her strength I adored.

til one dreadful day after dark
your leaves shriveled like bark
and mint green leaves fresh with water
suddenly mellowed into a deep yellow

all against your will
came rescue after rescue
like a frantic quest
but just failed attempts to save you

had there been an error in my care?
this gruesome death I couldn't bear
gone before the sun set after six
What remained?
just a hollow corpse that could not be fixed
or a grimy spiders new throne
but all that was left could no longer be mourned

Was ever there a chance for hope?
perhaps there was but now i'll never know

Pebbles

Evy Guzman

people move like fearless pebbles
whispering through the wind
wondering if time trembles
as they settle near the sea
condensed tighter than sardines
wishing they could jump out and see
what lies beyond the serenity of the shore
where crushing waves await them in violent silence
a ruthless riptide's desperate desire
for a soul too pure to know
of the danger that lies below

Blue Jay (2021) by Emma Kovalewich

Chalk and Colored Pencils on Toned Paper. 9x12in. I love to draw nature and having a hobby of bird watching, I created this drawing. It was important for me to have a contrast between the warm and cool colors shown in the bird. I chose red and orange as the main background to compliment the blue.

-Emma Kovalewich

"As You Like It"

Julieta Ismaili-Jean

Hope. How well does it measure against political instability, racial tensions, and a global shut-down caused by a pandemic?

How about when one has to deal with toxic people: "you are not good enough", "you will never make anything out of yourself", "you simply don't have it!" ?

Sometimes, the message is subliminal, passive aggressive: "How great that you thought you can do this and that you are working toward it. But, if you thought it's easy, let me tell you: it's not! This is so hard to accomplish. So difficult. There's just so much involved. However, there are other options, you know. Easier ones. A different KIND of objective, perhaps. And don't think for a second that this is a form of discouragement because it is not. It's just that your goals may not be attainable - for YOU!"

Because they don't like the way your hair curls up; or the way your name sounds; or the color of your skin; or because you come from a region that is not liked; or speak with an accent they may find irritating; or because they may think there is too much of your kind already - someone has to keep your numbers in check. "Speak American!" they say, even though it's English and a two-word slogan spelled with so many grammar errors makes one wonder.

"You are too young!" "You are too old!" "You are too small!" "You're just not one of us!"

Even if it is brief encounters, casual interactions, compared to everything else you go through, it does leave you with a bitter taste. With some creeping doubt. With something that becomes big enough for you to start questioning - and not just your choices and your dreams, but to question yourself. To make you pause. And even if for a split second, to go along with this idea, that perhaps after all they are right: "You don't have it, you never did and you never will"!

Although you try to fight it, and consciously you are fully aware - the world is full of those who will try to bring you down and tear you apart if they could (because deep down their cruelty comes from a place of fear, pain, and unmet needs), the damage is done. The doubt, the scrutinizing voice takes a life of its own, and it holds you back from even trying, from sometimes taking baby steps; from walking away from the negativity, from the comfort zone, from putting yourself out there.

What is hope other than this innate belief in yourself that you will prevail! That you will make it through against any and all the odds, even at profoundly uncertain times and in environments plagued by racism, intolerance, hatred, prejudice, and sometimes disregard for anything different.

Hope is a conscious choice we make to say to the world: "I can and I will!"
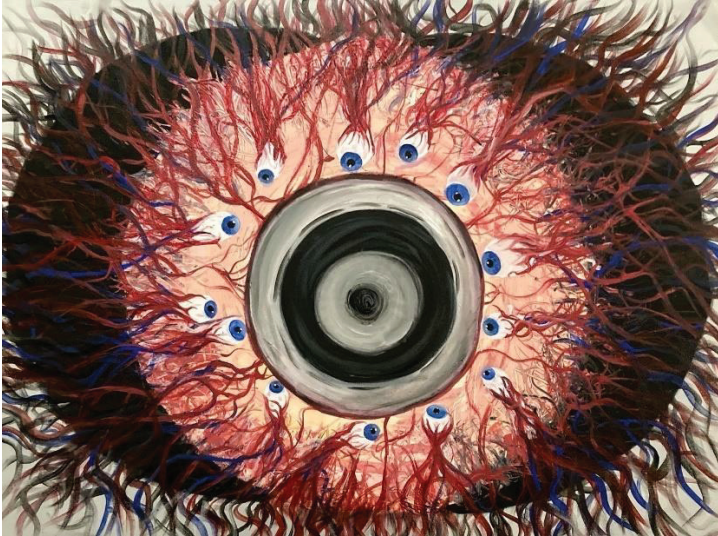
Evil Eye (2021) by Sayeda Sourour

Acrylic on Canvas (30 x 40)

Ukrainian Famine as a Genocide: A Reflective Essay.[3]

Michael Nascimiento

The Ukrainian Famine of 1932-1933 (also known as the Holodomor) was in fact a genocide because it was engineered by the Soviet government to punish the Ukrainian people. This targeted famine fulfills sections 6(B) and 6(C) of the International Criminal Court's (ICC) definition of genocide because the Soviet Union targeted the Ukrainians as a nationalistic "enemy nation," and the result was the deaths of millions of people. The debate over whether the Holodomor should be considered a genocide can be partially attributed to the Soviet Union's hand in narrowing the United Nation's original definition of genocide in order to avoid accountability for the Holodomor. The Holodomor's legacy, and the fight over its classification as a genocide, shows how powerful actors on a global stage have tried to suppress the true nature of past atrocities. While the Holodomor may meet the ICC's criteria for genocide, the Soviet Union's self-serving actions at the UN have not only resulted in the

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[3] Michael worked on this paper under mentorship of Professor Corrigan.

mislabeling of the Holodomor, but have also manipulated the debate over whether worldwide atrocities are truly genocides.

To understand how the Soviet Union perpetrated the genocide in Ukraine one must understand the importance of Ukraine's agricultural wealth to the viability of the Soviet Union. Stalin's Communist Party sought to take control of the grain harvest in the Ukraine whose people (including the peasants who controlled much of the agriculture) stubbornly resisted Communism and maintained their national identity as Ukrainians. What followed was the Soviet crackdown on Ukrainian peasants meant to suppress the population and bring them under Soviet control (Melnyczuk, p.19-20). The Soviet government's engineered famine of 1932-1933 resulted in millions of Ukrainians dying from starvation. While the Soviets may not have sought the deaths of all Ukrainians, Ukrainian peasants who resisted collectivization (the Soviet policy that sought to transfer farms owned by peasants into a state-controlled system) drew the wrath of the Soviets: "The bottom line is that Stalin...and their ilk were convinced that the Ukrainian peasants as a group were 'enemies of the people' who deserved to die. That was enough for the Soviet leadership; that should be enough to conclude that the Ukrainian

famine was genocide" (Naimark, p.45). The Soviet Union enacted a plan "to remove all food reserves from Ukrainian peasants so they would be forced to join the collective farms in order to survive" (Melnyczuk, p.42). As Ukrainians began to bear the burden of the Soviets' cruel policy, the genocidal nature of the famine became apparent.

The Holodomor may not be unanimously recognized as a genocide, but the events that took place do fulfill the ICC's definition of genocide. As starvation set in, peasants began to suffer the physical maladies of food deprivation. Their bodies began to weaken and health issues like lethargy, fatigue, and diarrhea gave way to prolonged suffering and in many cases a painful death: "Any exertion can induce heart failure. Eventually, a starving person will lapse into a semi-conscious state of sleep that might last a week, until their heart finally stops beating and they die" (Melnyczuk, p.46). Survivors witnessed the terrible physical deterioration of the people around them, including that of many children, "And the children's faces were aged, tormented, just as if they were seventy years old...She was eight or ten years old. Her legs were swollen like bottles, big glass bottles. They were leaking. Like broken glass, water dripping from those legs. Do you understand?" (Melnyczuk,

p.47) The physical harm inflicted on the Ukrainians by the Soviet Union's leaders fulfill Article 6(B) of the ICC's definition of genocide as the Soviet Union being the perpetrator of the famine, "caused serious bodily or mental harm to one or more persons...the perpetrator intended to destroy, in whole or in part, that national, ethnical...group" (ICC, Article 6 (B)).

While the famine certainly did physically harm the Ukrainians, the Soviet-inflicted famine also fulfills another definition of genocide according to the ICC. Article 6(C) describes genocide "by deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about physical destruction," (ICC, Article 6 (C)) and the Holodomor exactly inflicted that level of destruction. Visitors to the Ukraine described the effects of malnutrition on villagers and how their family members had died from starvation. The villagers reported that the famine was orchestrated by the Soviets with the intent to kill them, "We are all dying of starvation... It is they who are killing us. They want us to die. It is an organized famine" (*New York Times*, "Visitors Describe Famine In Ukraine"). In provinces with a majority of Ukrainians, people starved while just across the border in Russia no such food shortage existed. The famine was not simply a byproduct of Ukrainian resistance to Moscow's directive to collectivize the population,

the famine "was the aim" of the Soviet Union (Melnyczuk, p.44). The Soviets knew the famine would result in the deaths of Ukrainians.

While the Holodomor certainly inflicted bodily harm and brought about conditions of life meant to destroy Ukrainians, the ICC's statute on genocide requires that the acts show a group was targeted "with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group," (ICC, Article 6) and evidence exists showing how Soviets targeted Ukrainians for their national identity. In a speech on what he called the Soviet Genocide, Raphael Lemkin, the man responsible for coining the term genocide, recalled the words of a Soviet politician in 1933 at the height of the Holodomor: "Ukrainian nationalism is our chief danger" (Lemkin, "Soviet Genocide In The Ukraine", p.3). Lemkin claimed the resulting famine was the Soviet's effort to destroy the "Ukrainian nation." The Soviets were so obsessed with expansionism and the creation of the Soviet nation that any nation or culture perceived as a threat would be destroyed.

For Lemkin, the Ukrainian Famine was the "classic example of Soviet genocide, its longest and broadest experiment in Russification" (Lemkin, p.1). The Holodomor meets all the criteria under the ICC to be considered a genocide as the Soviet Union

clearly sought the destruction of the Ukrainian nation by inflicting serious bodily harm and conditions of life meant to destroy the group when it orchestrated the famine that ended the lives of millions.

Although the creator of the term genocide clearly believed the Holodomor was a classic example of genocide, the Holodomor is still not universally regarded as such. The story of Raphael Lemkin and the history of the UN Genocide Convention is key to understanding how the legal definition of genocide was manipulated by powerful forces to avoid accountability for atrocities like the Holodomor. Raphael Lemkin coined the term genocide after bearing witness to the death of much of his family in the Holocaust, a fate that he barely avoided. In the aftermath of the Holocaust, Lemkin lobbied for the creation of the Genocide Convention at the United Nations in 1948 (Lemkin, *Genos and Cide*, p.2) Lemkin's original idea of genocide was broad and encompassed political, social, cultural, economic, biological, and physical forms of genocide. If the United Nations had adopted Lemkin's original framework, the Holodomor would have certainly attained international recognition as a genocide. However, Lemkin's original framework was not adopted by the United Nations and the Soviet Union

is the reason why the United Nations passed a much more narrow definition (Applebaum, p.417-418).

Lemkin's original framework for genocide was supported in a resolution passed by the UN General Assembly in 1946. Genocide would have been identified "as a crime under international law…whether it is committed on religious, racial, political, or any other ground" (Applebaum, p.417) However, the Soviet delegation feared this language, knowing that they could be blamed for genocide against political opponents. They wanted the term genocide to be tied to Nazism, fascism, and racism. Proponents of the Genocide Convention adopted the Soviet Union's narrow interpretation out of fear that the measure would be vetoed by the Soviet Union. Ultimately, the UN's interpretation of genocide "came to mean the physical elimination of an entire ethnic group, in a manner similar to the Holocaust" (Applebaum, p.418). As a result, the Holodomor cannot meet the UN's criteria for genocide because it was not an attempt to eliminate all Ukrainians. The Soviet Union manipulated the legal definition of genocide in order to "prevent Soviet crimes, including the Holodomor, from being classified as "genocide"' (Applebaum, p. 418). When considering whether the Holodomor was truly a genocide, one would be wise to remember the

original intent behind Lemkin and proponents of the Genocide Convention. For Lemkin, the Holocaust and the Holodomor were two genocides of equally devastating proportions for the victims and that is what ultimately matters most.

Justice for the Ukrainian survivors of the Holodomor may be too late, but the effort to remember the famine and its victims and bring to light the full extent of Soviet atrocities in the 20th century begins with classifying the Holodomor as a genocide. There is enough evidence to prove that the Soviets committed genocide by the ICC's standards. Even though it's more difficult to prove genocide by the UN's definition, one should embrace Lemkin's original interpretation of genocide especially when it's noted how the Soviet Union manipulated the definition to avoid accountability for atrocities like the Holodomor. Our understanding of genocide is flawed because the very definition was created by flawed human beings. The Holodomor was more than just a famine, it was a genocide and only when the world recognizes it as such can the world learn and heal from the past.

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Three-Point Perspective City (2021) by Emma Kovalewich

Ink and Graphite Pencils. 14x17in.

The composition was important when drawing my buildings. I wanted to add some of the buildings closer to the viewer but also have some crowded in the middle. Adding different window shapes and sizes makes the buildings unique and that is what I wanted to do throughout the drawing. I sketched first with graphite and after went over it with ink. The ink wasn't enough, so I used graphite to give color to the buildings.

-Emma Kovalewich

Warfare Hermeneutics: Machiavelli & Sunzi in the 21st Century [4]

Robert Charles Scott

Abstract

Machiavelli and Sunzi's respective theories of war differ along compositional, ethical, and aesthetic lines. Machiavellian warfare emphasizes historical study, geographical knowledge, and imitation, pursuing war as a function of the sovereign's self-preservation. Aesthetic warfare is composed of five compositional elements upon which two forces, *zheng* and *qi*, are founded. Its ethics orient themselves across a dialectic of victory and minimization that serves as the foundation of the hierarchy of strategic offensive. The role of *qi*, a positive force, in Sunzi's writings lend his theories to a wider range of applications than Machiavelli's more contextual and historically oriented works. This is highlighted when comparing each model to modern theories of biopolitics and psychopolitics, advanced by Michel Foucault and Byung-Chul Han. The historical roles positivity has played in disciplinary and achievement societies when looked at through the lens of aesthetic warfare highlight the evolution of positivity-by-necessity, a phenomenon which departs from aesthetic warfare's orthodoxy and abolishes discrete features of Sunzi's writings.

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[4] Robert worked on this paper under mentorship of Professor Rotolo

Despite this asymmetry, the heretical consciousness found in Sunzi's work still leave his writings with the potential for wider applications.

Warfare Hermeneutics: Machiavelli & Sunzi in the 21st Century

Niccolò Machiavelli's popular cultural influence is immediately palpable in the 21st century. A diplomat and philosopher of the Italian Renaissance, Machiavelli's writings have strongly influenced Western paradigms of political philosophy and warfare. The eponymous "Machiavellianism" captures the spirit of his work, often characterized as overly honorific towards manipulation, diabolic cunning, and the pursuit of power. Under Machiavelli, the sovereign is subject to a singular ethical imperative, self-preservation, that guides the actions of the state as the arm of the sovereign. This political logic would serve as the prototypical maxim upon which future Western thinkers would expand and expound upon. However, over 1000 years before Machiavelli's birth, an individual to the east would offer a different model that would persist within separate spheres for centuries to come; Sunzi, a philosopher of war from the state of Qi within modern China during the 6th century BCE. His treatise *The Art of War* is a cultural milestone across

the East, and is even recognized in the West as a critical piece of classical literature. Though Sunzi's theories of war would never gain the same hegemonic position as Machiavelli's would, the prescience of his writing is darkly apparent when comparing the two.

Machiavelli and Sunzi's respective models of warfare are contrasted across three axes; the compositional, the ethical, and the aesthetic. Beginning with the compositional[5], though both regard war as an *art*, they model the components of war with notable degrees of varying sophistication. Machiavelli's war comprises, fundamentally, *arms*, which exercise power; those who are armed naturally command those who are unarmed[6]. Warfare is the macrophysical organization and discipline of arms, whose presence and exercise manifests the sovereign's law.[7] Mastering warfare is achieved through physical and mental practices:

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[5] Note: *Composition* here refers to the most fundamental "substance(s)" that each theory of war comprises. Composition serves as the ideal structure from which higher order characteristics of each theory develop.

[6] Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince* (Translated by George Bull. New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 62

[7] Machiavelli, 51

[The sovereign] must always be out hunting, so accustoming his body to hardships and also learning some practical geography[...]if he obtains a clear understanding of local geography, he will have a better understanding of how to organize this defense; and in addition his knowledge of and acquaintance with local conditions will make it easy for him to grasp the features of any new locality[...][The sovereign] must read history, studying the actions of eminent men to see how they conducted themselves during war and to discover the reasons for their victories or their defeats, so that he may avoid the latter and imitate the former.[8]

This broad theory of warfare is what *The Prince*'s art of war denotes, though it will be seen that a complete understanding of *Machiavellian warfare* is incomplete without its ethical dimension. It is *particular* and *real*, only observed through its actualization. Its theory is developed not at the level of the ideal but through a material reconstruction of history and geography, with the sovereign's iterative imitations approximating the ideal form of warfare through physical practice and intellectual study.

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[8] Ibidem, 62-65

Sunzi's composition is more sophisticated than Machiavelli's. Fundamentally, warfare comprises Five Fundamentals: The Way; Heaven; Earth; Command; and Discipline[9]. The Way is a Daoist dialectic contextually referring to just governance[10], which bestows purpose and deliberation. Heaven describes change and motion, particularly in relation to both climate and the elasticity of tactics[11]. Earth is geography, the knowledge of terrain and its exploitation[12]. Command refers to the virtues of a military's commanders[13], and Discipline is logistical prowess as well as control of military supplies[14]. The Five Fundamentals inform the consequence of battle, the dichotomy between victory and defeat. "Every commander is aware of these Five Fundamentals. He who grasps them Wins; he who fails to grasp them Loses"[15]. The Five Fundamentals are the ontological underpinnings of all other normative imperatives and features of Sunzi's treatise. In Chapter 5 he writes, "Managing many is

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[9] Sunzi, *The Art of War* (Translated by John Minford. New York: Penguin Books, 2009), 3-4
[10] Ibidem, 102-103
[11] Ibidem, 104-105
[12] Ibidem, 105
[13] Ibidem, 106-107
[14] Ibidem, 107
[15] Ibidem, 4

the same as managing few; it is a question of Division. Fighting with many is the same as fighting with few; it is a matter of marshaling men with gongs, identifying them with flags. With a combination of Indirect (*qi*) and Direct (*zheng*), an army can hold off the enemy Undefeated."[16] The division of tactics into *zheng* and *qi* represents the first superstructure beyond the Five Fundamentals, whose permutations will ultimately define the higher-order features of aesthetic warfare.

Sunzi's theory of warfare, *aesthetic warfare*, already deeply contrasts with Machiavellian warfare. Aesthetic warfare is *ideal*, *trans-historical*, and *anthropocentric*. The theory exists independent from actualization and is universally applicable in all spaces and times. Machiavellian reconstruction and imitation are not only unnecessary but actively discouraged, as we will observe later, on an aesthetic basis. Sunzi is uncharacteristically optimistic in the rational faculties of human beings to command the Five Fundamentals, so much so that failure to achieve victory rests entirely on the capacity of the general under aesthetic warfare independent of any extenuating circumstances. Victory in aesthetic warfare is necessarily and sufficiently determined

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[16] Ibidem, 163-164

by arithmetic determining how well competing forces align themselves with the Fundamentals.

Though Machiavellian warfare does not include the underlying forces found in The Way, Heaven, and Command (with Earth and Discipline corresponding to geography and arm respectively), those forces still exist and warrant consideration to Machiavelli. The most prominent, *fortune*, Machiavelli commonly cites as the ultimate factor in determining a sovereign's prowess. Fortune occupies a similar space to Heaven as a category of change; however, where Heaven is cyclical and predictable, fortune is "one of those violent rivers which[...]flood the plains, tears down trees and buildings[...]Everyone flees before them, everybody yields to their impetus, there is no possibility of resistance"[17]. Overwhelming and erratic, when fortune strikes, those who have not worked to insulate themselves are swept away; while it can be foreseen in the short term, it follows no comprehensible pattern that lends itself to long-term rational prediction[18]. Analogous to Command, Machiavelli explores *beast virtues*[19], modes of

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[17] Machiavelli, 105

[18] Ibidem, 108

[19] Note: "Beast virtues" references the animist analogy presented by Machiavelli to explain the dual modes of the

behavior that the sovereign selectively occupies to further their rule: "[...]the lion is defenceless from traps and the fox is defenceless from wolves. Therefore one must be a fox in order to recognize traps, and a lion to frighten off wolves."[20] Since the fox and the lion combat each others' deficiencies, it is imprudent to always assume these modes of behavior; rather, the sovereign must create a facade of whatever beast the situation requires while remaining alert to any winds of fortune that would demand a behavior change.

Machiavellian warfare encapsulates neither fortune nor beast virtues nor an analogous category to The Way as a consequence of its ethical dimension, which regards warfare only as a function of *self-preservation* on behalf of the sovereign. Warfare perpetuates the sovereign's existence, for "unless [the sovereign] commands its own arms, no principality is secure; rather, it is dependent on fortune, since there is no valour and no loyalty to

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sovereign's behavior. The first, "lion", sees the sovereign exercise visible power to impose his will on the principality. The second, "fox", sees the sovereign outmaneuver obstacles or foes to whom the visible power is no object, sometimes visibly and sometimes invisibly. Balancing the two modes ensures the sovereign's self-perpetuation.

[20] Ibidem, 74

defend it when the time comes[...]a man who neglects what is actually done for what should be done moves towards self-destruction rather than self-preservation."[21] The classical Greco-Western paradigm of political ethics hinders the sovereign under Machiavellian warfare since the pursuit of traditional virtues often prevents the sovereign from claiming victory over foes who abandon virtue[22]. Machiavellian warfare rejects auxiliaries and mercenaries on account of their disloyalty per this principle: "Wise princes[...]have preferred to lose battles with their own forces than win them with others, in the belief that no true victory is possible with alien arms."[23] It subordinates victory to self-preservation; just governance does not occupy a space in Machiavellian warfare as it does in aesthetic warfare because Machiavellian warfare is itself a prerequisite to just governance. Fortune and beast virtues fall outside of Machiavellian warfare as they are chiefly concerned with sovereignty and only associate with warfare as a consequence.

Aesthetic warfare's ethical dimension is developed in its treatment of civilians and

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[21] Ibidem, 61-65

[22] Ibidem, 65

[23] Ibidem, 58

espionage, explored in Chapters 2 and 13 respectively. In Chapter 2, Sunzi writes;

Without a full understanding of the harm caused by war, it is impossible to understand the most profitable way of conducting it[...]supplying an army at a distance drains the public coffers and impoverishes the common people. Where an army is close at hand, prices rise; when prices rise, the common people spend all they have; when they spend all, they feel the pinch of taxies and levies[...]the common people lose seven-tenths of their wealth[...]in War, prize victory, not a protracted campaign.[24]

Aesthetic warfare is defined here by its sociological and economic consequences. It emphasizes the *minimization of external harm* that stems from its actualization. This is compounded in Chapter 13:

Raising an army of a hundred thousand men and marching them three hundred miles drains the pockets of the common people and the public treasury to the daily sum of a thousand taels of silver. It causes commotion at home and abroad and sets countless men tramping the highways exhausted. It keeps seven

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[24] Sunzi, 10-13

hundred thousand families from their work. Two armies may confront each other for several years, for a single decisive battle. It is therefore callous to begrudge the expense of a hundred taels of silver for knowledge of the enemy's situation.[25] *Such a miser is no commander of men, no support to his lord, no master of victory.*[26]

Once again, emphasis is placed on minimization. Peasants lived in eight-family communities, organized in a nine-by-nine grid of fifteen square acres with the families residing in the centermost fifteen with the rest being used as farmland. When one of the families had a member in an army, the other seven were obligated to support the soldier, preventing them from tending to crops properly. The ethical component of aesthetic war is dialectical. A general necessarily engages in warfare to achieve victory, but in doing so strives to minimize the consequences of warfare. The tension and synthesis between victory and minimization drive aesthetic warfare.

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[25] Note: Chapter 13 is titled "Espionage"; the hundred taels and knowledge Sunzi refers to here are the price of employing spies and the information gleaned from them.
[26] Ibidem, 314-316

The aesthetic dimension of Machiavellian war is imitation. At the compositional level, the study of history causes one to imitate victories and evade failures. At the ethical level, the virtues of the lion and fox are imitated to overwhelm and outwit the sovereign's foes; the appearance of various traits—generosity, compassion, piety, courage—should be imitated to promote a positive image while the sovereign remains ready to abandon such charades at a moment's notice.[27] Aesthetic warfare, in contrast, shuns imitation:

To be victorious in battle and to be acclaimed for one's skill is no true skill. To lift autumn fur is no Strength; to see sun and moon is no Perception; to hear thunder is no Quickness of hearing. The Skillful Warrior of old won easy victories. The victories of the Skilled Warrior are not extraordinary victories; they bring neither fame for wisdom nor merit for valor. His victories are Flawless; his victory is Flawless because it is Inevitable; he vanquishes an already defeated enemy.[28]

Aesthetic warfare regards *visible* warfare as lower than *invisible* warfare as a consequence of its composition. Since aesthetic warfare is composed at

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[27] Machiavelli, 65-70

[28] Sunzi, 22-23

the level of the ideal, contemplating historical, material iterations of warfare is a distraction from pursuing true arts of war. *Knowing* comes before *achieving*[29]. Emphasizing the material places the proverbial cart before the horse, as it preoccupies itself with achievement before knowledge. The aesthetic war is unseen, bloodless, and ultimately devoid of merit[30], defined not by troop movements or supply chains but by stratagems, deceit, and *ruse de guerre* first and foremost. *Zheng* and *qi*, the Direct and Indirect, play a prominent role here.

Zheng is *orthodox*[31]. It engages the enemy overtly and regularly. Its motions are easily divined and contested. In a battle of armies, the main force is *zheng*. *Qi* is *heterodox*[32]. It engages the enemy covertly and irregularly. Its motions are invisible to the enemy and unique in their actualization. In a battle of armies, the flank is *qi*. Where *zheng* is the "fixed assault", *qi* is the "flexible maneuver"[33].

This combination of *zheng* and *qi*, downstream from the Five Fundamentals, is what composes all of aesthetic warfare's tactics. Sunzi characterizes tactics

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[29] Ibidem, 151
[30] Ibidem, 155
[31] Ibidem, 164
[32] Ibidem, 164
[33] Ibidem, 164

as an *actual infinity* through a comparison to the senses:

There are but five notes, and yet their permutations are more than can ever be heard. There are but five colors, and yet their permutations are more than can ever be seen. There are but five flavors, and yet their permutations are more than can ever be tasted. In the dynamics of War, there are but these two — Indirect and Direct — and yet their permutations are inexhaustible. They give rise to each other in a never-ending, inexhaustible cycle.[34]

Zheng and *qi* are dialectical, mutually necessary to compose tactics (the synthesis). Though it is *qi* that ultimately achieves victory[35], it is only through *zheng*, the orthodox, that *qi*, the heterodox, is achieved. That which is covert and invisible cannot be without the presence of the overt and visible. The *zheng-qi* dialectic defines the most important feature of aesthetic warfare, the *hierarchy of strategic offense*:

Ultimate excellence lies not in winning every battle but in defeating the enemy without ever fighting. The highest form of warfare is to attack Strategy itself; the next, to attack Alliances; the next, to attack Armies; the

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[34] Ibidem, 27
[35] Ibidem, 16

lowest form of war is to attack Cities. Siege warfare is a last resort[...]the general who cannot master his anger orders his troops out like ants, sending one in three to their deaths, without taking the city. This is the calamity of siege warfare.[36]

The hierarchy is defined by the role of *qi*. The lower forms, wars of Armies and Cities, poorly integrate *qi* into their actualization. They are highly visible by nature and thus rely on *zheng* as their primary instrument. They are destructive and simple to pilot. The higher forms, wars of Strategy and Alliances, strongly integrate *qi* into their actualization. They are invisible by nature and thus shun *zheng* as a secondary instrument. They are bloodless and difficult to pilot. Higher forms of warfare are also justified on ethical grounds in addition to aesthetic ones; unseen war is not only more beautiful and difficult to wage, but also better at synthesizing the victory-minimization dialectic by skirting the consequences observed by the conflicts innate to lower forms of warfare.

Modern theories of power bear interesting parallels to Machiavellian and aesthetic warfare, particularly the bio-psycho-theories of Michel

[36] Ibidem, 14-15

Foucault and Byung-Chul Han. Foucault's *biopolitics* refers to the brand of power characteristic to industrial, disciplinary society that differentiated it from pre-industrial, sovereign society; the administration of power used to prolong and transform life, such that it "confines [the body] within a system of commands and prohibitions[...]supervision was effected through an entire series of interventions and regulatory controls: a biopolitics of the population."[37] The *prison* is the archetypal biopolitical institution, acculturating inmates through disciplinary society's overwhelming normativity. The technology of industrial society, Foucault argues, allows discipline to "[dissociate] power from the body...disciplinary coercion establishes in the body the constricting link between an increased aptitude and an increased domination."[38] The biopolitical arises from a series of comorbid policies of industrial society that begin to appropriate disciplinary power before it totalizes into disciplinary society itself, beginning

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[37] Byung-Chul Han, *Topology of Violence* (Translated by Amanda DeMarco. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2018), 84
[38] Foucault, 138

in secondary education...later in primary schools; they slowly invested the space of the hospital; and, in a few decades, they restructured the military organization...On almost every occasion, they were adopted in response to particular needs: an industrial innovation, a renewed outbreak of certain epidemic diseases, the invention of the rifle or the victories of Prussia.[39]

Han's *psychopolitics* concerns itself with the mind as biopolitics concerns itself with the body. Psychopolitics reflect the power and interests of modern *achievement society*, Han's image of modern late-stage capitalism, which is defined by a dialectic of freedom and compulsion:

The freedom of Can *generates even more coercion than the disciplinarian* Should, *which issues commandments and prohibitions.* Should *has a limit. In contrast,* Can *has none. Thus, the compulsion entailed by* Can *is unlimited...Psychic maladies such as depression and burnout express a profound crisis of freedom. They represent pathological signs that*

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[39] Ibidem, 138

freedom is now switching over into manifold forms of compulsion.[40]

The object of psychopolitics is as cultivative as biopolitics, but looks to coerce through the invisible exploitation of freedom instead of visible repressive forces. Its sophistication and invisibility offers psychopolitics greater access to the economic potential of achievement society. The paradigm shift from biopolitical disciplinary society to psychopolitical achievement society is facilitated through the same process of policy and technology that originally delivered the former, but also represents a shift in disposition, from a paradigm of negativity to one of positivity. It is an analysis of these two concepts that underpins the fundamental differences between biopolitics and psychopolitics, and the roles each concept plays in Machiavellian warfare as well as aesthetic warfare establish the prescience of the latter over the former when comparing them to the psychopolitical and biopolitical models of power.

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[40] Byung-Chul Han, *Psychopolitics: Neoliberalism and New Technologies of Power* (Translated by Erik Butler. Verso Books, 2017), 1-2

Negativity most broadly is defined by resistance, negation, and repression[41]; it is orthodoxical in nature. Sovereign societies employed negativity through the threat of death[42], ritualized through the military[43] and law which made *criminality* synonymous with an attack on the sovereign's will[44]. Negativity under disciplinary societies manifested as biopolitics, replacing torture in sovereign society with calculated legal and normative coercion, "methods which [make] possible the meticulous control of the operations of the body, which [assure] the constant subjugation of its forces and [impose] upon them a relation of docility-unity."[45] The disciplinary prison replaced the sovereign's sword.

Positivity, in contrast, is defined by freedom, flexibility, desire, and inclination[46]; it is heterodoxical in nature. Positivity is characteristic of achievement society, which "represents a highly efficient, indeed an intelligent, system for exploiting

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[41] Han, Topology, 20-21

[42] Ibidem, 83

[43] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (Translated by Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 50

[44] Ibidem, 47

[45] Ibidem, 137

[46] Han, *Topology*, 25, 44

freedom."[47] *Psychopolitics* is the medium with which achievement society weaponizes positivity; "Immaterial and non-physical forms of production are what determine the course of capitalism[...]Now, productivity is not to be enhanced by *overcoming* physical resistance so much as by *optimizing* psychic or mental processes. Physical discipline has given way to mental optimization."[48] The achievement society employs psychopolitical forces to transform the economic *subject* to *project*[49] through a fundamental transformation in the owner-worker relationship from *allo*-exploitation to *auto*-exploitation[50]. This transformation, wherein the achievement-subject perceives themself no longer as such but as a project, sees them "refashioning and reinventing themselves". This superficial emancipation precedes a crisis of freedom occurs as the productive forces of the mind exploit themselves through compulsive achievement and optimization, ironically, as a consequence of excessive positivity.

Machiavellian warfare and aesthetic warfare each originate from sovereign societies, though their relationship to the negativity of those societies is

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[47] Han, *Psychopolitics*, 3
[48] Ibidem, 25
[49] Ibidem, 1
[50] Ibidem, 4-5

different. Machiavellian warfare is exclusively exercised by sovereignty to perpetuate itself. Its ethical dimension makes it impossible to remove Machiavellian warfare from sovereignty without producing various anachronisms. If a general's telos is anything other than self-perpetuation, the model begins to implode on itself. The power exercised in Machiavellian warfare is that of the sword used exclusively by the sovereign; delegating war to others goes against its central ethos[51]. Machiavellian warfare is also *immunological;* the sovereign *inoculates* himself against fortune, employing negativity to escape ruin at the hands of the *viral other*[52]. The immunological paradigm of violence firmly establishes Machiavellian warfare's dependence on negativity as its primary medium. Aesthetic warfare employs negativity as *zheng*, the orthodox tactic. Its visibility gives rise to *qi*'s invisibility, whose positivity guarantees victory. Negativity only exists to exacerbate positivity. The hierarchy of strategic offense shuns negativity, elevating *qi*'s positivity as instrumental to the aesthetic and ethical superiority of wars against Strategy and Alliances; negativity only exists insofar

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[51] Machiavelli, 41
[52] Ibidem, 105-106

as it creates positivity. Aesthetic warfare is thus *non-immunological;* the hierarchy of strategic offense aims to *uncreate* enemies instead of *inoculating against* them, creating a fundamentally different paradigm as a consequence of positivity.

Though Sunzi significantly predates Machiavelli, aesthetic warfare aligns itself closer to societies of discipline and achievement than they do sovereignty. The victory-minimization dialectic is biopolitical, concerning itself with the proliferation of life through the prevention of war's harmful externalities. The hierarchy of offense is psychopolitical, favoring techniques that are invisible and psychic first and foremost. The conditions of Sunzi's era had neither the technologies of industrialization that necessitated the biopolitical features of disciplinary society[53] nor the technologies of immaterial production that necessitated the psychopolitical features of achievement society[54]. Absent these, aesthetic warfare would never reach its highest form since biopolitics advances the victory-minimization dialectic along ethical lines and psychopolitics

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[53] Han, *Topology*, 84-85

[54] Han, *Psychopolitics*, 25-27

advances the integration of *qi* up the hierarchy of strategic offense.

This anachronism alone makes aesthetic warfare a prescient model for analyzing the progression of war, power, and society through time unique from Machiavellian warfare. Carl Schmitt's writings of the twentieth century are descendants of Machiavelli's model. War is political in and of itself[55]; war is an *existential* exercise, hierarchy of removing questions of normativity from its practice (there is no "just war")[56]; war is *decision* before *discussion*, an "unmediated verdict made with the sword."[57] Schmitt's warfare emphasizes the *violence of negativity,* employing its repressive qualities to exercise political will. Yet any model that excludes positivity fails to account for the evolution of power. Schmitt's model is married to the discrete character negativity offers, so much so that it cannot account for the character-less positivity of the twenty-first century[58]. Character is intrinsically negative on account of using repression and exclusion to define itself[59]. The dichotomies that appear in Schmitt's

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[55] Han, *Topology*, 39
[56] Ibidem, 37-38, 40
[57] Ibidem, 42
[58] Ibidem, 43
[59] Ibidem, 28

writing and the temporal qualities of Machiavelli's work are at odds with the modern *violence of positivity* of psychopolitical achievement society.

Aesthetic warfare, in contrast, aligns itself cleanly with the evolution of power through the hierarchy of strategic offense. Antiquity (sovereignty) restricted itself to *zheng* to the detriment of *qi*. The sovereign's sword is too preoccupied with condemning the body to engage with the higher, psychic components of aesthetic warfare (*qi*). Wars against Armies and Cities are commonplace in sovereign society's economy of negative violence. Modern psychopolitics, then, represents the highest form of warfare hitherto known to man. It is, by nature, invisible[60] and highly aesthetic[61]. Its crowning achievement, the *auto*-exploitation of the achievement-subject's psyche, is a war against Strategy in its purest form:

> [I]t arises from an unusual battle, one without domination or enmity. One wages war against oneself and does violence to oneself. It no longer sounds from the disciplinary society's institutions of incarceration but rather from the psyche of the achievement-subject.

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[60] Han, *Psychopolitics*, 14
[61] Ibidem, 25-26

Paradoxically, this new prison is called freedom. It's like a labor camp where one is prisoner and warden all at once[...]it is ruled by the violence of positivity, which makes freedom indistinguishable from compulsion.[62]

How, then, does one make sense of the 20th century through the lens of aesthetic warfare? From infancy to the Cold War, it is marked by disciplinary societies, those of negativity and negative technologies. The World Wars are phenomena of negativity as a consequence of such technologies; gas, bombs, and tanks are, by nature, highly visible and pertaining to the body. They do not function otherwise. However, in the World Wars, one can observe natal positivity, particularly in respect to their international scope. One might say that the aspirations of these conflicts to become wars of Alliances were thwarted by the negative technological circumstances of the era, a crisis that entailed a regression to wars of Armies and Cities. Throughout the first half of the 20th century, the immunological paradigm demanded increasing negativity to negate negation, lacking the imagination to meaningfully integrate positivity. The culmination of this demand, atomic weaponry,

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[62] Han, *Topology*, 89-90

is a milestone of overwhelming force, a moment where *absolute negativity* was realized; the ultimate capacity to fully and completely inoculate against the Other. Their coercive properties represented the highest form of negative war technology disciplinary society could have to offer, the final instrument of the World Wars. Yet this too would precipitate a crisis, the confrontation of the Atomic Self by the Atomic Other.

This crisis, the first moments of the Cold War, represent the turning point in the history of 20th century aesthetic warfare. Absolute, atomic negativity cannot negate itself; the inoculation and counter-inoculation of the Atomic Self and Atomic Other is absurd. This absurdity, mutually assured destruction, represents a crisis for aesthetic warfare in its relationship to the victory-minimization dialectic, where "victory" has become synonymous with "defeat" and "minimization" with "destruction". The immunological paradigm's logical conclusions cannot sustain the dialectic. The Cold War, then, marks the beginning of a non-immunological paradigm of warfare, one that imagines and integrates positivity *necessarily* as a consequence of absolute negativity. It forced the modern *positivization of warfare*. The consequences of positivity-by-necessity fall

outside of orthodoxy aesthetic warfare's orthodoxy. Positivity was never necessarily entailed for Sunzi because his primordial era lacked the technologies to do so. It was always, instead, "imagined"; the Warrior sought positivity to wage invisible warfare and achieve artful victory, seeking uncreation instead of inoculation. Their creative realm was one where Han's "idiocy" or "heretical consciousness" was made operative; the imagination to choose from *without* instead of *between*.[63] Du Mu (803-852 CE), a poet of the Tang dynasty, recounts the exploits of various quasi-mythic figures in his commentary on the *The Art of War*. One such figure, the folk hero Zhuge Liang (181-234 CE), chancellor of Shu-Han during the Three Kingdoms period, executed what would become known as the Stratagem of the Empty Fort.

> *Zhuge Liang[...]when encamped at Yanping, ordered Wei Yan and other commanders of his to proceed together eastward, while he kept a small force of ten thousand to defend the city. The opposing general, Sima Yi, observed that Zhuge Liang had few troops in the city and that his generals and officers seemed to have lost heart. In point of fact, Zhuge's spirits were*

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[63] Han, *Psychopolitics*, 81, 83, 85

high. He deliberately ordered his troops to silence their drums, and he forbade them to go out. Then he threw open the four gates of the city and set men to sweeping and sprinkling the streets. General Sima suspected an ambush and drew off his army into the northern hills. Subsequently, when he learned the truth of what had happened, he felt extremely bitter about it.[64]

In another example, Du Mu recounts a campaign made against the Qiang tribesmen, wherein the general pursued the Qiang armies "at a leisurely pace".[65] The Qiang, unburdened by the pressure of imminent advance but fearing annihilation, found themselves in retreat and ended up drowning while crossing a river. If the Qiang had been pressed, the poet argues, each side would have been drawn into a prolonged conflict to the death; thus, the general is worthy of praise.[66]

Du Mu also identifies primordial heretical consciousness in ancillary contexts. When Sunzi states "There are ruler's orders not to obey,"[67], Du Mu quotes an ancient figure, Master Weiliao[68],

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[64] Sunzi, 184

[65] Ibidem, 213

[66] Ibidem, 213

[67] Ibidem, 218

[68] Note: Master Weiliao here refers to the supposed author of *Wei Liaozi,* one of the Seven Military Classics. His existence

writing "War is an instrument of ill omen. Combat is contrary to virtue. Generals are officers of death. They know neither Heaven nor Earth, they respect neither enemy nor their own lord."[69] Doing so elevates the heretical consciousness of the Warrior, opening opportunities to revolt against an unjust, illegitimate, or destructive liege. Du Mu also develops the notion of "calamity" to prevent any confusion in his interpretation: "A foolish general who is also brave is a calamity. Lord Yellow Stone[70] said, 'The brave are set on achieving their goal; the foolish are impervious[71] to death.'[...]A courageous man is liable to fight recklessly and to ignore thoughts of [long-term] gain. Such a man is not a Skillful General."[72] An authentic primordial heretic constructs spaces of silence to guard against calamity, where contemplation complements idiocy.

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and status as author of the text remains historically questionable.

[69] Ibidem, 218

[70] Note: Lord Yellow Stone is a mythic figure and supposed author of *The Three Stratagems*, one of the Seven Military Classics. Sima Qian's *Shiji*, or *Records of the Grand Historian*, identifies Lord Yellow Stone as an old man who bestowed upon Zhang Liang a treatise which enabled him and Liu Bang to establish the Han Dynasty (202 BCE–220 CE).

[71] Note: "Impervious" here refers to an ignorant disposition towards death or disregard thereof.

[72] Ibidem, 223

In Han's words, "Idiotism erects *spaces for guarding silence (Freiräume des Schweigens), quiet, and solitude,* where it is still possible to say what really deserves to be said."[73]

The primordial heretic aspired to positivity through heretical consciousness, seeking to transcend the technological circumstances of antiquity. By contrast, the negative technologies operative in disciplinary societies quash heretical consciousness. The power of punishment conditions the disciplinary subject to relinquish their capacity for choosing from *without*. Disciplinary society is antithetical to any institutionalization of positivity. Thus, its sudden appearance in post-immunological warfare consequently creates a shock of vulgar, Frankensteinian modes of warfare, abolishing Sunzi's pure and discrete modes. The *proxy war* is a synthesis of Armies and Strategy. Proxy states and the armies within are *zheng*, the orthodox condemned to visible wars of negativity. Their patrons are *qi*, the positivized heterodox, invisible merchants of death whose exposure risks unquantifiable destruction. Vulgar warfare, in its quasi-visibility and quasi-cleanliness, represents the crisis of absolute negativity, wherein the

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[73] Han, *Psychopolitics*, 84

overwhelming negativity of atomic states spills over into "safer" conflicts of negativity by proxy against the backdrop of necessary positivization. It is a failure to fully step into the post-immunological and recognize the Atomic Other as an invisible force instead of a visible one, a confusion exacerbated by the prohibition of heretical consciousness.

The end of the Cold War and beginning of the 21st century were increasingly driven by positivity, as is the present day. Drone violence, a mode of warfare now familiar to us, represents a highly sophisticated form of vulgar warfare. Not only does it advance along the victory-minimization dialectic more so than any other negative technology hitherto created, but it battles wars of negativity instantaneously, sans supply lines and deployments. Its presentation is clean, surgical, and invisible until the moment it strikes. Terrorism, violence highly charged with *qi*, aims to assault the psyche through the mutilation of the body. Its confused identity oscillates between visible and invisible, its idiosyncrasies becoming integral to its function. So-called "developed nations" wage economic wars with words and capital, "uncreating" enemies in invisible wars of Strategy and Alliances. It represents the most artful of modern warfare.

Positivity-by-necessity certainly leaves aesthetic warfare as a prescient but nonetheless incomplete lens through which an understanding of warfare might be totalized. It is tempting, then, to return to Machiavellian warfare as a lens for interpretation. To do so, however, would be an anachronism. While both *The Art of War* and *The Prince* qualify as cultural artifacts, the heretical consciousnesses developed by each thinker, fundamentally, exist on two separate tracks. Machiavelli was imaginative enough to transcend the Greco-Classical marriage of justice and politics, but in doing so fell victim to a deeply contextual mode of thought that could never truly leave the Italian city-states without revision. *The Prince*'s legacy is not the work itself, but in the tradition it establishes via the relationship of Machiavelli's consciousness to the political philosophical paradigm of antiquity. The negative theorists of the 20th century are the heirs of this tradition and its contextual-modal tendency. It is Sunzi's theory, instead, whose heretical consciousness and imaginative qualities lend propel it into the realm of the trans-historical.

In no place is this better seen than the juxtaposition between Carl Schmitt and Guo

Huaruo[74]. Schmitt's writings, while influential, are comprehensible and applicable without any mention of Machiavelli. In contrast, Huaruo, a military strategist and lieutenant-general of the People's Liberation Army, is understood *only* in the context of Sunzi and *The Art of War*. Huaruo's political-historical perspective clashes with various features of orthodox aesthetic warfare, iconically citing that "undue emphasis on the importance of the individual commander is not in accordance with dialectical materialism."[75] Huaruo also identifies various primitive forms of vulgar warfare in identifying certain "invisible" victories (the seizure of Peking) as the consequence of previous "visible" victories (the Battle of Tientsin).[76] Yet nonetheless in every aspect of Huaruo's military theories exists the fundamental form of the aesthetic stratagem; "Avoiding the full and attacking the empty is a key principle in Master Sun's strategic thinking. He expounds the importance of[...]creating the enemy's

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[74] Note: The characterization of Schmitt's relationship to negativity and Huaruo's position in Chinese military theory here are taken from Han's *Topology of Violence* and the collected commentaries found in Minford's translation of *The Art of War*, both of which are listed as references.
[75] Sunzi, 143
[76] Ibidem, 133

weakness and of forcing our own troops to concentrate their might; thus we counter exhaustion with a relaxed ease. And as soon as we detect a weak point in the enemy, we respond swiftly and seize the moment to attack while he is unprepared. We gain[...]victory by adapting our actions to those of the enemy."[77] *Zheng* and *qi*, the superstructural forces upon which these motions rest, thus remain an instrumental feature of Huaruo's import of Sunzi into the 20th century.

Han argues for heretical consciousness in the psychopolitical age on the basis of its emancipatory qualities, its capacity to stand "in light of increasingly coercive conformism[...]opposed to the neoliberal power of domination."[78] Such power is imbued with the modern violence of positivity, the coercive freedom of *Can*. It might appear strange, then, to label Sunzi's positivism as heretical. This confusion is relieved, however, when you acknowledge Sunzi as a primordial, ultimately *non-emancipatory*, heretic. *The Art of War*'s recognition of positivity in an original, idealist model of warfare identifies the work not as an instrument of political impetus, but as wisdom literature whose analytical

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[77] Ibidem, 177

[78] Han, *Psychopolitics*, 83

potential extends across a plurality of contexts and temporalities. The classification of "vulgar warfare" and positivity-by-necessity, despite their departures from orthodoxy, are but one manifestation of this potential. Huaruo's writings and presence in Chinese military theory is another. The Chinese sex manuals of antiquity, couching "The Art of Love" in the language of *The Art of War*, demonstrate the greatest lengths with which one could stretch Sunzi's model. John Minford's commentary on *The Art of War* includes a translation taken from the penultimate paragraph of *The True Classic of the Complete Union*, a Ming-era example of such literature:[79]

> *I am in no hurry, but the enemy [female partner] is hard pressed for time[...]and throws 'his' entire force into the battle. The arms clash as I advance and withdraw at will, using the enemy's food and exhausting 'his' supplies[...]The enemy surrenders 'his' arms and I gather the fruits of victory. This is called* jiji*[...], ensuring peace for one generation. I withdraw from the battlefield and dismiss my soldiers. I rest quietly to regain my strength. I convey the booty*

[79] Note: Minford's translation includes commentaries describing the specific acts each line refers to, which I have elected to omit as I find it unnecessary to the argument.

to the storeroom thereby increasing my power to the heights of my strength.[80]

This parallel is not drawn to profess the spiritual significance of Ming-era esotericism, but as perhaps the most provocative example of the versatility and applicability of Sunzi's writings. It is these qualities that demand a continued consideration of *The Art of War* and a deeper exploration of where his model could be applied today.

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[80] Sunzi, 291

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Raven (2020) by Emma Kovalewich

Chalk and Colored Pencils on Toned Paper. 9x12in. I used chalk for the background and colored pencils for the bird. I wanted the bird to be placed in the center of the paper. I wanted the background to be blurred out and have a warm color palette. The bird had tiny feather details, so it was easier to get that detail using colored pencils.

-Emma Kovalewich

Burgeoning Scholars

In this section, we highlight academic work by Middlesex College students. These essays and research papers were produced to satisfy course requirements. In these papers, students offer the best of themselves as they develop their skills as scholarly writers. For that reason, we wanted to share this selection of student writing with our community.

Editors
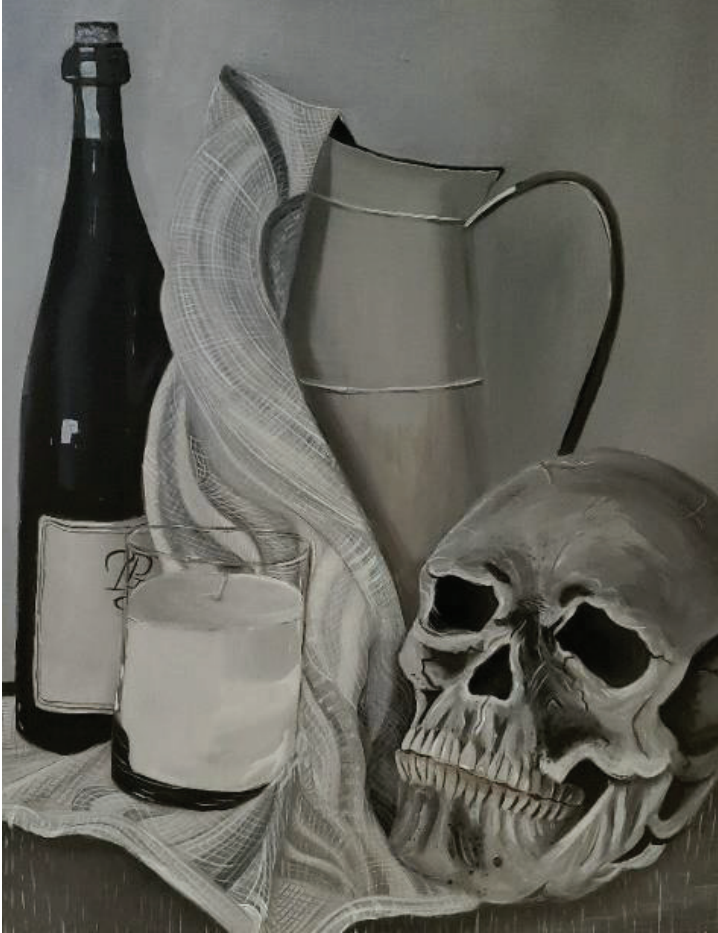
Grisaille Still Life (2021) by Emma Kovalewich

Acrylic Paint on Board. 14x18in. This is an acrylic painting of a skull, wine glass, candle, pitcher, and a towel. I planned out my composition through several sketches. I wanted to have a vertical object in the back, but have the skull closer to the front. I mixed Ultramarine blue, Burnt Umber, and white to make all my grey values.

-Emma Kovalewich

Medieval and Modern-Day Income Equality Are Not Far Apart.[81]

Gurdip Kaur

Over the last 500 years, the world has dramatically changed. There are more people and we have seen the world evolve in many ways. Between medieval and modern-day times, a common element is the difference in classes. Throughout time, people are labeled based off traits like money and status. Unfortunately, that has not changed as the world still consists of a range of people who are homeless with nothing and those who can afford the most expensive items with no care about others. When comparing medieval and modern-day societies, there are major differences when it comes to income, and that can be seen with how these people lived.

In *The Inferno*, Dante goes through several levels of hell with Virgil by his side. Along their journey, they meet many different kinds of people. In my understanding of Cantos I-VIII, Dante delivers a message through his journey that when people do

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[81] Gurdip worked on this paper for World Literature I with Professor Bender. While completing this paper, Gurdip worked with Joseph Lisnow at the Writing Center.

not do good in their real life, get punished after they die and go to hell. In Canto VI, it states, "The just are two, and are not understood there; / Envy and Arrogance and Avarice / Are the three sparks that have all hearts enkindled" (33). The audience is learning how several negative traits sent these people to their current location. Being jealous of other people, whether it involves money, status, or health would send someone to their current level. Also, being full of oneself, like bragging, does not help. Finally, having more money than one will ever need or use is a third reason that points to gluttony; which seems to be a theme in this section of the text.

During the medieval period, there were basically two classes of people. There were the peasants and the very wealthy. Although, the classes could be broken down further as there were different levels of peasants and the wealthy. In Europe, 90% of the people were considered peasants as they lived in small communities. Mostly, they performed physical work, while only eating small amounts of food and having little comfort ("Daily Medieval Life"). To survive, many of the peasants needed to grow their own food. They relied on the land and any skills they learned along the way to help. They would mostly eat different kinds of wheat with a few vegetables ("What Was Life Like in Medieval

Society?"). Right away, 90% being peasants is an alarming number. Seemingly, almost everyone lived a life that would be considered low class or poor in modern-day. It reminds me of the avarice mentioned by Dante in Canto VI. There is no reason that any population should be so skewed. That number is due to greed as once someone is in an upper class, they often do not care about the ones below them. I see this in modern-day. There are families that are struggling to keep a roof over their head. At the same time, there are large houses all around them with fancy cars in the driveway. An important lesson I follow and teach to others is be generous. If I help the people around the neighborhood, they can repeat the act. Over time, the action continues and everyone in the neighborhood can live without worrying about losing their house.

As for living arrangements, the peasants were seemingly miserable. The peasants mostly slept in some sort one room hut, which was only a single floor and it was missing many things. Instead of marble floors, they lived on the actual earth. The home had little ventilation and the only light would come from a few windows. Also, it was not uncommon for animals to live in the home ("What Was Life Like in Medieval Society?"). Since

electricity was not yet invented, nobody had power and therefore they were unable to have luxuries we have today like heat, air conditioning, and the internet. Besides natural sunlight, fat-based candles were the only means of light. The furniture was made of wood and consisted of items seen today such as tables, cupboards, and chairs. If a peasant could save enough money, they were able to add fabric to the items in their hut. The beds were made of soft material, but they had to deal with biting insects such as bedbugs and lice ("Daily Medieval Life").

The wealthy were better off than the peasants, but comfort was a problem for both classes. They had floors made of stone and also multiple rooms, yet they had no heat. Still, they were located in a better place. The rich and poor did not live right next to each other. Typically, the rich were a bit away from the poor. Some lived in a castle that was surrounded by a water. The peasants would need to walk over a bridge to get to the castle, which was also frequently located next to a religious building. The peasants were surrounded by strip farms, where they worked to feed themselves and make money ("What Was Life Like in Medieval Society?"). The design of society during the medieval time, could create envy. If I was one of the peasants, I would not feel like a

member of the community because of location. Nowadays, that pattern has not changed too much. In towns, there are neighborhoods that are nicer than others. One can see by the size of houses and how they are kept, if the area is rich or poor. In New Jersey, there are rich parts like Red Bank and Rumson, but fifty miles north there are low income areas like South Orange and Newark, where they have a high crime rate. When people are separated, they begin to talk about what areas are good and bad, which creates a stigma about those in who live in certain areas.

One of the most interesting pieces of information I learned was that some peasant actually had servants. Often, the servants were young people who would leave home for several years to work for another family. This was done so the young people would learn skills and even earn money at the same time. Both men and women worked as servants, with their gender sometimes playing a role in what they did. For example, men would do the heavy lifting jobs like cutting trees and the women would spin wool ("What Was Life Like in Medieval Society?").

Currently, the United States is in a spot where many believe there is only a rich and poor class as the middle class is disappearing. In "The U.S.

Inequality Debate," Anshu Siripurapu looks at the Gini coefficient, which measures a country's economic inequality. A score of zero means completely equal and one hundred is completely unequal. In 2017, the United States coefficient was thirty-nine. Of all the advanced economies only Chile, Mexico, and Turkey did worse. Siripurapu continued that by 2016, the top ten percent were wealthier than they were a decade prior. At the same time, the lower ninety percent had lost money. This is a case of the rich get richer. In "Yes, the Rich Are Different," Kim Parker, using a Pew Research Center survey, stated the rich "are viewed as more intelligent and more hardworking but also greedier and less honest." The survey featured 2,508 adults, with 65% believing the country's income gap has increased and "and most say that's a bad thing for the country" (Parker). Also, the survey found happiness, health, and satisfaction with one's job favored the rich. When asked about a yearly income for a family of four, the median amount was $150,000 (Parker). To me, someone needs a good job to make that much. So, the person probably went to college and worked very hard to get where they are. For a family that makes nowhere near that amount, college might not seem like an option. Instead, some

have to skip college to get a full-time job support their family.

Personally, after seeing the numbers from the Pew Research Center survey, arrogance seems be a problem in the United States. I have only lived in the United States for the second part of my life, making it somewhat difficult to understand everything that has gone on with the different classes. Although, I believe in treating people fairly. It is okay if someone has billions, but the country needs to make sure that the rest of the population is being properly treated. Once the country eliminates homelessness and the Gini coefficient is at or very close to zero, then the United States will be the right track. For now, we have a country and world that is heavily divided based on income. We see billionaires going into space, but look at the people struggling just to have somewhere to live. If the billionaires were trying to help those in need, I could see the compassion that the world so desperately needs. The issues that need to be addressed are humanitarian based and that is a major problem. A country as advanced as the United States should be able to solve such concerns. Instead, some help while others turn their head and act like nothing wrong is happening.

In conclusion, the world has evolved in some sense. The buildings are taller and stronger, with

people enjoying luxurious like the cell phone and internet. Still, there is an issue about class that has not changed from the medieval era to modern-day. If anything, the problems seem to get worse as time goes on. The envy, arrogance, and avarice of humans mentioned in *The Inferno* by Dante is a reason the problem has not been fixed. Once people can get past the beliefs that are diving the country, only then can change really happen. Until then, we live a world where the divide grows each passing year because of income and social status.

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Sweet Tooth (2021) by Emma Kovalewich

Oil Pastel. 14x17in.The medium used is oil pastel. Using candy and cake, I made multiple sketches of where these would be placed. The oil pastel made a great texture when drawing out the cake. I stippled some tan oil pastel to make those cake crumbles.

-Emma Kovalewich

The Issues Within the Fashion Industry [82]

Carmelle Latortue

William Shakespeare, in "Much Ado About Nothing," said, "The fashion wears out more apparel than the man" (qtd. in Raustiala and Sprigman). The fashion industry's most important concepts are trends. Every season, there is a new trend on the runway, and the industry replies to those latest styles by putting them in the retail stores at a fast pace and low cost. Therefore, people purchase new clothes not because they need them but because they are the latest trend. The fashion industry has a long history of challenges for the people it employs; while the issues have changed, the human toll fashion causes have not. The challenges that people working in the fashion industry face are fast fashion, intellectual property issues, and Mental Health issues.

Apparel companies manufacture clothing at such a rapid pace because of consumers' high demand for

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[82] Carmelle submitted this paper for her English Composition II course with Professor Lichtenfeld. While completing this paper, Carmelle worked with Joseph Lisnow at the Writing Center.

the latest trends. Fast fashion can be defined as a business model in which huge fashion companies like Zara, H&M, and Forever 21 respond quickly to consumer wants and needs for the latest trend at a rapid pace. By doing so, customers can buy clothes "that match exclusive and current runway styles without spending a great deal of money on individual items" (Charpail). Fast fashion, for example, describes products that are mass-produced and ready-to-wear as compared to haute couture, which describes expensive, hand-sewn, made-to-order clothing (Charpail). In addition, according to fashion experts, the origins of the fast fashion industry can be traced back "to transformational changes that first appeared in the nineteenth century" (Charpail). However, the term 'fast fashion' was first seen "in a 1989 New York Times article describing the arrival of Spain-based apparel retailer Zara in the city" (Charpail). When Zara first arrived in New York, the company just needed fifteen days to bring a new product from inception to retail (Charpail). Furthermore, "Zara's success in the US market signaled the impending explosion of fast fashion, which revolutionized the US apparel industry during the 2000s" (Charpail). Moreover, top fashion brands like Zara, H&M, and Forever 21, coincided with the rise of fast fashion by "a sharp

increase of about one- third in the amount of money spent on clothing by the average consumer between 2002 and 2006" (Charpail). Therefore, with fast fashion becoming popular and producing clothing for customers at such a fast-paced, a lot of independent fashion designers and people working in the fashion industry struggle to keep up with the latest trend.

In order to keep up with the buyer's demand, fast fashion companies are expected to produce new lines on short notice and at an affordable price. Therefore, sourcing from less-economically developed countries such as "India, Uzbekistan, China, Bangladesh, Egypt, Thailand and Pakistan" (Overeem and Theauws), they locate their warehouses in those countries' developing regions where the basic labor market protection such as minimum pay, restrictions on the number of hours worked each day, and production quotas don't exist or are not applied in order to benefit from the reduced labor costs (Charpail). Furthermore, there is currently an estimated 168 million to 200 million child laborers working in the fashion industry today (Overeem and Thews). Many of these children work in small workshops, spinning mills, and agriculture and garment factories in countries like "India, China, Bangladesh, Egypt, Thailand, and Pakistan"

(Overeem and Thews). Moreover, this exercise has become so popular that "only about 3 percent of all clothing purchased by US consumers was actually made in the United States, compared to about 90 percent in 1960" (Charpail). With these fashion giants' products being manufactured in different countries at such a fast pace with "North American and European demand for fast fashion" (Charpail), people working in sweatshops, textile, and agriculture fields suffer due to the working conditions, wages, and forced labor. Mathilde Charpail, the founder of Sustain Your Style and director of SANE, wrote in 2017, for a general audience, "What's wrong with the fashion industry?." Charpail states, that many of the workers working in garment factories are described by the European Parliament as "slave labour." The reason for this is because these workers "are often forced to work 14 to 16 hours a day, 7 days a week" and, "[d]uring peak season, they may work until 2 or 3 am to meet the fashion brand's deadlines." Moreover, not only do these workers work long hours in horrible conditions, but these workers also get paid very little. Further, several large fashion brands tell their consumers that the garment workers who make their clothes are paid "at least the minimum legal wage." However, many big

apparels fashion brands do not even pay their workers the legal minimum wage.

To shift focus, the fast fashion industry does not only impact the lives of its workers, but also the environment, as it is the "second-largest polluter in the world after the oil industry. The environmental damage is increasing as the industry grows" (Charpail). Several of the garment factories in which clothes are produced discard their untreated toxic wastewater into rivers, which reach the sea and spread out around the globe (Charpail). For example, "22,000 liters of toxic waste is dumped into rivers by tanneries in Bangladesh every day" (Charpail). Moreover, the toxic wastewater that is discarded into those rivers "contains toxic substances such as lead, mercury, and arsenic" that are destructive to aquatic life as well as the health of the millions of people who live near those riverbanks (Charpail). In addition, a 2019 *New York Times* article stated that "more than 60 percent of fabrics used to make mass produced clothing are synthetic and must be produced using fossil fuels" (Charpail) which is not recycled. Further, the article also states that fast fashion items are created for disposability and that "85 percent of textile waste makes its way to incinerators or landfills, with harmful byproducts polluting land, sea, and air

alike" (Charpail). Lastly, with the fashion industry's problem with pollution, people living in these countries' health is in jeopardy due to the different toxic waste being dumped into their rivers.

Moreover, big apparel retail companies steal work from small independent designers and do not give them credit. Big fashion giants like Zara, Old Navy, Forever 21, and H&M are known for stealing "the intellectual property of the independent designers who create emerging style trends" (Charpail). Carrie Anne Roberts, for example, is a British designer and single mom behind the clothing brand, Mere Soeur. Roberts sells, 'mamamerch' items with cute mom reference like "T-shirts, totes and coffee mugs" (Lieber). However, one of her best-selling products that sold hundreds to customers, "most of whom are based in the US" was copied by Old-Navy (Lieber). The product Old-Navy copied was a 'Raising the Future' shirt and which Robert also "created it to go along with a matching kids' tee with words 'The Future' printed across the chest" (Lieber). However, not only did the fashion giant copy her work, but they were also selling it for half the original price (Lieber). Therefore, with the help of her Instagram followers, Old Navy took the shirts from their website after days of being attacked, although the shirt was "still available for sale in

stores" (Lieber). As a result of this, the company emailed Roberts stating, "since Roberts didn't trademark the phrases 'Raising the Future' or 'The Future,' and does not have a trademark for the front or graphic design of the shirts, she has zero legal rights to them." (Lieber). This is not the first-or last-time a big apparel company has copied a small independent designer's intellectual property. Even with a world before technology, designers still went through this experience but compared to today's age with social media, big fashion brands can easily steal ideas from small designers.

Finally, people working in the fashion industry are increasingly having problems with their mental health. Although the fashion industry can be exciting and glamorous, it can also be devastating for the people working in the industry. For instance, "statistics reveals those working within the fashion industry are 25% more likely to experience mental illness" (Hartley). According to neuroscientist Nancy C. Andreasen, people "who are less creative are more likely to accept what they are told by authoritative people" compared to more creative people. Andreasen also stated that people that are more creative often focus on trivial ideas, and draw connections, and mentally replay events and images to better understand their surroundings. They can

produce fresh, creative ideas because of this way of thinking ("Designed By Depression"). However, research has shown that "[g]oing over intricate details in every aspect of your life can lead to feelings of hopelessness and ultimately depression" ("Designed By Depression"). With the fashion industry being fast-paced and highly demanding, many people working in the industry have suffered or are suffering from stress, anxiety, and depression. For example, "[d]esigners and models involved in fashion have also been known for developing mental health disorders ranging from depression and anxiety to eating disorders" ("Designed By Depression"). Due to high pressure, expectation, and impossible workload, most of them find release or comfort in alcohol and drugs, leading to the development of mental health issues ("Designed By Depression"). Many working in the industry have described it as "Mentally it was like working in a machine" (Hartly) or "it was sink or swim" (Soar and Chen). A notable example of this is the pressure models are facing to risk their health and safety as a requirement for employment (Hartley). Lastly, even with all the pressure, they face many choices to continue working in the industry.

Although the fashion industry has these issues, some people working in the industry feel differently.

In fact, designer Marc Jacobs "doesn't necessarily blame the state of his mental health on the fashion industry" ("Designed By Depression"). Even with his two rehab visits for addiction. Some may disagree with him, but photographer Mert Alas also doesn't believe that the fashion industry "is responsible for people's poor mental health" ("Designed By Depression"). Moreover, mental health should not be blamed on the fashion industry and people working within the industry should speak up about their mental health. If companies and people use their platforms to promote awareness for mental health and how it should not be stereotyped to the fashion world, then change can happen.

In conclusion, people working in the fashion industry face many challenges, many of these challenges are fast fashion, intellectual property issues, and Mental Health concerns. In fact, a lot of people who work in the fashion industry have suffered a lot because of the working conditions, wages, forced labor, and the competitive environment. Therefore, which leads them to suffer from anxiety, depression, and other mental health problems. However, the fashion industry can fix these problems by frequently updating the current

fashion laws and by finding new ways to help people working in the industry.

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Mark V (2021) by Jonathan Quizhpe

35 mm Film Photography. I came across the vehicle photographed in "Mark V" while on one of my usual photo walks around my hometown South River, New Jersey. When making the image I looked for some sort of odd element from the subject. While the color and model of the car are lovely, I believe the crooked "Mark V" emblem on the back made it a bit more visually interesting.

-Jonathan Quizhpe

All Your Data Are Belong to Us.[83]

Alexander Laudino

Considered to be one of the first internet memes, "all your base" became a humorous declaration of victory as it spread across early internet forums in the early 2000s (Metz, 2003). Appearing in the opening scene of a 1989 shooter game named *Zero Wing*, the short sequence, now immortalized in GIF form, shows the leader of the enemy forces boasting onscreen that they 'have taken over all your bases', but due to poor translation into English, the message came across as 'all your base are belong to us' (explain xkcd, 2021; Teh Meme Wiki, 2009). Around the same time on different corner of the internet, another meme first appeared, surveillance capitalism. Having been discovered and systematized at Google, surveillance capitalism spread its meme far and wide, casting the internet and later the world under its spell (Zuboff, 2019, p. 63). It was not long before data extraction became the norm; once the data was extracted, it would be analyzed and run through algorithms to produce

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[83] Alexander worked on this paper for English Composition II Honors- Professor Wincester.

behavioral predictions (Zuboff, 2019, p. 8). These predictions are then monetized when they are sold to Google's actual customers, advertisers, through automated auctions for targeting ads to specific users. This market and its customers demand better quality predictions, these predictions rely on more in-depth information being captured and analyzed and led to the development of extraction methods that expanded into all facets of life (Zuboff, 2019, p. 82-83). The new economic system is based on an extraction and prediction imperative that leads to guaranteed outcomes for other's profits (Zuboff, 2019, p. 195). If all this seems confusing, it is because it was intentionally designed to be opaque, it was not meant to be understood by the masses. It is as if all the tech companies and corporations appeared onscreen together to declare victory but there is no translation, and the message was never sent. The text on the screen should read 'all your data are belong to us'.

With the rise of large tech companies, extraction, analysis, and monetization of personal data became the main driver of the economic system in the early 21st century (Groth et al., 2020). This data enters into a value chain that ultimately leaves the individual on the outside (World Economic Forum, 2022, p. 11) with no compensation for their data nor any

recourse for when their data has been compromised (Warkentin, 2021). In addition to updated privacy and data laws (Maréchal, 2021, p. 161-162), individuals are in need of a trusted data intermediary that protects their interests and can navigate the tangled web that surrounds their data privacy and rights (Groth et al., 2020; Lehtiniemi, 2017; World Economic Forum, 2022). By shifting to a human-centric approach to interacting with technology, data intermediaries can help individuals to take back control and leverage their data for their own benefit.

Zuboff (2014) coined the term 'surveillance capitalism' in her digital declaration in which she put a name to the new market that had formed around data assets and their acquisition through surveillance. Five years of research and dedication culminated in Zuboff's *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power*, in which she meticulously dissected, and laid bare the backstage and inner workings of the surveillance capital apparatus. By leveraging neoliberal economic policies regarding deregulation that equated any government oversight with tyranny, technology companies in pursuit of exponential profits sacrificed the integrity of public knowledge and were able to take control of

the division of learning in society (Zuboff, 2019, p. 512). With the speed at which technology was advancing in the early 2000s, it became difficult to enact relevant laws that reigned in Big Others' encroachment into all areas of life, allowing for it to maintain independence from democratic society (Zuboff, 2019, p. 512). Combining the aforementioned with collectivist ambitions and behavioral psychology's radical indifference, inclusion in economic and political life remains elusive for all but a select few in the current climate in which capitalism currently exists (Zuboff, 2019, p. 513). With Zuboff having done the heavy lifting of identifying and analyzing surveillance capitalism, the questions become oriented around what can be done to fight back and looking towards what comes next as the world comes to grips with the unprecedented.

Before looking to the future, an assessment of the contemporary climate in which the world finds itself must be undertaken. With digital technology becoming almost ubiquitous in modern life, individual privacy has become almost non-existent while the privacy of authorities and corporations has become codified behind laws. In this shifting power dynamic, humans have become objectified and turned into data objects to be consumed by

machines. The machines are controlled by invasive others, "best characterized as those forces of power and authority that collect information about us and exert influence over us" (Silverman, 2017, p. 149). Wood (2017) explored the dynamic between authoritarianism and surveillance and their relationship to democracy as it relates to contemporary history. He then connected the current situation in the mid-2010s to globalization and neoliberalism and that the current turn towards authoritarianism is in part a backlash to neoliberal economic policies, (Wood, 2017) the same policies the led to the rise of surveillance capitalism. This leads to questions surrounding the levels of surveillance and what individuals will allow into their lives, one example being smart TVs and their new functionality that delivers targeted ads to users based on harvested household statistics (Antier & Vasylyk, 2022). While a clear solution has not been identified to help repel surveillance capitalism, one thing is clear, collective action is required, the type of action that stands in stark contrast to the deregulated, free market neoliberal policies of the past 50 years.

Lehtiniemi (2017) explored the relationship between surveillance capitalism and datafication, claiming that datafication lies at the heart of the

value creation mechanism (Lehtiniemi, 2017). By analyzing the various roles the user plays in surveillance capitalism, he provided a clear view of the user's participation in the process, which amounts to a "lack of reciprocities" (Lehtiniemi, 2017, p. 629) and is zero. Lehtiniemi (2017) then looks to different solutions that could empower users to fight back against surveillance capitalism, homing in on personal data spaces as one viable solution (Lehtiniemi, 2017). While well and good, that does not take into account that an individual's personal data has value (Hardjono & Pentland, 2020). This can be seen in the massive profits that technology companies reap from extracting and selling the data, but the market is asymmetric and so there is currently no way to properly value data (Groth et al., 2020). In order for users to get paid for their data, a new marketplace has to be created and a proper way to determine the data's underlying value needs to be put in place (Groth et al., 2020; Hardjono & Pentland, 2020; World Economic Forum, 2022). Groth et al., (2020) stated that for this to come about, it would require placing individual data privacy at the forefront and be comprised of four foundational components: a system for users to manage their data, the establishment of legal ownership rights for users' data, an exchange

mechanism, and a pricing formula (Groth et al., 2020). An additional core element that has been proposed by the WEF is the introduction of trusted human-centric data intermediaries that has the potential to reshape the current data value chain (World Economic Forum, 2022), which is what will be focused on here. It will be shown that the other elements of a symmetrical data marketplace are only possible with the assistance of trusted intermediaries.

Before exploring the role data intermediaries will play in overhauling the data value chain, a proper definition is needed, and an overview of their functions must be analyzed. In era of waning trust, data intermediaries can become the missing safeguard in the data sharing ecosystem on the side of the individual (Hardjono & Pentland, 2020; Leonard, 2020, p. 13; World Economic Forum, 2022). Functions include, datafication to support individual agency (Lehtiniemi, 2017, p. 630), empowering citizens and communities to control and automate flows of data (Hardjono & Pentland, 2020), and assist in securing and enacting privacy controls (Groth et al., 2020; World Economic Forum, 2022). By joining together and taking collective action on behalf of their members, their primary focus would be in "facilitating and managing data

relations between data holders" (World Economic Forum, 2022, p. 9) thus giving individuals more negotiating power. The complexities that come with will require the effort of multiple stakeholders and the role data intermediaries will play in bringing about a new economic system is crucial.

The first cornerstone in the foundation of a new data marketplace would start with data intermediaries and their role in creating a system for users to manage their data (Groth et al., 2020; Hardjono & Pentland, 2020; Lehtiniemi, 2017; World Economic Forum, 2022). In first approaching this problem, an individual would need to figure out what data is out there and where it is, and then have a place to store their data once it has been found. The difficulties in going solo are numerous and the task is often lonely as there are almost no areas of life left that have not been encroached upon by invasive others (Silverman, 2017, p. 160). On top of that, notice and consent leads to decision fatigue (World Economic Forum, 2022, p. 24) while privacy and security controls are often complicated leaving an individual confused. An interface is required to easily manage all settings in one place (Groth et al., 2020) and allow for users to pre-consent their privacy preferences before any data is shared (World Economic Forum, 2022, p. 24). The final piece

would be for the data intermediary to assist in organizing and analyzing an individual's data to help them glean insights that benefit their life; this is the raw data being turned into valuable data sets (Groth et al., 2020; Lehtiniemi, 2017; Leonard, 2020; World Economic Forum, 2022). Of course, all of this will not be possible without updated policies and legislation, another function for data intermediaries.

Power and knowledge is too concentrated (Hardjono & Pentland, 2020; World Economic Forum, 2022), but individuals have strengthened negotiating power when they take collective actions (Hardjono & Pentland, 2020), therefore by establishing voluntary, collaborative data intermediaries, an individual will be able to leverage the group to assist in establishing data rights (Groth et al., 2020; World Economic Forum, 2022). Two distinct roles come out of this, one where the data intermediary acts on the individual's behalf to protect data and steward its use (World Economic Forum, 2022), the other is where the data intermediary assumes a fiduciary role, ensuring proper care of the data and loyalty to their members (Austin & Lie, 2021; Hardjono & Pentland, 2020; World Economic Forum, 2022), balancing all the stakeholders in the ecosystem. In addition, professional codes of conduct and licensing might

be required to ensure liability concerns are alleviated, and regulatory oversight will require transparency for data intermediaries (World Economic Forum, 2022). By taking care to delegate liability, it will also help to reinforce the cyber insurance market, potentially allowing for compensation in the event of data breaches as the individual is left on the hook to clean up the mess (Warkentin, 2021). The current data value chain is complex, but with the help of a trusted data intermediary, the tangled web can be spun into a tapestry that offers the individual sanctuary from the invasive other.

The transaction exchange infrastructure and pricing mechanisms can be looked at together as this is when the focus shifts from privacy rights to economic rights (Hull, 2019), and neither can exist without the other. In their position, the data intermediaries will have the ability to aggregate member data as individually personal data does not have much value, but when combined, a better value can be negotiated (Groth et al., 2020; Hardjono & Pentland, 2020; Lehtiniemi, 2017; Leonard, 2020). This can be combined with an anonymization layer that ensures the privacy of the individuals whose data is being shared (World Economic Forum, 2022). Often times an individual does not have the time nor

expertise to value all their data, and so the data intermediary can step in to act on the individual's behalf, again ensuring fiduciary responsibility (Groth et al., 2020; World Economic Forum, 2022). Here the data intermediary is assisting the individuals in analyzing and discovering ways to increase the value of the data if the individual chooses to put it on the market (Groth et al., 2020; Hardjono & Pentland, 2020; Lehtiniemi, 2017; World Economic Forum, 2022). With the introduction of a trusted data intermediary, individuals will be able to start to take back control of their data and dismantle the surveillance capital apparatus.

Zuboff believes the data they collect should not exist in the first place, that the data has been renditioned from individuals as the surveillance capitalists have claimed their lives as their raw material (Zuboff, 2019, p. 232-233). There are also complexities surrounding the right to privacy and in turn the right to publicity that stems from it, where the issue surrounds "managing identity and limiting abuse of information in public, protecting both public and private figures" (Hull, 2019, p. 503). It also does not counter surveillance capitalism but rather works alongside it, and allow for individuals to monetize their data (Lehtiniemi, 2017), thus introducing additional economic incentives that

turns individual data into intellectual property (Hull, 2019). There is a belief that the focus should be solely on regulation and legal avenues (Maréchal, 2021) but given the neoliberal economic climate and current state of US politics, any type of legislation would be harshly and swiftly opposed by surveillance capital lobbyists given their concentration of power, knowledge, and freedom.

Regardless of whether data intermediaries are the solution, collective action will be required to reign in surveillance capitalism. Trust needs to be brought back into the equation and put at the forefront as social cohesion is waning in corporate and governmental institutions (Hardjono & Pentland, 2020). Individuals need privacy and with it the right to sanctuary as it allows for the individual to disconnect from the world and develop their identity independent of the group (Zuboff, 2019, p. 475-480). With humans' innate ability to assert their will on the future, the right of the future tense and the right to sanctuary are key components in protecting individual autonomy in a democratic society (Zuboff, 2019, p. 328-331). If collective action is required, collaborative and cooperative trusted data intermediary models look like they are best suited to handle the job.

The first wave of capitalism renditioned the Earth as its raw material, the second wave looks to be renditioning human experience (Zuboff, 2019, p. 344-347). Surveillance capitalism crept up quickly and without many noticing, leading to the current economic paradigm. Data intermediaries look to be a solid solution in assisting individuals gain more digital agency and control of not just their data, but their lives. Freedom and democracy has been at the heart of the global system that has allowed it to thrive over the past century, lifting many up out of poverty and allowing them to have lives that kings couldn't even imagine, but those ideals are being threatened behind the scenes at every turn. The reader will be pointed to the chorus of a song from 1984 by Rockwell, in which he harmonized with Michael Jackson, "I always feel like somebody's watching me, and I have no privacy" (Rockwell, 1984).

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A digital take on The Stevenson Memorial Angel (2022)
by Brian Orozco

"I know it is illegal, but…"[84]

A review of "'I just don't, it's illegal' – Is There a Moral Obligation to Obey the Law?" by Samantha Love

Gabriela Madruñero

In order for justice to exist, there must be some rules and duties that people should follow so social coexistence can be possible. These rules, are what people know as law. The law is clear, every human being is equal to one another. That way, no one is justified for not following it, because it was made for everyone. However, Samantha Love in her article "'I just don't, it's illegal' – Is There a Moral Obligation to Obey the Law?," gives examples supporting why it might be okay to break the law sometimes and mentions that the fact that a law demands certain behavior should be morally important for people, regardless of what the law says. This means that sometimes, despite the consequences, breaking the law will be allowed if it does not reflect one's values, principles, or what they think is right, as long as breaking it does not harm others.

The law is generally good, so people will not question themselves whether to break it or not.

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[84] Gabriela submitted this paper on her English Composition I Class with Professor Slobodow. While completing this paper, Gabriela worked with Joseph Lisnow at the Writing Center.

Nevertheless, there may be times when they do not feel supported by that law. Love agrees by saying that, "In a morally unjust legal system, you may well find yourself being punished for doing things that are morally right, but that does not mean that you should not do the right thing." Being against a law does not mean they are wrong. Instead, it means that people are defending what they believe, and do not let the state or those who have created the laws, impose the way they think. So, motivated by the search for justice, people will decide to break it and do what they think is right, even if it the law is said to be something good and always followed.

In a moment of despair, they do not think clearly and just act on emotions. A good example of this, is when Love quoted Joseph Raz. Love notes, "Raz gives the example of stealing medicine for an ill tourist who has no English language skills or right to medical care." Imagine being in a situation, when the only option is to break the law because a relative is about to die. People would not think twice and just decide to steal the medicine they need because it is fair for them to have it. Stopping to think about others would not be an option, but only about family. If they were taught to fight for what they want, thinking about stealing is justified because otherwise their relative will no longer live.

It is common to think that the law would know better than mankind, which is why rules are supposed to exist. Although, at times, it only makes

people wonder if it is being fair enough. For this reason, Love says, "We should be sceptical [sic] about a moral obligation to obey the law because at face value we do not know if a law is moral or not-something being law does not automatically mean we can assume it is valuable or correct." That is when people would have to stop and think if that law goes along with their principles. If the answer is no, they will probably go against it. Not because they want to, but because they cannot contradict and go against themselves. That does not mean they are not doing the right action.

In other words, people are allowed to break the law to an extent where they do not harm others. Laws can be morally unfair and protect one, but not others. It can sometimes go against values and also can make them act in a certain way without thinking if someone else is watching. Therefore, based on what each individual possesses as their principles and what they have known since they were children, people will decide and probably break the law, so their actions go along with what they preach.

Shoebox Still Life (2021) by Emma Kovalewich

Graphite Pencils. 19x24in. Shoebox still life was made using graphite pencils. It was a large area to cover with only using graphite, so I worked on each area multiple times. I used a kneaded eraser to create some highlights, but also left some of the paper surface white to make the highlights even stronger. I picked several different objects, but the ones that worked in this composition are the knife, birdhouse, jar with seashells, and a vase with roses.

-Emma Kovalewich

Empty Promises: Reflections on the Assyrian Genocide of 1933[85]

Martha Lopez

In the 1930s the British empire was not at its peak, but its influence was still surely seen and felt in many different parts of the world. 1930s Iraq was one of these places that felt the imperialist influence of the Brits. Besides the Iraqi, there is one group of people that have had to bear the consequences of the selfish, tyrannical actions of the British Empire: These people are the Christian Assyrians. These people were victims of genocide in the 1933. There are two clear perpetrators in this genocide: The British Empire and the Iraqi governing body. The killing and treatment of the Assyrians should be considered a genocide because it violates section 6a, 6b, and 6c of the ICC definition of genocide.

The Assyrian people were originally from the Hakkari mountain areas in Turkey. This was their place of origin, their first home. During the first World War they were targeted and persecuted. The Assyrians had a history of being attacked and oppressed. With the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the Assyrian people were rolling around the Middle East, defending themselves from Turkish and

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[85] Martha submitted this paper for her class Dimensions of Prejudice, Genocide and Holocaust with Professor Corrigan.

Kurdish attacks. The Kurds were also a minority in the Middle East area that is completely opposite from the Assyrians, but would later play a big role in the Assyrian Massacre in Simele. This affair is heavily analyzed by R. S. Stafford, a British official who writes based both on his own encounters with the Assyrians and accounts he heard (160). It was first in 1918 that the Assyrian people came into contact with the British Army. The Assyrians had been hung up on Russian promises that they would help them defend themselves from the Turkish and Kurdish attacks (Stafford 160-161).

In 1920, Turkey made it very clear that they were not going to tolerate any Assyrians living in the Hakkari region, and ran them from their ancestral home. The Assyrians who had been pushed out for a while already were living in Mosul, a plain in the northeastern part of Iraq. At this location, the British Empire spent two million euros on a settlement camp for the Assyrians. In this camp, the Assyrians developed what Stafford describes in the journal as "refugee mentality," and quotes Dr. Wigram, who analyzes the Assyrian experience. He writes, "For as Dr. Wigram rightly remarks in his book *The Assyrians and their Neighbours*, 'The administration of the camp erred on the side of kindness. Maintenance in idleness is not good for neither Eastern nor Western, and the Assyrian is a type that shows the evil results of it sooner than others'" (Stafford 161). Stafford calls this refugee

mentality a curse for the Assyrian people. The British Empire made too many empty promises to the Assyrian people. They filled them with hopes of getting back to their land of origin.

These promises spoken by the Brits did nothing but cause the Assyrians to be filled with dreams to go back. Stafford writes that the British brought about immeasurable consequences, "They certainly took this for granted and the inability of the British Government to bring this about has been a never-ending source of grievances" (161). This caused a mental separation, impeding any type of assimilation of the Assyrians in Iraq. Another factor that caused Iraqi and Assyrian dislike was the prominence the Assyrians had in the Levy military force. This regiment established by the British was at first designated for the Iraqi people, but in 1921, when the Assyrians joined, they held power in the Levy military force. The British admired the Assyrian Levies, and this did not improve their settlement status, and really did not improve Assyrian lifestyle besides the pay they were receiving. One consequence of the Assyrian hold in the Levies was the jealous sentiments of the Iraqi people. John Joseph writes in his journal article for the *International Journal of Middle East Studies,* "the British officials, instead of pursuing a policy which held out hope for such an assimilation, persuaded a large body of the warlike Assyrian mountaineers to enroll as mercenary troops for the suppression of

local revolts. Instead of helping the Assyrians from the very beginning to make the best of what were to them disappointing circumstances, and to carve out their own developments as citizens of the Iraqi state, the mandatory power was advising Mar Sham'un as late as the summer of 1932 to put faith in the League of Nations, which the mandatory was doing its best to undermine and mislead." (116). As mentioned above the British Empire did nothing to help the situation of the Assyrians, but rather fueled the hate and gave Iraq both literal and figurative ammunition to want to target the Assyrian people. This mindset grew the divide between the Assyrians and Iraqi, giving both sides more reason to detest the other. The Assyrians persisted in their desire to go back home and be indifferent to the Iraqi. The Iraqi continued their heavily stressed relations with the migrants to their country.

The Iraqi people were excessively suspicious of the minorities that lived amongst them. They suspected the Assyrian people to be lackeys of the British, too heavily influenced by the British empire. This dislike turned into hatred and the Iraqis soon were nearing a point to where the hatred was going to explode. While the British were there the Iraqis had to maintain their cool and act as if they were a mature country capable of dealing with minorities in their land. Hursy writes in his journal article, analyzing the Assyrian Affair,

"Iraqis saw in the British anxiety about the future of the minorities a plot for perpetuation of British rule in Iraq" (162). The Assyrians made the Iraqis nervous, Hursy comments, "To the Iraqis, the swaggering Assyrian Levies with their slouch hats and red or white hackles, who stood guard at the houses of the High Commissioner, the Air Officer Commanding, and Hinaidi, the British Air Force Headquarters, situated in a suburb of Baghdad, became the symbols of British domination" (166). Iraq was calling and hoping for independence at this time, with much pressure and heavy traditional sentiments in their government. Wishing for independence from Britain, Iraq certainly did not take kindly to any type of reminder of British rule, and to them, the Assyrians were a reminder of the power that the foreign imperialists had—and continued to have—in the 1930s.

This tension among the Iraqi and Assyrians kept growing and became worse. The situation reached its peak when the British Empire decided to end its Mandate. In 1932, the British Empire decided to negotiate independence for Iraq. The Assyrians, along with the other minorities, were to remain in Iraq. All the promises of getting their own enclave in Iraq fell through and the Assyrians reacted. In June 1932, the Assyrian Levies submitted their resignation letter and were adamant in their decision (Stafford 165). The traditional spiritual

leader of the Assyrians, Mar Shimun, whose influence was precarious at best, tried to convince the soldiers to remain in the military. Mar Shimun succeeded and promised to plead with the Iraqi government on behalf of the Assyrians. Thus, Mar Shimun made his way to Baghdad.

Mar Shimun had a bit of a dislikable personality, being a man who thought highly of himself and had petitioned to both the League of Nations and the Iraqi government that his spiritual and political power needed to be recognized, and subsequently, he needed to receive pay from the state. Since his demands were deemed ridiculous, Mar Shimun was advised to go speak to the League of Nations. Here Stafford writes of how the Shimun failed and the Iraqi government was favored by the League of Nations. All of these events led to a build up of frustration in Mar Shimun, whose attitude was contentious, but his authority had been undermined by the Iraqis. Stafford writes how this affected the Assyrian settlement project in Iraq, "From then on he did his utmost to oppose settlement on these lines. He succeeded, as no applications for settlement were made" (166).

The events that happened next, are what is considered the massacre of the Assyrians in August of 1933. Since Mar Shimun insisted so much for the Assyrians to be granted territory, he was summoned to a meeting in Baghdad. He was summoned in late May of 1933, and for weeks,

negotiated and debated for a home for the Assyrians and temporal power for himself. These negotiations took time, and while Mar Shimun was in Baghdad, British and Iraqi personnel tried to convince the Assyrians that becoming Iraqi citizens and settling was in their best interests. Hursy comments on the role of Lieutenant Stafford, who provided much of the first and secondary source of this massacre, " Stafford told the Assyrians that they must either recognize that they are Iraqi citizens, with the same rights and duties as the other inhabitants of the country, or they must leave Iraq, but that the real future for them lay in Iraq" (172). Therein lies the problem: The Assyrians were not Iraqi, they were Assyrian and proudly so. They were descendants of the first Christians with their own customs and culture. The Assyrians were being asked to give up their identity by both the Iraqi and British governments. They were being told to comply, to lose themselves.

The Assyrians, tired of this treatment and false promises, decided to leave. On July 23, 1933, Yacu and Luqo, who were two prominent Assyrian leaders, left Iraq for Syria. They had tricked the British advisors and the Iraqi government, by saying that they were going to head to Baghdad to help convince Mar Shimun to submit to the negotiation. A total of 1200 armed men went with Yacu and Luqo and more came from neighboring villages. This movement made Iraq anxious, and

Iraq alerted the French in Syria to both disarm the
Assyrians and to not allow them return to Iraq
(Hursy 174).

On August 4, 1933 the Assyrians returned to
Iraq, armed, and attacked the Iraqi posts in order to
return to Iraq. Some say that it was self-defense
while other scholars disagree (Hursy 178). This was
too much for the Iraqi government, combined with
the persistence of Mar Shimun and the long history
of hatred, the Iraqi decided to act. Stafford writes,
"Their irritation over the Mar Shimun's obstinacy in
Baghdad and over Yacu's behavior in the north
induced them to consider that the Assyrian
question must be settled once and for all and that
the only way to do this was to teach the Assyrians a
really severe lesson." (170). The leading military
officer in this post, Bakir Sidqi, a long known anti-
Assyrian official, was enraged and retaliated
swiftly and violently. The people of Baghdad were
furious, anxious, and wanted to be done with the
Assyrians, "But the alarm in Baghdad did cause
certain prominent person to make remarks of the
'rid me of this turbulent priest' order. They cried,
'Kill all the Assyrian men but leave the women and
children, as the eyes of the world are on us. Let the
Kurdish and Arab tribes be raised against the
Assyrians, and let trouble be raised in Syria against
the treacherous French" (Stafford 172). This
sentiment of hatred that was previously
downplayed by the Iraqi was finally brought to the

light with the events in August of 1933. Sidqi portrayed the true sentiments of hatred that was common amongst the Iraqi people, hatred towards the Assyrians, and wanted to deal with the Assyrian question, a chilling phrase repeated in some of history's darkest times.

The Assyrians began to find refuge in a village called Simmel. Here the Assyrians thought they were to be safe because there was a police station established there. Unfortunately they were not as safe as they thought, and their weapons were taken from them. On the morning of August 11 the police sergeant told the Assyrians camped around the Simmel police post to return to their houses. The Assyrians were naturally afraid to return due to the fact that since August 8th, in their absence, Kurdish and Arab tribes had entered into the villages and were looting. The Assyrians were sent back to their houses either way. Soon after the Assyrians returned to their houses surrounding Simmel, the Iraqi army entered as well and decided to massacre the men. They targeted the men, but sadly women and children died as well. A total of three hundred and five men, four women, and six children were killed (Hursy 344).

This act alone violates the section 6a of the ICC definition of genocide. The Assyrians were targeted, singled out as a minority in Iraq and were killed because they were Assyrian, because they were a minority. The Simmel massacre was not the

only killing that occurred in August of 1933, there are reports of similar extermination of Assyrian men in neighboring villages for example, Dohuk, and in this case priests were targeted (Stafford 176). This is a clear violation of section 6a of the genocide definition, the killing of a targeted group and in the case of Dohuk the fixation of priests brings to light a religious prejudice as well.

The treatment of the Assyrians afterward never reached the extent of the massacre of Simmel, but was terrifying in itself, violating section 6b of the ICC genocide definition. This section refers to any deliberate harm committed against a singled out group. The army burnt and buried corpses of the Assyrians that were massacred. The days that followed the Assyrian women and children were left to starve in Simmel. These women were left to fend by themselves until the situation was evaluated by the Iraqi government. (Stafford 175). Since the men of the village were all killed off, the women and children were left in the hands of the Iraqi government.

When it comes to the violation of section 6c, deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part, the Iraqi are not the only guilty one, Britain is as guilty as well. The British Empire ignored the plight of the Assyrians and the consequence was a terrible massacre that will be described above. Had there been the quick

and efficient fulfillment of the promises made to the Assyrian people, so many lives would have been saved. Because of the promises made to the Assyrians, they developed a mindset that impeded them from settling. With the involvement of the Assyrians in the Levies, discord amongst the Iraqi and Assyrians grew as well. John Joseph notes, "that the Assyrians 'should be guaranteed the re-establish-ment of the ancient privileges....' In the light of such utterances and encouragements, it is not surprising that Mar Sham'un and other Assyrian leaders, were under the impression that they should enjoy a special status in Mosul" (Joseph 116).

   This condition of insecurity continued for the Assyrians for many years after the Assyrian Affair of 1933. After the massacre, or what can now be called a genocide, the British Empire along with the League of Nations, tried to find a home for the Assyrians. Many different countries were brought forward, such as Brazil, Australia and Ecuador (Stavridis 177). In the end, the Assyrians were relocated to the religion of Khabur in Syria.

        The 1933 massacre of the Assyrians in Iraq has been mislabeled; it must be called for what it truly is: a genocide. The Assyrians were a people that were targeted. They became victims of likely the greatest criminal in imperial history, the British Empire. The empty, false promises of this empire, brought upon destruction and death later on. The

Assyrian massacre is a genocide because three different parts of the ICC definition of genocide were violated. Section 6a was violated, with the killing of the Assyrians, section 6b was violated as well in the treatment of the Assyrians immediately after the killing, and section 6c was also violated, by the British imperialists who played a mind game with the hopeful Assyrians. The Assyrian genocide has been overlooked as it can be confused with the earlier genocide of the Armenians, but the Assyrians have been a lost people, looking for home, and this led to their manipulation. The author of the *New York Time* article "Assyrians a Worry to Iraq Authorities" puts it best, "It is really unfortunate that during their fifteen years of stay in Iraq the Assyrians have permitted themselves to be used as the instruments of foreign exploitation." (Matta). The British Empire is guilty of this crime and certainly the Iraqi people are not innocent, but if the British had not played with these people as pawns on a chessboard, would there be so much innocent blood drenched into the Earth?

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War Pollution (2022) by Yousef Nasr

20x28 in. poster board, colored pencils

For nearly a decade, Syria has been in the midst of a civil war. As destruction advanced, the world witnessed how civilians risked their lives to escape. In 2015, a small boat with refugees sunk and all its occupants died. Soon after, the body of one of the passengers—2-year-old Alan Kurdi—was found on the Turkish coast. The photo of Alan Kurdi has had an effect on me like no other. That image became a testimony to the atrocities millions of Syrians were facing, and to the little support Western nations provided. Elmo communicates lost innocence, and the beer bottle represents the party life those sheltered from destruction enjoy. Both are together on a Turkish coast.

-Yousef Nasr

Editors' Note:

The United Nations estimates 5.6 million Syrians were displaced outside the country and 6.9 million people have been displaced internally. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees—Filippo Grandi—has called it "the biggest humanitarian and refugee crisis of our time and a continuing cause for suffering."

unrefugees.org/emergencies/syria/

Deflate the Hate: Understanding and Effectively Combating White Supremacy in New Jersey at the Local Level.[86]

Peter McCormack

"What we must fight for is to safeguard the existence and reproduction of our race and our people, the sustenance of our children and the purity of our blood, the freedom and independence of the fatherland, so that our people may mature for the fulfillment of the mission allotted it by the creator of the universe." -Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, Vol 1., Chapter 8.

""We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children"." -David Lane, white supremacist, and leader of "The Order", 1995.

"This is a battle to save the Heritage, History, and Greatness of our Country! #MAGA2020" -Donald Trump, 45th President of the United States of America, 6/30/2020 via Twitter. (Note the length of the tweet, 14 words, 88 letters.)

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[86] Peter worked on this essay on History of the United States since Civil War Honors- Professor Espinoza.

Members of "The Base", an internationally organized white supremacist group with focuses on accelerationism and militarized separationism. The leader of The Base, Rinaldo Nazzaro, was born and raised in New Jersey. (This photo is one of their propaganda images; the story was covered by the BBC.)

Introduction: Hate in the Garden State

American history is deeply connected with white supremacy. While this should come as no surprise, nor be considered historically controversial, what is controversial, and frustrating, is the country's continued relationship with the abhorrent part of our "national culture." While some living in the more affluent, "diverse," progressive northeastern and northwestern United States may see things like white nationalism, white supremacy, antisemitism, and neo-fascism as a problem only plaguing more conservative, impoverished, rural "red states" of the American South and Midwest, this is not the case.

New Jersey has emerged as a battleground for hate groups to spread their rhetoric. "The recent growth of hate activity in New Jersey has been stunning, particularly since it erased what had been a steady decline from 876 bias incidents in 2008 to a low of 367 in 2015. That number slowly started to climb in 2016, reaching 569 incidents in 2018. It then skyrocketed to 994 in 2019 and to 1441 last year [2020]." (Murray) While data is always up for interpretation, analysis shows an upswing in bias incidents and hate activity in the state of New Jersey since 2016. This escalation of racist activity in the state proves that hate groups (primarily white nationalist and white supremacist) feel that there is opportunity to promote hateful agendas in the state of New Jersey and are doing so more often than in the past.

With the increase of bias and hate activity reported, an alarming portion of these incidents have occurred on or near college campuses. While college campuses, generally bastions of progressivism, have long been avoided by white supremacists, they are now being seen as a large recruitment opportunity. "They have been increasingly targeting colleges and universities since January 2016…More than three years later their materials -- fliers, stickers, posters -- continue to proliferate on campuses. The posters often contain insignias and other white nationalist images and are used to direct students and others to social media.

White supremacists often target campuses because they want to recruit young extremists to their ranks and to 'inject their views into spaces they view as bastions of liberal thinking and left-wing indoctrination,' according to the report." (Bauer-Wolf) What journalist Jeremy Bauer-Wolf is pointing out in this article is that white supremacists are changing their strategy, targeting colleges and more progressive communities for recruitment. This change in strategy shows that these groups have felt emboldened (since 2016, the year of Donald Trump's presidential election) enough to start attempting to promote their message to college students who were once not considered by these groups.

White supremacy and white nationalism activity in New Jersey is increasing rapidly. It is important that citizens of the state be aware of the problem, understand the messages being spread that are particularly infectious, know how white supremacists are infiltrating the community, and understand what is being done to counter these messages. It is also important that the community has a sensible, deliberate, and viable action plan to further counter the spread of white supremacy in the state of New Jersey, especially around vulnerable populations like students and veterans. The purpose of this report is to outline these points and promote practical, judgement-free solutions to this issue. Although the rise of white supremacy and white nationalism are national (and global) issues, citizens

of local and/or state municipalities can work together to stem the rise of these hateful ideologies if they work with resolve and expedience.

Members of the New Jersey European Heritage Association (NJEHA) protesting for "white civil rights" outside of Princeton University. "White Civil Rights Activism" has become a popular tenet of white supremacist ideology. (Photos courtesy the Anti-Defamation League, ADL.org)

"You Will Not Replace Us": The Powerful New Message of White Supremacy

"The U.S. Census Bureau has just released its last batch of race-ethnic population estimates in advance of the 2020 census, with data indicating that the national headcount will reveal a more diverse nation than was previously expected. The new estimates show that nearly four of 10 Americans identify with a race or ethnic group other than white and suggest that the 2010 to 2020 decade will be the first in the nation's history in which the white population declined in numbers." -William Frey, Brookings.edu

One of the most clever and damaging ways in which white nationalism and white supremacy has gained a foothold in the American conversation as of late has been through deceptively inverting leftist viewpoints and civil rights arguments to depict white people as a victimized population. One example is the conspiracy theory of a "white

genocide". The concept that whites are under attack and their values and culture are being extinguished. In June 2020, the militant accelerationist group called "The Base" posted recruitment posters on Princeton University's Mercer County campus, with the slogan "Save your race, join The Base" on the flyers (Hwang). This idea that the white race must be "saved" is a heavily used part of current white supremacist ideology. The New Jersey European Heritage Association similarly postered the Rutgers University New Brunswick Campus with stickers saying, "There is a War on Whites". Messages like this, when examined, provide insight into a new culture created by white supremacists that interpret white people as victims of an attack, and white nationalist groups as defenders of white people, their culture, and their heritage. Many fall for this ideology, as it gives them a defined purpose (to protect their race from harm) and creates an "us-against-them" mentality, indoctrinating people into a community while creating isolation from other communities (those who are supposedly destroying the white race).

The concept of white genocide received encouragement from the xenophobic fervor displayed during the 2016 presidential election. In the beginning of his presidential campaign, Donald Trump opined regarding Latinx immigrants, "'They are not our friend, believe me…They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And

some, I assume, are good people'" (Reilly). Trump's "hot takes" on Latinx immigrants and Muslims aligned with the views of many radical extremist groups (from "white civil rights organizations" like the NJEHA and Patriot Front, to violent accelerationists like The Base, Atomwaffen Division and white supremacist adjacent organizations like the Three Percenters and the Proud Boys), emboldening them to take further measures to "secure the safety and continuity of the white race". "Our message is simple: The once mighty Western Civilization is on the brink of a new dark age and the White European peoples are being led into genocide by those who we have admitted to be responsible" (Roberts). Bobby Roberts of the NJEHA's claim of a white genocide is directly in line with the ideology of whites being replaced by "invaders" coming from overseas and across the southern border. While Donald Trump may not share the level of ideology of hardline white supremacists, his violent, divisive rhetoric was one that was heard as a rallying cry for many of these groups, even in New Jersey.

New and Old Meets "Blood and Soil": How White Supremacists Spread their Message

White supremacists and white nationalists often intend to provoke fear and anger in white moderates, spreading an ideology of replacement, genocide, and the extinction of white people in America (and in many western nations). To spread

these ideas, some of the most popular methods of information dissemination are leaflets, flyers, stickers, posters, and graffiti. In the words of Bobby Roberts from New Jersey European Heritage Association "Members of our organization have been working hard in the past couple of years to distribute recruitment materials across the State of New Jersey. We have even been able to reach parts of New York and Pennsylvania with our information. Our recruitment materials, In the form of simple flyers…were noticed by many" (Roberts). Leaflets, posters, stickers and "banner drops" (when members of groups lower banners across highway overpasses, bridges or building facades) are effective for a few reasons: they are cheap forms of advertisement and can be placed quickly, especially in provocative locations (like university campuses, religious centers, history museums, outside of restaurants, etc.). Furthermore, they also often garner media attention, which exponentially increases the exposure the advertised group receives. Ironically, media coverage intended to draw attention to the problem often aids the recruitment efforts of the white supremacists.

Propaganda sticker from the New Jersey European Heritage Association, placed on Rutgers University Campus in New Brunswick.

Many of these types of "information campaigns" have been used to target university campuses such as Rutgers University in New Brunswick. This diverse community was recently hit multiple times with flier and sticker campaigns from the Identity Evropa group (see flyers shown below). The recent targeting of college campuses with propaganda shows a clear shift in white supremacist recruitment efforts, as they seem to now be focused on finding potential new members who are college educated, come from more affluent backgrounds, and may be less vulnerable to indoctrination due to higher

degrees of critical thinking and skepticism. The reshaping of the white supremacist/white nationalist narrative (from the superiority of the white race, to trying to stave off an ongoing white genocide) may also play a role in why leaders of groups like Identity Evropa (now the American Identity Movement) are targeting college students.

Recruitment flyers and sticker from Identity Evropa, a white nationalist identitarian group. Posted at Middlesex College, Edison and Rutgers University, New Brunswick (Photos courtesy *Quo Vadis* and the *Daily Targum,* respectively)

Another obvious realm by which the white supremacist and white nationalist movements have seen major success in advancing their position and spread has been through the internet, and social media. Often their websites are well designed, and look very "official", "academic", and "democratic" in nature. (Anti-Defamation League) These website designs, contrasting with state and federal websites that are often less user-friendly, use smaller font settings, and lack the "patriotic imagery" most white nationalist sites employ, often seem more official than government webpages.

The New Jersey European Heritage Association is extremely active in places like Twitter and Gab, constantly posting about their "successful" flier and leafleting campaigns. Gab has become a breeding ground for white supremacist groups and aspiring extremists, often being directly linked to white terrorists after they've committed violent acts. "While the fringe forum never aimed to stir up racial animus and harbor hateful users, according to founder Andrew Torba, expecting that to happen only seems logical. Many Gab's users had been banned from mainstream social media sites like Facebook and Twitter for alarming posts, and naturally flocked to a site that would accommodate their extremist views — a cornucopia of right-wing

zealots who reinforced each other's bigoted beliefs."(Hagen) As can be inferred, those who've been removed from mainstream social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube often flock to smaller "free speech platforms like Gab, which seemingly cater to extremist groups. Platforms like Gab, 4chan, and 8chan, along with a bevy of white supremacist message boards (like Stormfront, Vanguard, and the now defunct IronMarch.org) have become popular digital hangouts for members of "the movement", along with even more heavily encrypted networks across small messaging apps and the dark web.

Gab post from the NJEHA, detailing their national propaganda campaign.

Gab posts (like the one shown above) bring a sense of validity and clout to these organizations, and can be shared among similar-minded people or disseminated to moderates who may harbor some thoughts or feelings that could be turned towards white supremacy. As people like Donald Trump were pushed off mainstream platforms like Twitter, Facebook and YouTube, activity on smaller platforms like Gab, Parler (now mostly defunct) and BitChute (a "free-speech" YouTube clone) went up dramatically, funneling potential members into established white supremacist groups and their propaganda. NJEHA's Gab exemplifies how white supremacist organizations are thriving in the digital neighborhood

Countering Hate: What is it being done?

To combat the messages being spread, New Jersey and the United States have taken some measures to help contend with the messages of white supremacy. Beginning in the 2022-2023 public school year, Governor Phil Murphy's "Laura Wooten Law" will require school boards to incorporate civics-based classes into their core curriculum, to promote greater understanding and participation within America's existing democracy,

something that most white nationalist organizations push their followers away from (as evidenced by the January 6 Capitol Riots). "The course will be taken by all students in an appropriate middle school grade. The bill also directs the New Jersey Center for Civic Education at Rutgers University to prepare curriculum guidelines and provide professional development for high school social studies teachers to fulfill the requirement of integrating civics, economics, and the history of New Jersey into the United States history course."(NJSBA) In analyzing this new law, it is important to point out that it incorporates a multi-tiered, multi-level structure, beginning as early as middle school, all the way into college graduate programs. This commitment to universal promotion of thoughtful, democratic inclusion and participation is a direct counter to most white nationalist ideology, which has often argued that white Americans have no voice in the current political sphere, and can only create change through anger, intimidation, and violence. It will be important to analyze how this new civics-based program impacts a myriad of outcomes, including voting participation, college acceptance rates, and occurrences of hate crimes and reporting of "bias incidents", which has gone up year-over-year since 2019 in New Jersey. (NJ Office of the Attorney General)

Another measure recommended by child psychologists, instructors, historians, and experts in

the field of counterterrorism, radicalization and the tracking of right-wing hate groups is to continue focusing on bringing to light the history and continuity of white supremacy and white nationalism in the United States. While many are now fighting to raise awareness to some of the more subconscious forms of bias, like institutional racism and implicit bias, there are available educational resources for instructors to utilize to teach students about the roots of the modern white supremacist movement. For example, the University of Southern California (USC) has a comprehensive resource guide for educators attempting to create programs focused on exposing white supremacist and white nationalist teachings and creating "teachable moments" around them. One of these resources is the 1991 book (and film) *Blood in the Face: The Ku Klux Klan, Aryan Nations, Nazi Skinheads, and the Rise of a New White Culture*. While slightly dated, James Ridgeway's journalistic approach to explaining the radical white supremacist subculture is accurate, uncensored, and explains much of what is relevant today. There is also an updated edition coming in July of 2022, in time for the new school year. Educating students on how the modern white power movement grew in the period between the American civil rights movement and today is paramount in removing the idea that white supremacy is not a current threat to democracy. "Few listened when journalist James Ridgeway

sounded the alarm about the resurgent far-right. Hand this book to anyone who thinks that the racist movement ended with the Trump presidency."(Tracy, Ridgeway) While Americans are constantly and consistently being told that white supremacy is a "thing of the past", Ridgeway's faithful commitment to exposing and documenting the movement (even today) is proof of the opposite.

Christian Picciolini (by Cpicciolini, Wikimedia Commons), *Jeff Schoep* (by New America, Wikimedia Commons), *TM Garret* (by John Sklba, Wikimedia Commons) *and Joshua Turner* (not pictured)), *four former white supremacists who now try to help others break free from the white power movement.*

Finally, there are resources for those trying to leave the white power movement, a terrifying and often dangerous task for those considering a positive life change. Life After Hate (LifeAfterHate.org) is one such independent non-profit organization committed to helping those trapped within white supremacist organizations and ideologies break free of their indoctrination, and find resources like employment help, counseling, and some access to relocation services. They are most effective through a toll-free phone service, dubbed ExitUSA, that connects callers to ex-radicals, social workers and psychologists trained in helping people break free of radical ideologies (most often white nationalist ideologies). "Our team's experiences and expertise empower us to talk openly about our own shame and guilt which in turn creates a safe space for our clients to do the same. This intimate understanding allows us to connect formers with the professional help they need to confront lingering trauma and other psychological issues that may be present." (Life After Hate) Similar to how recent campaigns have developed raising awareness for suicide prevention and drug addiction hotlines, the public school system should also promote awareness and access to Life After Hate's ExitUSA phone line, which is 612-888-EXIT (3948). Groups like Life After Hate, the New Radicals Project, Parents for Peace, and others are invaluable resources for rehabilitating former white supremacists.

Putting out the Fire Before it Starts: How to Enact a Blame-Free, Solution-Based Method for Defeating White Supremacy in Local Communities

Communities in New Jersey, particularly Edison in Middlesex County (a town directly adjacent to New Brunswick, frequently targeted by white supremacist groups) are well positioned to administer different techniques to combat white supremacy at its roots with blameless problem-solving techniques. The solution would focus on targeting three parts of the community where radicalization may be caught early and eliminated: In the public school system, among the veteran community, and by forging stronger bonds between local law enforcement agencies and religious community leaders. Even more promising, some of these strategies would likely come at zero (or nearly zero) cost to the taxpayers.

Edison Township Public Schools (EPS) are in a unique position to counter early extremism and radicalization. The EPS student body is very diverse, with Edison Highschool hosting 73.6% of their student body who are people of color (POC), and John P. Stevens High School with an attendance rate of 89.1% people of color. (Schooldigger.com) Despite this diverse student body racial/ethnic makeup, most administrators, educators, and support staff in the EPS (89.1%) are white. (Schooldigger.com) This

racial disparity has led to varying levels of miscommunication and explicit racial bias that has led some students to create the Instagram profile, "@racism.inedisonschools". This student/alumni-led Instagram profile allows for anonymous submissions that depict students' encounters with racism and antisemitism, and how faculty members often failed to respond properly to it (or even performed the acts themselves).
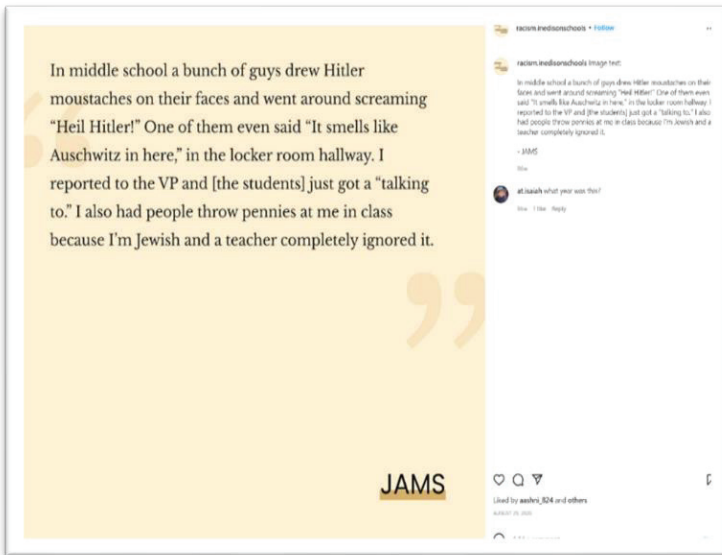
An example of one of many posts from @racism.inedisonschools. (From Instagram)

Based on the above figure, it takes little analysis to determine that many students feel that racism and antisemitism are not being properly addressed within the EPS. The @racism.inedisonpublicschools Instagram profile has many problematic stories like this one, which likely points to a major breakdown within the public school district. The best way to solve this issue would be with a rigorous diversity training program for the educators and other staff. There are many programs available, but most have an initial fee and additional headcount charge. At an average rate of $40 a client (with minimum charges the EPS would have no trouble exceeding) and EPS employing roughly 1,030 faculty members, this kind of diversity training would cost under $50,000, plus likely another $103,000 for substitute educators for every day that those attending diversity training are not available for their students (Brauner). When students see educators and faculty taking diversity and anti-racism seriously, they will be more inclined to follow suit.

Veterans are an increasingly susceptible community to the draws of white supremacy and white nationalism. The Capitol riots of January 6 are exemplary of how far-right ideology has infiltrated the veteran and active-duty military community: "…nearly 20%, have served or are currently serving

in the U.S. military. To put that number in perspective, only about 7% of all American adults are military veterans, according to the U.S. Census Bureau" (Anderson, Dreisbach). This means that veterans, despite making up a small percentage of the U.S. population, were three times more likely than non-veterans to have attended the January 6 Capitol riots and have committed crimes at these events. Furthermore, white supremacist groups have been known to intentionally target the veteran community, due to their leadership qualities, weapons training, and often for their knowledge in making and using explosives. "Returning veterans possess combat skills and experience that are attractive to rightwing extremists. DHS/I&A is concerned that rightwing extremists will attempt to recruit and radicalize returning veterans in order to boost their violent capabilities" (DHS). This report, conducted by the United States Department of Homeland Security, explains that right wing extremists are inclined to recruit directly from the veteran and active-duty military community. This poses many risks to the public, as many of these men and women have extensive training and experience in armed combat, making violent extremism amongst the veteran community both dangerous to

the greater community, and the veterans themselves.

One solution to protecting the community from this threat is for coordinated efforts between the township and the New Jersey Veterans Affairs group. Veterans often struggle adjusting to life outside of the military, and for some, fighting in parts of the world where the "enemy" was racially different from themselves, only to return to have trouble finding employment opportunities or figuring out ways to access benefits they'd earned (like college tuition and job training) can lead to lashing out, and can synchronize with many white supremacist ideological concepts. "DHS/I&A assesses that the combination of environmental factors that echo the 1990s, including heightened interest in legislation for tighter firearms restrictions and returning military veterans, as well as several new trends, including an uncertain economy and a perceived rising influence of other countries, may be invigorating rightwing extremist activity, specifically the white supremacist and militia movements. To the extent that these factors persist, rightwing extremism is likely to grow in strength." (DHS) The report from the DHS clearly insists that economic turmoil breeds extremist fervor, amongst other issues faced. One solution to this would be

setting up job and vocational recruitment drives at local Veterans Affairs agencies and hospitals. By connecting veterans directly with prospective employers, it would show veterans (up close) that the economy is currently worker-driven, giving them opportunities for success. It would also put veterans who may be susceptible to racist ideologies face to face with the extremely diverse Edison community (as exemplified previously) and pull them away from utilizing internet search engines (which have been identified as potential radicalization areas earlier in this report). This concept would likely come at no cost to the community and could be directed through the Edison City Council. Currently, Joyce Ship-Freeman serves as liaison to the Education, Police and Public Safety, and Veterans Affairs committees, making her an excellent resource in organizing these programs for veterans (as well as guiding them towards higher education resources, and potential career paths in Edison's law enforcement network).

The final step in ensuring an anti-racist plan of attack that would not alienate those who might be susceptible to white supremacist ideologies would be creating a closer community bond between law enforcement agencies and religious community leadership. Many of the mythologies developed by

white supremacist groups interestingly intersect with Christian theological teachings (that have often been warped or interpreted incorrectly, most Christian groups would argue), similarly to how many Islamic extremists have perverted the teachings of Allah and the Koran. In some communities, religious leaders have extremely intimate access to their community, and with proper training and communication with local law enforcement, may be able to point out community members teetering on the edge of dangerous white supremacy before they harm themselves or others.

In 2015, WORDE (The World Organization for Resource Development and Education) developed the "Montgomery Model", which is a plan that linked Muslim religious and community leaders with local law enforcement entities in Montgomery, Maryland. The model centered on strong channels of communication between Muslim religious leaders and law enforcement personnel, which unintentionally created strong bonds and mutual respect between the two communities. This same approach (which was exclusively used to combat "Islamic extremism", despite being explained as a general anti-extremist initiative) could easily be applied to white extremism in Edison. "The MCM is best described as an early-warning system targeted

towards the intervention and prevention of violent extremism through four interrelated parts. First is engaging and convening a wide range of public and private stakeholders, which includes diverse faith community leaders, public officials, law enforcement officers, educators, social service providers, and county agencies. This inclusive approach is specifically designed to reduce the stigma on Muslim communities by including a broad spectrum of other partners" (WORDE). Simply put, if "Muslim" is substituted with "White Christian", the Montgomery Model can be used identically to strengthen community ties and connect Christian churches with the greater community, something that has consistently proven to be a way to snuff out white extremism. Edison Township could "redeem" the Montgomery Model, which has garnered criticism for it's Muslim focus, by applying it to white supremacism. Enacting the usage of the Montgomery Model would come at zero cost to the taxpayer and could be facilitated through Joyce Ship-Freeman of the Edison City Council, who is the liaison to the public safety and police committee.

Final thoughts

White supremacy and white nationalism are national problems that must be reckoned with. While these problems span hundreds of years of American history, oscillating between patterns of avoidance of these problems is unhelpful and problematic. White supremacists are now trying to recruit more actively in the state of New Jersey, especially in more liberal communities and on university campuses. Their messages have been tailored to a new generation of those vulnerable to hate, and their methods for disseminating that hatred are clever and pervasive. Currently, there are many individual groups trying to stem the tide of white supremacism nationally, with varying degrees of success, and many exemplary resources available to educate both adults and children. New Jerseyans have a unique opportunity to squash the ability for white supremacy to grow in the state that can be instituted at the local community level, which has been detailed in this report.

The white power movement is constantly evolving, and as such, plans to counter it will have to do the same. The strategies detailed in this report will likely require revision in just a few years due to the speed at which information can be moved in the modern era. One thing, however, has been constant

regarding the white power movement, and most radical extremist movements across the world: White supremacy thrives on separation and isolation, and the movement's "kryptonite" is integration and understanding. Many white supremacists join the movement to find a long-missing sense of belonging, and most are not racist until after joining a white nationalist organization. Leaders of white supremacist groups promote isolation and separation because they know that integration and collaboration directly contradict many of their viewpoints and tenets. In that respect, any community-focused event that incorporates all members of the local population can be "anti-racist" events. A community fair, parade, children's workshops, parenting education groups, reading clubs at local libraries, and free music festivals are all "anti-racist", because they steer people towards community as opposed to pushing them further apart. Many rehabilitated white supremacists point to random acts of kindness from people they did not deserve them from as critical moments in their turning away from extremist ideologies, and thoughtful conversations with people who vehemently disagreed with them but did not resort to calling them racists, bigots, Nazis, or other pejorative names. This is further proof that a plan of

blame-free, solutions-driven problem solving is best when combating white supremacy and can protect the people of New Jersey from being victimized by the dangerous ideologies of white nationalism.

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Crowded (2021) by Emma Kovalewich

Oil Pastel. 9x12in

I knew I could make this piece have a smooth or textured look to it while using oil pastel, which allowed me to work freely in this piece. I decided to use red and green as my color choice and work some brown in as well. The space needed to feel packed in. I added circles and rectangles all over the composition, some smaller and bigger to add depth.

About the Humanities Honor Society

Created in 2015 as the History and Philosophy Honor Society, this organization sought 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. For that reason, in 2018, we 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 College Learning Center under the supervision of the Learning Center Coordinator.

Cristóbal Espinoza-Wulach and Joseph Pascale
Society's advisers

Sobre la Sociedad Honorífica de Humanidades

Creada en 2015 como 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. Con el tiempo, se hizo evidente que entendernos requería una perspectiva más amplia. Así en 2018 llegamos a ser Sociedad Honorífica de Humanidades.

Nuestra organización desarrolla en sus miembros el arte de entendernos como seres que sienten, piensan, imaginan y crean. Los miembros desarrollan esas habilidades bajo la guía de un profesor/mentor. Además, miembros trabajan en el Centro de Tutoría bajo la supervisión de su director.

Cristóbal Espinoza-Wulach and Joseph Pascale
Mentores y Consejeros

Members for Academic Year 2022– 2023

Members worked with a faculty mentor and Joseph Pascale learning the arts of teaching and researching different topics associated with humanities.

Nathalia Allenza graduated from Middlesex College in Spring 2022. She will continue her studies at Princeton University. There, she hopes to pursue studies in Public Policy and Law. She is a member of the 2021-2022 honors learning community

Matthew Dias is a Liberal Arts major at Middlesex College. He is striving to be a freelance writer and be able to support himself through writing. He enjoys everything from philosophy to science and art, and he hopes to incorporate these themes as much as possible in his work.

Evy Guzmán, a Psychology major, graduated from Middlesex College and will be continuing her studies at Rutgers once fall comes. Reading and writing have always been two of her favorite hobbies, and she looks forward to seeing everyone's pieces in the journal. Additionally, she had a wonderful time working alongside other creatives and hopes to be able to continue writing stories in the future. "

Julieta Ismaili-Jean is an Education major and *Phi Theta Kappa* officer. She was one of the two students

of the EA Fellowship, selected to attend in-person Stanford's EA's Impact Generator Workshop (Part I&II), financed by Stanford University. She is a member of the 2021-2022 honors learning community.

Michael Nascimento is a Liberal Arts major and a returning student after receiving his bachelor's degree in 2013. He plans to pursue graduate studies in the future, possibly in history, the study of which is vital for explaining so many of our current predicaments. His writing on the Ukrainian Genocide known as the Holodomor examines how the Soviet government deliberately starved millions of Ukrainians and is unfortunately timely following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Robert Charles Scott: After graduating with a Philosophy degree, Charles is pursuing an Anthropology degree at Rutgers University. He hopes to become a college professor.

Transnational Voices Authors

Jing Lin is from Fujian, China, and is currently studying Biology in order to become a dentist. Jing came to Middlesex College as a freshman and agrees with the slogan, "Success Starts Here." She has found confidence, and she knows that she has unique talents but also works hard to achieve her goals.

Ahsen Nazir was born in North Carolina but raised in Pakistan. He likes to socialize and to meet new people. Ahsen intends to get his associate's degree in Computer Science, as his dream is to become a programmer and make new types of programs for video games.

Estefany Perez was born in Peru, where she grew up with her mother and grandmother. After earning a degree in Animal Husbandry, she came to the United States in 2016 with a suitcase full of dreams, and projects, and began to work on a farm in Missouri. Estefany has a beautiful family and a beautiful daughter whom she loves very much and for whom she came to the ESL program at Middlesex College. The truth is that her four-year-old daughter has taught Estefany that she should not stop moving forward to help her and the dreams she has for her, as well as to achieve her own life's projects.

Artists

Mahek Ghai, a Fine Arts major, has always loved acrylic paint and watercolor because of how versatile she can be. Mahek hopes to use her knowledge as a Fine Arts major to become an interior designer and make her dream and others, a reality.

Emma Kovalewich is a Fine Arts major. Drawing is her passion; especially after she took AP art courses in high school. She has always enjoyed the details in nature and tries to bring that out in her artwork. When asked, "Why did you choose Fine Arts as your major?" She responds: "Art is everywhere and in everything. People just need to open their eyes and take the time to see it and appreciate it." She hopes to use her art to help herself and others: "As an Artist not only do we make art to satisfy our inner conflicts but hope that the art we create will affect hundreds of other people who see it."

Yousef Nasr is studying Electrical Engineering and hopes his skills can have a major positive impact on the world. He enjoys learning about many topics including mixed martial arts, religion, philosophy, and oppression throughout the world. He takes drawing seriously when he has the opportunity. إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون [We belong to Allah and to Him we shall return]

Brian Orozco, a World Language major, enjoys working on digital formats and hopes to become a translator. Art and aesthetics are essential in his life.

Jonathan Quizhpe graduated with a degree in Professional Commercial Photography. He actively practices different types of photography and often go by what feels right at the moment. "As I continue

with my art, I hope to one day showcase my work in galleries and publish several photobooks and zines."

Sayeda Misa Sourour graduated Middlesex College with a Fine Arts degree. Now transferring to The School of the Art Institute of Chicago for their BFA in painting. Sayeda plans on getting their MFA and work at a museum as a curator

Burgeoning Scholars

Kimberly Garcia, a Psychology major, graduated in May 2022 as Valedictorian. She started college as single mother on parole, speaking during her class welcome speech about how poor decisions as a teenager led to her being incarcerated. She is now an advocate for justice reform. At Middlesex College, she was a member of the Juvenile Justice Reform Club who worked as part of the team to secure funding for the dual partnership program between Middlesex College and the Middlesex County Juvenile Detention Center, a Bonner Leader who volunteered with the First Bilingual Seventh Day Adventist Church food pantry, and a member of *Phi Theta Kappa* honor society, working on the Honors in Action grant project. She will be pursuing her master's degree in social work on a full scholarship at Rutgers University and plans to continue on to her doctorate.

Gurdip Kaur moved to the United States twenty-seven years ago and graduated with an associate degree in Modern Language at Middlesex College in May 2022. Currently, she is working as a substitute teacher and plans to continue her education. When not spending time with her children or working in the garden, she serves at the Gurdwara (Sikh Temple) for more than ten years as the vice principal. In the future, Gurdip wants to become a librarian.

Carmelle Latortue finished her first year at Middlesex College where she is studying Fashion Merchandising and Retail Management. After graduating from Middlesex College, she would like to attend the Fashion Institute of Technology and major in Fashion Design. Even though she always had a hobby of sewing and crocheting, her interest in fashion began her senior year of high school, when she had the opportunity to enroll in a dual enrollment program. There, she was introduced to the fashion industry. This experience taught her about the discipline one must-have, the competitiveness and pressures of the industry.

Michael Laudino, a Computer Science Major, is a member of the 2021-2022 honors learning community. "My goal is to start a company in the cybersecurity and privacy sector focusing on individual data rights."

Martha Lopez, a History major, is the third of six children of "a loud, crazy, Catholic Hispanic family." Her travels and exposure to different cultures have fueled her interest in history. She enjoys traveling, reading, and volunteering at her church. She hopes to encourage new generations to never forget the past.

Gabriela Madruñero was born and raised in Guayaquil, Ecuador and recently moved to the US to study Dietetics at Middlesex College. "My main goal is to make it to a great university and keep learning about health, food, and fitness which is what I am most interested about. And who knows, maybe one day, be able to participate in research and be part of a published paper about it."

Peter McCormack, a History major, is a member of the 2021-2022 honors learning community. He has an interest in understanding radical groups and their ideas, as well as how to address them. Peter transferred to Rutgers University, where he is pursuing a BA/MA 5 years program to become a Social Studies Teacher.

Joysleen Morales graduated with a Paralegal degree and hopes to become a lawyer. She was Recording Secretary for *Phi Theta Kappa* Upsilon

Gamma chapter and Student Parent and Resource Center Coordinator at Middlesex College.

Academic Mentors Academic Year 2022-2023:

Susan Altman is a 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.

Shannon Bertha- Angulo is an Institutional Research Analyst and adjunct professor teaching Human Sexuality and Contemporary Health Issues. Part of her role in Institutional Research is to provide opportunities to gather information about the experiences of students at the College and opportunities for their voices to be heard.

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 at Middlesex College and the faculty adviser for History and Human Rights Club

Cristóbal Espinoza-Wulach teaches History of the United States until and since the Civil War as well as Student Success. He is a co-adviser of the Humanities Honor Society and co-director of the Honors program.

Joseph Lisnow graduated from Middlesex College in 2010 and continued to pursue his education at Montclair State University with focus on writing, journalism, and rhetoric. He returned to Middlesex College in early 2014 to work as a tutor in the Writing Center and is now a tutor for special services. When he finds free time between work and growing out his hair, Joseph enjoys covering pro wrestling and mixed martial arts.

Joseph Patrick Pascale: As the Learning Center Coordinator, Mr. Pascale manages tutoring and academic support programs at Middlesex College. He is a published author of both fiction and nonfiction writing. He is a co-adviser of the Humanities Honor Society.

Crystal Quillen is a psychology professor. She often teaches Introduction to Psychology honors, Research Methods, Abnormal Psychology and Contemporary Health Issues. She enjoys helping students to reach their full potential

Giuseppe Rotolo: Besides teaching Introduction to Philosophy and Ethics, Professor Rotolo teaches

Social and Political Philosophy. Additionally, Professor Rotolo is the Philosophy Club's adviser.

Elizabeth Shaheen is an instructor in the Department of ESL, Languages and Cultures at Middlesex 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.

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Hear from our members:

"I went to the first meeting where the one thing that immediately caught my attention was how supportive the group was, the essential feedback provided by both advisors, and how you can change the way you write when discussed in a writing circle...I felt my publication reached new heights. Overall, I think I am now better prepared in conducting research."

-Adithya Venkateswaran, Middlesex College graduate, senior at Rutgers University

"Volunteering at the Writing Center has helped me improve not only my writing skills but my ability to collaborate with others. Typically, the writing process can be rather frustrating especially, when dwelling on it all alone. When you're writing, there's nothing like good feedback that can give you an extra push in the right direction. Additionally, working to get my writing published has been quite the experience, and I feel as if I've grown a whole lot throughout the process...Makes me think about all the other possibilities awaiting me in the future as I journey through college."

-Evy Guzman, Middlesex College graduate, junior at Rutgers University

Our writing circle meets twice a month to share thoughts, ideas and inspirations. Send us an email.

Cheers,
Joseph Pascale: jpascale@middlesexcc.edu
Cristóbal Espinoza: cespinoza@middlesexcc.edu