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Office of Undergraduate Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity

1400 Wesley W. Posvar Hall

230 S. Bouquet Street

Pittsburgh, PA 15260

412-648-7920

forbes5@pitt.edu

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Emma Porter

DESIGNER

Saskia van't Hof

EDITORS

Emma Bender	Alyssa Machi
Aditi Choudhary	Amarachi Onwuka
Sofia Gurgel	Caroline Roberts
Kendal Johnson	Anna Sedlak
Lauren Kotulka	Cassady Tercek
Abigail Lucas	Dani Wormack

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Letter from the
Editor

Dear Readers,

I am often asked if there is a theme for each Volume. While a theme always emerges, we never set one. I think this Volume's theme is one of reflection. It takes a critical look at the current ways of the world and demands more. It makes you want to do better, to see better, to be a part of something better.

If you look at the editor list between Volume 20 and Volume 21, you will notice that most of the editors graduated. Half of the team is new, which I think makes it even more remarkable that Volume 21 is so strong. It is proof that Forbes & Fifth is more than just a journal. It is a living, breathing, thing that is resilient and persists. And it attracts dedicated, hard-working people who see the value of the written word and the power it holds.

Warmly,
Emma Porter

Letter from the
Designer

Dear Readers,

Thank you so much for picking up this Volume of Forbes & Fifth. As a first-time Designer, it was inspiring–and admittedly intimidating–to work with such extraordinary pieces of art, writing, and research.

It is a very rare thing to flip threw a journal and find a research thesis on genotyping and cell culture techniques printed on the same sheet of paper as an oil painting of an Italian cat. But, such duality is exactly what makes Forbes & Fifth so special. From public health to to art, all intellectual pursuits have a place within this journal.

As a designer, I opted to maintain a restricted color palette of mostly blues, yellows, and oranges to unify the diverse pieces into one entity. I hope that my designs highlight the talent that went into this Volume of Forbes & Fifth.

Sincerely,
Saskia van't Hof

Five Poems of
Home and **Heart**

Danielle Obisie-Orlu

I am a Nigerian-American senior at the University of Pittsburgh, who grew up in Johannesburg, South Africa. As a third-culture kid, I was proud to use my platform as the Youth Poet Laureate of Allegheny County '21-'22 and the National Youth Poet Laureate Network's Northeast Regional Runner-Up 2022 to champion belonging and civic engagement. I am double majoring in International & Area Studies and Political Science, and I conduct research on the comparative expressions of xenophobia. I am proud to share these poems as to foster environments of intersectional community, build bridges of belonging, and advocate for a society that is inspired by and acts towards peace.

University of Pittsburgh • Senior

OXFORD'S COMMA,

- Learn to speak English the way I speak it,
- Let the letters dance on your tongue, in tune,
- Cleanse your palette of your language borne,
- Submit, My English wants to see no trace of you,
- Crash land your courage on these jagged rocks,
- My invitation is not made to empower,
- Erase your History, your Home, long Forgotten,
- Erase your History and stand Recreated in Mine,
- I want to see no trace of that Mother on your Tongue,
- My Oxford's Comma is Law,
- Praise the boats on which I came,
- Celebrate my standard,
- You and I are not the same,
- You may have mastered it, but you are Subject to my language,
- There is Civilization in this Punctuation,
- I have saved you from a Nonsensical Refrain,
- ,

These are the things that were told
Their Bullets raged like their run-on sentences,
These are the stories of old,
Ironic, isn't it?
That the most violent war is one of words.

Love's Elegy

learning to unlove is putting on shoes that no longer fit my feet
there is too much room where you used to be
and now that empty space preoccupies me

learning to unlove you was me finally not picking at the scab
of almost love.
Almost trust.
Too much love.
Too much trust
never enough.

Learning to unlove has been a never-ending funeral,
an elegy for what was.
but this grief threatens to swallow me whole.

When I think of you,
I can't help but smile
I can't help but pour myself a glass of your laughter
and continue to be refreshed by it

Learning to unlove you has me walking in reverse
like my feet have no volition
and someone keeps messing with the remote.

learning to unlove you has me bound.

to the memories of when you were everything
and I could only thank God that you wanted to stick around.

      In those memories, I am a dusty accordion
ready to be played but time and history sure as hell will have their way
and all that comes out is an unpleasant sound.

      However it is all I get to keep of us,
so it became my favorite melody.

      Learning to unlove you is the cough syrup I hated as a child.
the bottle tells me that in 1-2 weeks I should start to feel fine
but this sickly sweet tastes like poison
and I'd rather keep the irritation than drink that again

      Learning to unlove you
reminded me of how much of myself I had lost
slowly the lights will turn back on
slowly the end of you will be the beginning of me.

The Becoming

There is a revolution in these bones
Each step a cry for Justice
A myriad of Black memories and legacies built the foundations on which I stand
And these revolting bones demand that no more stories go untold

There is a past of vision, intuition, and innovation
Memories loud and unrelenting, ever dignified
There is a future, a now, where Black is Pride
Black is Joy. Black is Love. Black is Divine and Nine.
Black is Mind, Body, and Soul Alive
in Laughter, Serenity and Movement.

Black is Disruption. It is Learning and Unlearning. It is Open, Loud and Aware.
Black is Being Aware and claustrophobic in a room full of ignorance.
It is standing up, sitting in, and pointing to the door, the window, the cracks in the roof
and demanding that Light, Voice, and Accountability shine forth.
It is knowing where your presence is valued and making it so.

Black is Support–a hand, a commitment, a nod, a yes-you-can, an I-know-that's-right!
when the body and mind can barely push through. It is Trailblazing, Growth and Vulnera-
bility.
Black is acquaintance with Pressure and Tension–weighty and heavy, boulders on shoul-
ders with little room for rest and even less to fail. Still, Black must mean Rest and Honor.
Remember that.
Black is Protest and Mediation. Black is Jazz and Melody. Black is by any means neces-
sary.
It is preserving your peace and light just the same.

Black is Ethereal. It is Olympian and Multi-Hyphenate.
A Dream of a better today and Action towards it.
It is becoming more and speaking life into existence.
It is choosing when to say yes, no, now-is-not-the-time, and come-back-when-you-know-
more.

There is a revolution in your being, your breath.
No bullets or bigotry could bullet list your future.
Black is Connoisseur of Culture, Creator,
Delicate and Bold. Black is Community.
Black is a River of Gold.

These Rivers of Power, of Passion, Pain, and Strife
Rivers of Endless Drive and Legacy-
In these rivers may you find more Life
Where Glory and Capacity Untapped
Become oceans of change and you find refuge in your voice.

There is a revolution in these bones.
And this revolution is for the neophyte; the veteran; the determined and impassioned.
The tired; the ready-unready; the uneasy; the institution;
The comfortable; the journeying; and changing,
The Becoming.

In this river of Blue, Gold, and Black
here you stand
From the Hill to Harrisburg with a voice that cannot be silenced

Story awaiting, story unfolding
A revolution in your bones,

Becoming.

S.S.I.D.

in sisterhood, I have learned to shapeshift.
with an eye for understated beauty, my sisters are a rainforest.
our laughter drizzling down
one moment,
and then a joke
gone
too
        far
has thunder sprinting through the air,
the forest of our friendship quiet with
the whispers of
        "shhhhh, no, no don't cry, you're fine
            JUST DON'T TELL MOM"

my sisters and I were spies,
we parasailed through discomfort
and roundhouse-kicked misogyny and patriarchy
in the ass.

my sisters-
crackers of the code on how to say
            "no"
        "not now, not ever,
      and definitely not in that tone"

see my sisters knew how to love like a jazz band
and a gospel choir
all at once
      spiritual
the only direction of your soul blossoming
is upwards

during midnight, kitchen deliberations
my sisters build their monuments
and promised each other
to be more

my sisters and I,
we argue as sisters do:
I steal her clothes,
she says I'm annoying
I tell Mom
                a cycle made just for us

        my sisters and I speak mountains out of pebbles
and life into empty spaces.

        in sisterhood I have seen
that each of these women
are manifestations of a dream
so dear to me that I dare not open my
eyes

        but then I hear them,
calling to me and asking
why I am never on time
and that the car is ready to go

 in sisterhood I shapeshift
        once more
despairing the day
I will leave them behind

ever-present
in cascading
        memories.

PEACEBUILDERS
(an ode to Dr. Comfort Ero)

They will ask you upon which foundation you stand
And if your voice is truly loud enough to carry
They will ask you where your boldness emerged from
And that you are yet to truly know fear
They will taunt and quarrel
Trembling because your heart refuses to falter
They will demand the silencing of your spirit

        And you will deny them.

Ten and Ten Thousand Times over
You will wage the words of peace
To shatter the illusions that have long existed
Before your arrival
Ten and Ten Thousand Times over
You will follow the journey of justice

A justice:
        Demanded
                Coaxed
                        Negotiated
                                And Long-Awaited For

Where there is no room for negotiation
Is in the business of Hope.
Ten and Ten Thousand Times over
Hope stands Alive and Eternal

 Ten and Ten Thousand Times over,
        The Peacebuilders speak Life
            Into the fight of Tomorrow.

The **Boss**

Jackson Campbell

This piece came from a trip to Italy, and a chance encounter with a very confident man. Using photography as his medium, Jackson seeks to find beauty in the ordinary. Lines, symmetry, and warm colors draw his eye the most.

University of Pittsburgh • Senior

Anti-Democratic Practices in **Protection of Free Speech** Online in the **United States** and **European Union**: Survey and Analysis
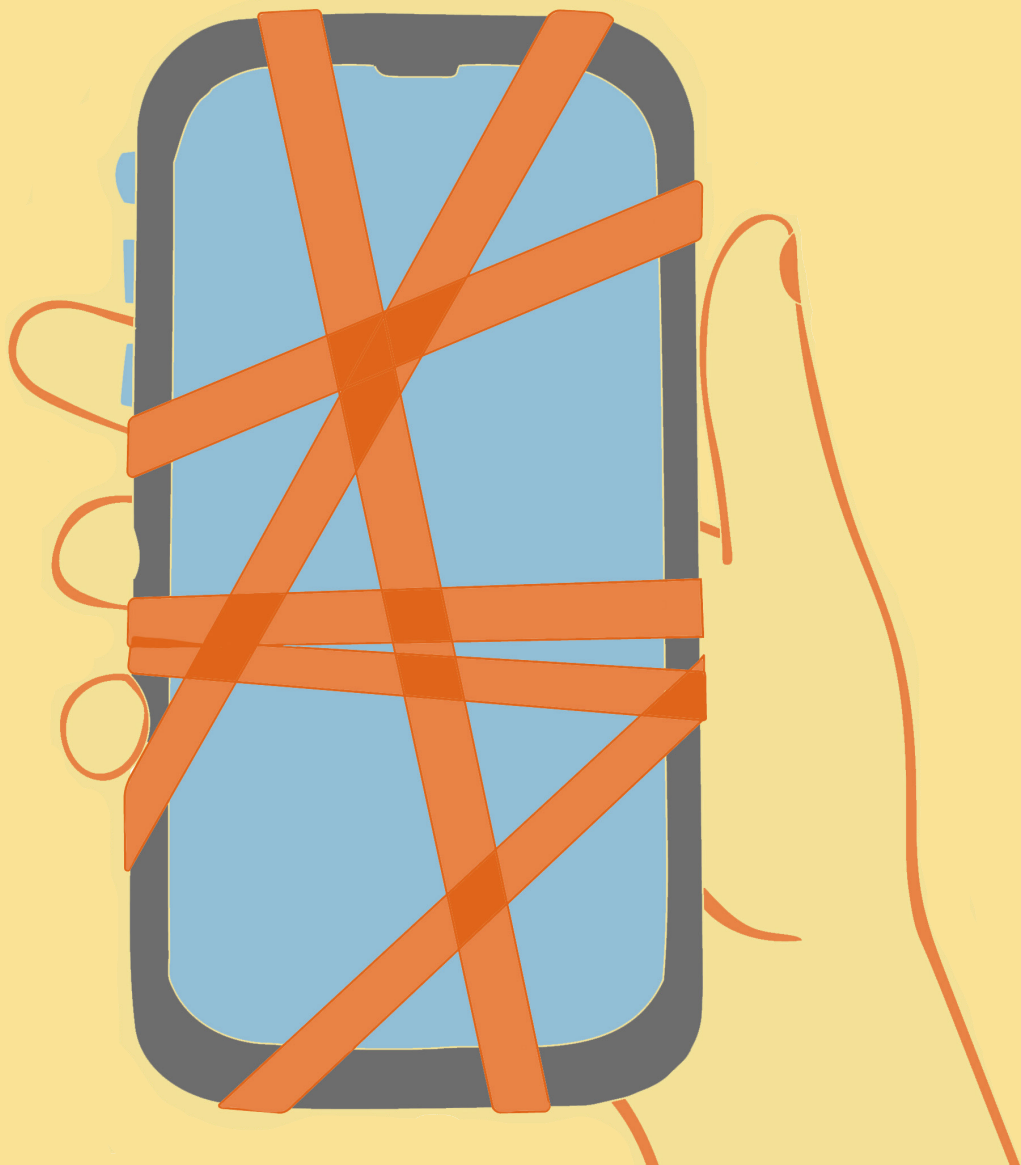
Laura M. Dvorkin

Laura is a second year at the University of Pittsburgh majoring in Politics & Philosophy with a certificate in Public & Professional Writing. This paper is the result of research conducted through the Pitt DC-Brussels study abroad program, where she had the privilege to speak with experts on emerging trans-Atlantic issues in the tech policy space. She hopes to continue her studies with further research in her undergraduate degree and pursue a JD/MPP. She is inspired to craft meaningful public policy to address the burgeoning questions new technologies pose, and the unlimited potential they offer for positive change.

University of Pittsburgh • Sophomore

Introduction

Deluges of invasively targeted advertiser content, democracy-challenging misinformation, and vitriolic hate speech fill the social networking platforms that have become a public square for the globalized era. Consumer content moderation is not a conversation between merely the citizen and the state; intermediaries—the companies that host the platforms that consumers access and use—exist between the two, uniquely positioned both to shape regulation and to be shaped by it. Meta, Twitter, and Alphabet, the corporations behind the world's largest social media platforms, enjoyed vastly unchecked freedom to develop through the past twenty years[1]. Now, foreign election interference, the rise of alt-right rhetoric, and increasingly narrow options for consumers aged these companies out of this unregulated playground. As the largest economic bloc in the world, it leverages a unique effect to shape regulation around the world, known as the "Brussels effect."[2] When companies adapt their product to comply with EU policies, consumers in other countries where that product is available are thus also affected by this regulatory action. In the content moderation sphere, the "Brussels effect" creates both a standard of compliance for companies and an exemplar for countries the world over to follow. America, long the leader in ideological and technological innovation, seems to have ceded any claim to power as the global referee for Big Tech. But is the European model durable? Does the United States' neoliberal wait-and-see strategy hold water in the face of growing concerns of platforms limiting freedom of expression?

This paper will examine American and European regulatory action towards social media platforms from 1990 onwards, and analyze the anti-democratic practices in concern to protection to freedom of speech therein. The First Amendment will be examined for its establishment of America's strict and expansive protection of freedom of speech. Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act of 1996 will also be evaluated for its role in establishing intermediary liability protection, both a boon and a blow to free speech online. Platform law and the internal regulatory controls of American corporations will also be discussed as major influences in global understanding of tech regulation. The American approach to regulatory action will be considered alongside the European Union's differing

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1   Kaye, D. (2019). *Speech Police: The Global Struggle to Govern the Internet.* Columbia Global Reports.

2   Marolda, G. (2022, May 18). *The European Union: History, Institutions, Decision-Making and Policy-Making* [Lecture]. University of Pittsburgh.

perspective on the importance of regulating hate speech and the necessity of government intervention. The E-Commerce Directive will be considered in its equivalencies and discrepancies from American digital rights protections. The 2014 Court of Justice of the European Union case Google Spain v. AEPD & González and the 2017 German law NetzDG will be examined for their contributing effects of granting private corporations powers of public adjudication.

The internet is one of humanity's greatest innovations—bridging the limitations of geographical and ideological space to bring people together in expansive, multifaceted networks of communication. Its impacts on the human psyche, inevitable as they are, remain to be seen; only one generation in high-income countries has grown up with ready access to the internet, and access to it grows in low-income countries year after year. Unlike any other advancement incommunication, economics, or governance, the internet holds unimpeachable and unmatched power to shape the very structures of governance that aim to regulate it—whether to strengthen or subvert democratic rule.

Consumer Content Moderation in the United States

The First Amendment & Foundational Philosophies of Free Speech

In the United States, often the conversation about what speech is free to access begins and ends with the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States: "Congress shall make no law [...] abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press."[3] Ratified in 1791 as part of the Bill of Rights, it was part of a wholesale establishment of the basic rights of the American people. Its wording is extremely ambiguous and seems to create an umbrella protection of the right to access, produce, and distribute speech without restriction by the government; it is generally held that this was the aspirational direction the framers hoped to point the new republic towards, with detailed understanding and jurisprudence to develop over time.[4]

Some 200 years later, the widespread adoption of the internet prompted lawmakers to contend with the Founding Fathers' expansive vision in the context of a new, untested medium. First Amendment issues in regulation mostly concern the rights that companies themselves hold; online platforms are not bound against

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3   U.S. Const. amend. I. (1791).
4   Berkowitz, E. (2022). *Dangerous Ideas: A Brief History of Censorship in the West, from the Ancients to Fake News.* Beacon Press.

abridgment of speech like the federal government and can present or restrict user speech as they see fit. Content curation and decisions therein are expressions of their own rights as entities to freely express their company's values and sentiments. On the consumer level, this means users are not entitled to unrestricted freedom of speech on private platforms.[5]

While private entities are not explicitly bound by First Amendment restrictions, most social media platforms are American companies staffed with American lawyers: thus, most decisions of corporate governance are made with the First Amendment philosophy to infringe as little as possible on users' speech.[6] There is an uncodified but understood right to free speech—the power structure created by the philosophy of the First Amendment is telegraphed from public governance to private self-regulation, underpinning how these companies operate. As such, the reach of the First Amendment extends far beyond American legal jurisdiction to practically anywhere these platforms operate. Under the same mechanism as the "Brussels effect" by the governing bodies of the Euro-

pean Union, content moderation grounded in the First Amendment becomes the world-over standard by the role of American companies as simply the largest and most powerful voices in the space.

Section 230 & the Balance Between Innovation and Consumer Protection

In 1996, the United States Congress passed the Communications Decency Act in response to the unmitigated exposure of minors to pornography on the nascent internet—the first major rehaul of communications law since the 1930s. As part of a larger effort to remove obscenity from the digital space, lawmakers sought to encourage companies to clean up the defamatory, offensive, and illegal speech users produced on their platforms.[7] They did so with Section 230, one of the cornerstones of the information ecosystem and the online experience as it is known today.

No provider or user of an interactive computer service shall be treated as the publisher or speaker of any information provided by another information content provider.[8]

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5   Cornell Law School. (n.d.). *Procedural Matters and Freedom of Speech: State Action*. Legal Information Institute.
6   Kaye, D. (2019). *Speech Police: The Global Struggle to Govern the Internet*. Columbia Global Reports.

7   Goodman, E. P., & Whittington, R. (2019, August). Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act and the Future of Online Speech. *German Marshall Fund of the United States*, (20). JSTOR.
8   47 U.S.C. § 230

Section 230 employs a two-pronged approach as both a "shield" and "sword." It shields companies from liability for illegal user content—only the speaker themself bears any legal consequence, and not the platform.[9] In creating this protection, Section 230 broke the publisher-distributor paradigm that governed production of traditional media and established online platforms as conduits for content and not originators in and of themselves.[10] Companies also expressly wield the power to actively moderate content on their platforms as they see fit—the "sword" Section 230 predictions afford. Alongside the protection afforded by their "conduit" status, platforms also cannot be found liable for removing user content. This gives platforms the right to take down speech that is not per se illegal but held by the platform to be inappropriate.[11] While broadly applied, Section 230 draws distinct limitations to liability protection; compa-

nies are liable for illegal content they either developed directly or encouraged production of the illegal aspect of said content.[12]

Section 230 is broadly credited with creating the regulatory environment conducive to innovation and rapid growth in the early internet that came to define Silicon Valley. Its liability shield encouraged platforms hosting user-generated content—now some of the largest and most valuable companies in the world—to expand both their market share and the array of services offered to users, without threat of civilian or state legal action.[13] By providing a freedom of choice as to what content is hosted and what is taken down in good faith, companies can develop and test moderation policies that are flexible and can respond quickly to rapidly changing public sentiment or legal standards for free speech.[14] Additionally, this power of curation curtails over-regulation; with a greater threat of legal action, platforms may choose to err on the side of caution and proactively remove content that could post any legal risk, regardless of its actual legality.[15]

In the 25 years since its passage,

9   Goodman, E. P., & Whittington, R. (2019, August). Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act and the Future of Online Speech. *German Marshall Fund of the United States*, (20). JSTOR.
10   Kaye, D. (2019). *Speech Police: The Global Struggle to Govern the Internet.* Columbia Global Reports.
11   Goodman, E. P., & Whittington, R. (2019, August). Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act and the Future of Online Speech. *German Marshall Fund of the United States*, (20). JSTOR.

12   Ibid.
13   Kelley, J. (2020, December 3). *Section 230 is Good, Actually.* Electronic Frontier Foundation.
14   Ibid.
15   Ibid.

Section 230 has proven to be vitally important to the information ecosystem and business models of online intermediaries, establishing structures for these companies to actively moderate with impunity from undue legal pressures.

Federal Inaction and the Role of Corporations in Internet Governance

Though its laissez-faire regulatory approach enabled the innovation that positioned America as a thought leader in the internet sector, it has also cost the United States federal government its power position as a true force in internet governance. Though popular with both Democrats and Republicans, meaningful internet regulation has lagged amidst debate over concerns with conservative censorship, the potential for antitrust reform, and nearly $100 million spent by major tech firms in lobbying efforts.[16] Meta alone has spent over $20 million in 2021, inserting itself as a central player in the legislative debate over antitrust, cybersecurity, and offline infrastructure.[17]

Following the probe into Russian interference in the 2016 election of President Donald Trump, which determined that Facebook's lax digital advertising policies enabled significant foreign disinformation and propaganda to flood American voters' timelines, Congressional Republicans have become even more evasive on the topic of regulating content online. Eager to avoid rehashing Special Counsel Robert Mueller's report and opening a debate into the legitimacy of their own advertising, Republican leadership has whipped their party to generally oppose significant debate in this area.[18] Now after the 2020 election and the use of social media to coordinate and broadcast the January 6th Capitol insurrection, it is likely this pattern will only continue.

In response to a vacuum of external regulation, tech companies have turned inward to regulate themselves with so-called "platform law:" the self-developed and -imposed regulations by which companies govern their platforms. While not legally binding, these codes look and act like legislation, with broad jurisdiction over every facet of a company's governance.[19] With

16   Zandt, F. (2022, January 25). •
Chart: Big Tech Goes Big on Lobbying Efforts. Statista.
        D'Souza, D. (2019, June 25). *Tech Lobby: Internet Giants Spend Record Amounts, Electronics Firms Trim Budgets*. Investopedia.
17   Client Profile: Meta. (2022, April 22). OpenSecrets.
18   Feiner, L., & Graham, M. (2020, October 31). *Congress fails to pass Big Tech legislation ahead of election*. CNBC.
19   Kaye, D. (2019). *Speech Police: The Global Struggle to Govern the Internet*. Columbia Global Reports.

mini bureaucratic, judicial, and analytical apparatuses within these companies themselves, the private sector has filled the void of government inaction by designing their internal governing structure to mimic the public institutions that have yet to regulate them. These tend to resemble the American three-branch model: companies' executive C-level positions respond to the legislative recommendations of dedicated policy teams while deferring to jurisprudential experts to evaluate their soundness. As discussed above, the mere fact that these are American companies, with largely American CEOs and high-level leadership, means that liberal ideals of unabridged freedom of speech and restricted interference from governing entities are intrinsic in these quasi-institutions.

As perhaps the most dynamic and attuned regulatory movement active presently, platform law is thus an inextricable and crucial component to analyze alongside federal policies.[20] Facebook in particular has a well-developed and powerful body of platform law. The creation of its Oversight Board in 2020 drew the role of internet corporations as structures of governance into public debate. Composed of a panel of distinguished legal scholars,

Nobel Prize laureates, and an ex-prime minister, the Oversight Board is a sui generis institution that acts as the final arbitrator of any disputed internal or external action on its platform and offers policy recommendations that steer Facebook's leadership.[21] As part of a greater push to increase transparency in the protections of freedom of expression for two billion people around the globe, Facebook has taken the unique step as a private entity of enjoining respected, public leaders in a role of arguably public leadership—a position that is hotly contested for its infringement on democratic rule of law.

Consumer Content Moderation in the European Union

The E-Commerce Directive & Intermediary Liability Protection

Outside the American model, longstanding questions in content regulation challenge intermediary liability: to what extent should companies be able to claim free speech or other rights to be legally protected from the content their users publish? The European Union contends with this question upon the legal framework of the Electronic Commerce Directive of 2000, stylized as the E-Commerce Directive.[22] As a directive, it is an instruction

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20   Klonick, K. (2017, March 20). *The New Governors: The People, Rules, and Processes Governing Online Speech.* Harvard Law Review, 131(1598), 1598-1670.

21   Ibid.
22   Madiega, T. (2020, May). *Reform*

to member states to produce an intended outcome but not a centralized executive action in itself: member states are free to enact whatever national policies they see fit to this end.[23] In line with the broader pattern through the 1990s of harmonizing patchwork network regulation enacted by member states, the E-Commerce Directive sought to integrate the growing field of international commerce conducted over the internet into Europe's Single Market economic policy. In doing so, it created a legal standard under which online inter-mediaries are protected from liability for illegal user content if they can prove they acted adequately to remove said material as soon as they were aware of its illegality.[24]

Where an information society service is provided that consists of the trans-mission in a communication network of information provided by a recipient of the service [...] Member States shall ensure that the service provider is not liable for the information transmitted[...][25]

If a Facebook user in Germany publishes a status update expressing hate towards the recent migrants in their community, Facebook has the right to remove that status update as such hate speech is illegal under German law. They are protected from both any law enforcement action for enabling hate speech and from a lawsuit by the user arguing restriction of their freedom of speech. Implementation of these "safe harbor" protections was left to the discretion of member states them-selves, and many chose to do so by form-ing voluntary agreements with intermedi-aries to create Codes of Conduct for their platforms. In the decades that followed, this was expressed in many different EU-wide acts of soft law, including the formation of a common code of conduct and various Parliamentary taskforces.[26] Much like Section 230, this directive rec-ognized information service providers as conduits for online material, as opposed to

of the EU liability regime for online inter-mediaries: Background on the forthcoming digital services act. EPRS | European Par-liamentary Research Service, 649 (404).
23   Marolda, G. (2022, May 18). *The European Union: History, Institutions, Decision-Making and Policy-Making* [Lec-ture]. University of Pittsburgh.
24   Kaye, D. (2019). *Speech Police: The Global Struggle to Govern the Internet.* Columbia Global Reports.

25   'Directive 2000/31/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 8 June 2000 on certain legal aspects of information society services, in particular electronic commerce, in the Internal Mar-ket ('Directive on electronic commerce')' (2000) Official Journal L178, p. 12.
26   Madiega, T. (2020, May). Reform of the EU liability regime for online inter-mediaries: Background on the forthcom-ing digital services act. *EPRS | European Parliamentary Research Service*, 649(404).

publishers themselves of original content. It gives companies the license to write their own rules while shielding them from liability for both user content itself and any resulting actions to take down that content. These freedoms gave burgeoning social media platforms through the 2000s flexibility to be created within the EU and for multinational internet companies to expand into the European market, without the constant threat of legal pressure.[27] An established understanding of intermediary liability protection forms the legal basis for much of the ensuing European regulatory action in the 2010s—lawmakers are restrained in their ability to target companies directly but can instead saddle them with additional duties to moderate content on their platforms.

"The Right to be Forgotten" & Contention Between Public Interest and Individual Rights

Free speech in Europe is grounded in Article 11 of the Charter of the European Union, ratified in the 2009 Treaty of Lisbon, which grants all European citizens the right to freedom of expression.[28] This differs crucially from freedom of speech in America by empowering the government to intervene with speech when there is a significant public interest to do so—a broad prescription resulting in a manifestly different understanding of the relationship between government and speech. As such, European jurisprudence in issues of speech tends to be more heavy-handed and public facing than in America.[29]

Article 11 protects not only the right to create speech but also to access it. Thus, search engines invariably become major players in the free speech debate. Nowhere in case law is this more apparent than the 2014 case establishing a European citizen's "right to be forgotten," and the responsibility of companies to protect said right.[30] In 2012, Spanish citizen Mario Costeja González petitioned *Google Spain* before the Court of Justice of the European Union. He claimed that the platform's search return of a 2009 newspaper article detailing a seizure of his assets in a bankruptcy proceeding violated his right to privacy, as the information listed in this search was outdated and irrelevant. The court sided with González and ruled the article must be delisted from Google

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27   Kaye, D. (2019). *Speech Police: The Global Struggle to Govern the Internet.* Columbia Global Reports.
28   *Article 11 - Freedom of expression and information.* (n.d.). European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights.
29   Kaye, D. (2019). *Speech Police: The Global Struggle to Govern the Internet.* Columbia Global Reports.
30   Ibid.

search results.[31]

This provision permits the processing of personal data where it is necessary for the purposes of the legitimate interests pursued by the controller or by the third party or parties to whom the data are disclosed, except where such interests are overridden by the interests or fundamental rights and freedoms of the data subject[...][32]

This decision overruled the notion that the neutrality of search algorithms was sacrosanct and unalterable; here, the CJEU decreed that a citizen's interest in delisting information about themselves that is irrelevant superseded the search engine's economic interest and the public's right to access that information.[33] It firmly placed individual privacy rights over corporate operations and created an important precedent in the agency of an individual to change how a platform processes third-party information. However, in protecting and enabling individuals,

it simultaneously undermines the basic principle of public, free access to information, and places the power of arbitrating what information is and is not deemed "relevant" in the hands of a private actor[34]. *Google Spain* is thus a double-edged sword—delineating the rights of the citizen established in European law yet placing the power for their adjudication outside public institutions, and instead with private companies.

NetzDG & the Rise of Self-Regulation

Pressure on intermediary platforms to effectively moderate content has only grown in recent years. In 2017, the German Parliament passed the *Netzwerkdurchsetzungsgesetz*, or NetzDG. This law formally decreed that social media companies had a legal obligation to remove content that was illegal under German law.[35] NetzDG applies to any internet platform with over two million users that operate for profit where users share content with other users.[36] While implied, this responsibility had yet to be enshrined in hard law. It built off soft law agreed to by the Task

31   Global Freedom of Expression | Columbia University. (2022). *Google Spain SL v. Agencia Española de Protección de Datos - Global Freedom of Expression.*
32   Case C-131/12 *Google Spain SL and Google Inc. v Agencia Española de Protección de Datos (AEPD) and Mario Costeja González (2014)* Official Journal C212, p. 4–5.
33   Kaye, D. (2019). *Speech Police: The Global Struggle to Govern the Internet.* Columbia Global Reports.

34   Ibid.
35   Ibid.
36   *Overview of the NetzDG Network Enforcement Law.* (2017, July 17). Center for Democracy and Technology.

Force Against Illegal Online Speech, composed of German free speech advocates, government agencies, and representatives from Facebook, Google, and Twitter.

The procedure shall ensure that the provider of the social network [...] removes or blocks access to content that is manifestly unlawful within 24 hours of receiving the complaint[...][37]

Platforms were now shouldered with the responsibility to not only identify content that violated their company codes of conduct but that which violated German hate speech and disinformation law. Such "manifestly illegal" content had to be removed within 24 hours of its posting.[38] Moreover, NetzDG added real teeth as enforcement: companies had to comply under threat of heavy sanctions, up to 50 million euros. It is seen as a framework for a potential EU-wide legislative agenda. Immediately upon its passage, it came under fire by international spectators and free speech advocates; they argued it abridged consumers' right to free expression by creating perverse economic incentives for platforms to take down borderline or questionable speech, out of an abundance of caution to avoid heavy

fines.[39] The right of a user to post content that may or may not be legal, and the rights of other users to access it, was now solely adjudicated by a company with a profit motive, rather than a public court of law. NetzDG highlights how the line between protected speech and moderated content becomes ever finer when deciding who draws it.

Democracy in Contention in American & European Regulatory Action

Through the above regulatory framework on both sides of the Atlantic, distinct practices emerge. Both the American and European approaches to regulating online platforms are marked by a supersession of the legal argument surrounding government restriction of freedom of expression altogether. Instead, these governing entities rely on platforms to self-regulate with impunity. With the adoption of NetzDG, Europe has taken it a step further by also delegating power to adjudicate hate speech and disinformation to the private companies hosting these platforms, with full discretionary power. Critics of the combined global effort find fault in the anti-democratic vesting of regulatory power

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37   *Netzdurchsetzunggesetz,* Art. 1 §3(2)(2)
38   Kaye, D. (2019). *Speech Police: The Global Struggle to Govern the Internet.* Columbia Global Reports.

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39   Ibid.

out of the public sphere to private industry: powers of arbitration in public law, no appropriate means of legal petition, and corrupted motive to govern in the best interests of the public.[40]

To fill the void left by lacking American leadership, companies have had to create legal frameworks of their own and rely on internal controls versus external ones. When entrusted with the power to determine gray-area freedom of speech concerns, these frameworks are not immediately apparent to be effective without real public involvement.

Often, the EU is lauded for its future-facing leadership and recognition of the real threat hate speech and misinformation can pose to democratic society. Tech regulation is only meaningful if it is enforced, which requires the governing body to have significant global economic heft to leverage an effective threat to remove itself from these companies' market.[41] China operates outside global digital infrastructure, and America is reluctant to contend with even the potential of regulation.[42] No other global power has the economic power to make a credible threat against these companies—thus, by enacting any action whatsoever, Europe comes in first place in a competition with only one player.

The direction Europe has steered the global conversation can easily be seen as anti-democratic. By promoting self-regulation instead of imposing external controls, social media platforms take on the power of the rule of law itself; the responsibility of social media platforms to arbitrate speech for not only its code of conduct compliance but its legality was codified into hard law in NetzDG.[43] A user's speech may be removed from a platform even if they are able to argue its legality as protected speech in a court of law—the option to do so has been foreclosed to them by the automated methods companies rely on to identify illegal content amid vast quantities of legal content.[44] Facebook and Twitter are not democratic institutions, nor do they aim to or pretend to be them. Consumers do not have any real say in how these companies operate. Voting by choice does not necessarily apply here—in most cases, the multinational market share of these platforms is so large that no meaningful, equivalent alternative exists. If a user disagrees with Instagram's

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40   Ibid.
41   Savin, A. (2020). *EU Internet Law* (3rd ed.). Edward Elgar Publishing.
42   Laskai, L. (2017). 'NAILING JELLO TO A WALL'. In J. Golley, L. Jaivin, & L. Tomba (Eds.), *Control* (pp. 191–208). ANU Press.

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43   Kaye, D. (2019). *Speech Police: The Global Struggle to Govern the Internet.* Columbia Global Reports.
44   Ibid.

content regulation policies, there is no alternative platform that encompasses the whole of the network that the user can reach on Instagram for that same specific purpose. Even in Facebook's mini-judiciary, there is no meaningful power of petition. The average user is not only demurred from action but shut out from real understanding of how any such petition is addressed. Platform law is broadly opaque, and users are subject to guidelines either inaccessible, incomprehensible, or both.[45]

It cannot be ignored that these companies operate with a hardline profit motive. There is nothing explicit in their assumed role in civic life that publicly traded companies owe anything to citizens beyond fiduciary responsibility to their stakeholders. In 2020, the combined value of Google, Amazon, Facebook, Apple, and Microsoft was over $4.5 trillion.[46] When compared to national economies, the five largest tech companies roughly match Japan's GDP, the 3rd largest economy in the world.[47] Moreover, their core business models benefit from more speech and more data. While vague notions of corporate responsibility compound the First Amendment philosophy of truly free speech, at the end of the day more content equals more clicks equals more revenue: a clear motive above public good in these companies' operations. Moreover, they rely on predatory data collection to attain advertising revenue—placing certain human rights, such as privacy, at odds with this baseline profit motive.[48] There is nothing wrong with providing services for profit; but when such great powers to shape how billions of people employ their rights have been delegated to private entities en masse, it must be questioned whether these are the correct institutions to govern with appropriate respect to the people's best interests.

With a delegated right to adjudicate public law, no meaningful right of petition, and regulation under unflinching profit motive, this method of governance is not sustainable nor appropriate for the pervasiveness with which these platforms affect daily life for American and European citizens.

Conclusion

45   Klonick, K. (2017, March 20). *The New Governors: The People, Rules, and Processes Governing Online Speech. Harvard Law Review,* 131(1598), 1598-1670.
46   *Brand value of the most valuable brands in the world* 2022. (2022, June 24). Statista.
47   Rasure, E. (2022, June 27). *Countries by GDP: The Top 25 Economies in the World.* Investopedia.
48   Kaye, D. (2019). *Speech Police: The Global Struggle to Govern the Internet.* Columbia Global Reports.

The United States has long been at the forefront of thought leadership in the tech sector—from the Silicon Valley start-ups in garages to the multinational conglomerates they grew into, America has long tread a path into cyberspace for others to follow. American legislators enjoy a dialogue with these companies that Europe does not; a common ground built upon the freedoms of the First Amendment enabling construction of structures such as Section 230. Congress deals with these players as domestic constituents—a shared interest in strong American GDP enables a uniquely liberal and laissez-faire regulatory approach, vesting great internal power of moderation of public speech to private players. Especially as the role of social media in American electoral politics develops, this mutual understanding becomes marred by a vector of distrust towards these tech platforms for purportedly undue abridgement of speech. Perhaps the real threat to democracy lies not in San Francisco skyrises but in the warped legal structures formed in their partnership with Capitol Hill.

Europe, meanwhile, has emerged in recent years as a credible threat to the unchecked power with which America allows these companies to operate. Contemporary history, with virulent Soviet and Nazi propaganda still in living memory, lends a more pragmatic view of free speech in Europe as well as a grave understanding of the danger hate speech can pose. The government is empowered as nowhere else in the world to take necessary action against speech to preserve democracy; though through a burgeoning legal movement towards internal regulation, they now cede this power to private entities—perhaps countering the very objective of the right to expression as established in the Charter. Through *Google Spain* and NetzDG, companies have the right to assign legality and delineate the rights of EU citizens without being democratic institutions themselves or answerable in any real way to the body politic. Is free speech truly free if it lives under rule of private power?

None of the legislation or legal thought I have discussed here is *prima facie* good or bad, effective or ineffective. Both America and Europe have taken credible steps in contending with the power of the internet as a force threatening to destabilize centuries of established rights enjoyed by people the world over. The internet is itself a new phenomenon, still in the nascent stages of its understanding and impact on the world. None of these issues are ours entirely to solve. The questions I have posed here will be grappled with for generations—but we owe it to future understanding of free speech and of the very nature of how forces outside government and civics affect human rights to begin to find their answers.

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Autumn Leaves

Victoria Li

Victoria is a sophomore studying Economics and Computer Science at Washington University in St. Louis. A Bay Area native, Victoria moved to Shanghai at the age of 5 and studied at an international school until she returned to the US at 16. While she was in Asia, she traveled to many countries to explore various cultures and attractions. Her trip to Kyoto, Japan inspired her to create this piece, "Autumn Leaves".

Washington University in St.Luis • Sophomore

But the **Forehead** Said So: **Sympathy** and **Phrenology** in **Jane Eyre**

Julia Seaton

Julia graduated Azusa Pacific University in May 2022 with a BM in Violin Performance and a BA in Honors Humanities. She enjoys studying the different ways that people have thought throughout history, and phrenology and sympathy piqued her interest as characteristically 19th-century concepts within Jane Eyre. Julia started working on this essay while studying abroad last year in the UK, where she is now moving with her husband. She teaches remote lessons for violin and English as a foreign language.

Azusa Pacific University • New Graduate

Introduction

The results of personality tests, such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and the Enneagram, find their way into casual conversations, job applications, and dating profiles. Once these assessments analyze a subject's "type," the opportunity to scrutinize that subject's relationships with other types arises. For example, the Myers & Briggs Foundation recommends using the system in premarital counseling "to identify areas of difference that may cause conflict."[1] More radically, the most popular website for this test, "16Personalities," has an entire category dedicated to relationships, including a "Romantic Fulfillment" quiz for "what makes someone a good match for you."[2] The Enneagram Institute website also has a page for learning about type combinations in relationships. Although this website assures its readers that "no pairing of types is particularly blessed and no pairing is particularly doomed," the analyses still delve into the pros and cons of different matches.[3] These evaluations can stimulate appraisal of a relationship before it even begins.

The desire to analyze human character and interactions is not unique to modern culture. It can be traced to the ancient Greek theory of four temperaments, where the proportions of "body humors" determined both dispositions and illnesses.[4] Much closer to modern day, between 1805 and 1807, Franz Joseph Gall and his assistant J.G. Spurzheim toured Europe, giving lectures about a system that Gall called "organology."[5] Today that system is known as phrenology: the study of the shape of the skull as a means of indicating character. Phrenology found an eager audience in the Victorian period (1837-1901), although the British Phrenological Society was only finally disbanded in 1967. Just like today's personality tests, phrenology was used not only for career decisions and personal entertainment but also for the perpetual human quest of matchmaking, as the suitors and the

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1   Psychology Types & Relationships," The Myers & Briggs Foundation, https://www.myersbriggs.org/type-use-for-every-day-life/psychological-type-and-relationships/.
2   "Relationships," 16Personalities, https://www.16personalities.com/tools/relationships.
3   "The Enneagram Type Combinations," The Enneagram Institute.
4   Peter L. Heineman, "History of Temperament and Temperament Theory" (1995).
5   Gül A. Russell, "The Phrenological Illustrations of George Cruickshank (1792-1878): A Satire on Phrenology or Human Nature?" *Journal of the History of the Neurosciences 29*, no. 1 (2020): 121. 4X.2019.1695455; John Van Wyhe, "Terms & Definitions associated with Phrenology," *VictorianWeb* (last modified 2000).

sought-after compared phrenological diagnoses to determine whether a relationship was desirable.[6]

When recalling Charlotte Brontë's 1847 novel *Jane Eyre*, what often comes to readers' minds is the controversial romance between Jane and Rochester. Through her storytelling, Brontë offers acute insights not only about Jane's internal development but also about her interactions and choices involving other people. To accomplish her balanced treatment of human character and interactions, Brontë both engages with the modern science of her day and departs from it in certain critical instances. At these points of the novel, Brontë relies on the Romantic concept of *sympathy*, a subconscious connection between individuals. Although Brontë references phrenology throughout the fictional autobiography, she denies the extended view that phrenology can predict these relationships just as it can predict character. Brontë's treatments of sympathy and phrenology set boundaries around the full reign of Victorian rationalism and inform the quality of Jane's interactions with many critical characters. Through Jane Eyre's friendships, romantic relationships, and enmities, Brontë illustrates that the popular Victorian science of phrenology cannot account for human sympathy.

Conceptual Background: Phrenology

To determine a person's character, Victorian phrenologists would either manually measure a client's skull or approximate measurements based on a client's photograph. They would then provide a list of numbers indicating the strength of various qualities based on the size of each corresponding section of the skull. For example, an 1844 pamphlet by Mr. H. Lundie, a self-described "practical phrenologist and mesmerist," suggests diagnoses for clients with different sizes of the organ of Acquisitiveness: "Small, labeled '2': Indifferent about money, and very apt to spend it freely...Full, labeled '6': Industrious, frugal, and economical, occasionally liberal...Extra large, labeled '10': Extremely miserly, sordid, penurious, and covetous."[7]

The intensity of the quality was supposedly tied directly to the size of the designated section of the skull. In an age of alleged science and reason, phrenology provided a rational explanation for

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6   Carla Bittel, "Cranial Compatibility: Phrenology, Measurement, and Marriage Assessment," *ISIS* 112, no. 4 (December 2021): 796-799.

7   H. Lundie, *The Phrenological Mirror; or, Delineation Book* (Leeds, UK: C. Croshaw, 1844), explanatory notes added in italics, 7.

the often-mysterious nuances of human behavior and interaction.[8] Today, examining bumps on the skull to diagnose personality may seem arbitrary and irrational, and even some contemporary opponents of phrenology mockingly dubbed the practice "bumpology."[9] English professor Mary A. Armstrong points out that some level of arbitrariness pervaded phrenology, which she calls "a conceptual structure available for the naturalization of any state, any position, any desire."[10] Phrenology had this unique ability to justify any perspective since the same forehead bump could indicate different characteristics depending on the particular phrenologist's interpretation.

Nevertheless, many Victorian phrenologists believed the practice to be grounded in science. A person's phrenological composition was supposedly developed before birth, alongside their character. In an 1832 British magazine, a medical doctor named David Uwins describes the process, "As this organ (the brain) developes itself particle by particle, and now pushes itself out in this direction, now in that, so does the structure of the bony case proceed in regular and undeviating dependence; and thus the skull becomes not the moulder of the brain, but the brain of it."[11] As a baby's brain developed in the womb, the sizes to which different sections grew supposedly indicated the intensity of that characteristic and would later be physically cemented and observable on the skull.[12]

Lundie's pamphlet urges readers to consider phrenological diagnoses before marriage. In this way, certain qualities could be propagated in the alleged best interest of future society, and the severe effects of people's phrenology led to even more racial discrimination than many British Victorians already sustained. Because of the subjectivity of what certain protrusions or deficiencies meant, those with higher social status had power over how other people were perceived and inevitably placed their own Western-centric features in a more favorable position.[13] Decades before phrenology would be claimed by those publicly supporting Nazi theory of racial hygiene, Lundie promoted phrenology as "destined to effect a giant physical, and moral regeneration amongst

8   Bittel, 799.
9   Wyhe.
10   M.A. Armstrong, "Reading a Head: *Jane Eyre*, Phrenology, and the Homoerotics of Legibility," Victorian Literature and Culture 33, no. 1 (March 2005): 112.

11   David Uwins, "Phrenology," *The New Monthly Magazine and Literary Journal*, Jan. 1821-Dec. 1836 34, no. 137 (May 1832): 451.
12   John Van Wyhe, "The History of Phrenology," *Victorian Web*.
13   Armstrong, 112.

our race . . . by far the greatest number of those evils attendant on frail humanity, would be avoided at every turn of life we should consult this infallible oracle."[14] Here Lundie partly refers to the use of phrenology in education, but also to its use in marital decisions. His language suggests complete societal reform through phrenological judgments.

In pursuit of either evolutionary "improvement" or individual felicity, phrenology made its way into matchmaking. One comedic narrative in an 1832 Irish journal depicts young adults comparing phrenological results in an excited flurry, with one character anxiously hoping that her favorite suitor should have positive qualities announced.[15] Once phrenology reached North America, personal ads for marriage partners began to include phrenological information of either the writer or the desired respondent. Phrenology provided a particularly convenient avenue for personal advertisers in these matchmaking ads, as a series of numbers could fit into a newspaper column more easily than lengthy descriptions.[16] Some requested that respondents return an official phrenological diagnosis for proof of character. Professor Carla Bittel suggests that matrimonial compatibility was based on similarity, as "strong organs in one person excited those in another, and this was then agreeable to both parties."[17] Dramatic disparities in organ size, especially with relational qualities like philoprogenitiveness (the desire to have children) or amativeness (sexual drive), supposedly led to more discord in the relationship. Chasers of passion were perhaps repelled by this systematic approach of comparing numbers, but seekers of harmony were drawn to the guarantee of success that many phrenologists advertised.

"Success" meant not just marriage, but steady and safe marriage. One of the key concerns of the 1828 British temperance movement was to protect children from the violence or neglect of alcoholic parents, and the 1839 Custody of Infants Act demonstrated a Victorian-period interest in the morality of its children. This act, designated the "Robbery of Fathers Act" by its opponents, granted divorced women custody of children younger than seven, along with the right to fight for custody of older children as long as the mothers proved their virtue.[18] Although proving virtue was an ambiguous process,

14   Lundie, 5; Armstrong, 129, note 7.
15   Barnaby Bumpus, "Phrenology," *The Dublin Penny Journal 1*, no. 5 (1832): 39.
16   Bittel, 800.

17   Ibid. 799.
18   Danaya C. Wright, *The Crisis of Child Custody: A History of the Birth of Family Law in England* (2002), 213.

this act expressed Victorian prioritization of children's peaceful and moral upbringing, as one of its fundamental assumptions was that "family stability" was essential to civil society.[19] The rise of phrenology in matchmaking was likely linked to this quest for virtue and peace in the family.

Conceptual Background: Sympathy

Brontë incorporates ample romantic passion into *Jane Eyre*, but she also establishes a significant theme of Jane searching for kinship. Brontë expresses this idea through instances of sympathy: a flexible term rooted in the previous literary period of Romanticism (1780-1830). Philosopher David Hume (1711-1776) and essayist Thomas De Quincey (1785-1859) broadly used the term to describe the mysterious medium that unites people or mobs toward a common goal, so that sympathy "enabl[es] collective, contagious and inexplicable forms of communication."[20] More specifically, English Professor Emeritus John P. Farrell describes the kind of sympathy that Brontë uses in *Jane Eyre* as "the experience of bonds that unite physically separated people who sense a common unity."[21] In both cases, sympathy is a powerful, inexplicable, and invisible connection between different persons. In *Jane Eyre*, sympathy is expressed as an intense sense of kinship. It must be noted that this idea is wholly separate from the modern definition of sympathy as a sensation of pity that often leads to active compassion. Sympathy in *Jane Eyre* is unrelated to benevolence, just as unkind individuals can still feel kinship with specific people.

Alongside Jane's passion for Rochester, she also shares a strong and unchanging sympathy with him. She also has sympathy with her cousins, Diana and Mary Rivers; she notably does not have sympathy with St. John Rivers, and the isolated quality of their "relationship" could be more aptly described as antipathy. Brontë presents the sensation of sympathy as one of three phenomena—presentiments, sympathies, and signs—that collectively can be referred to as intuitive knowledge, or "gut" knowledge that escapes rational explanation. The mysterious quality of intuitive knowledge is significant to Brontë, as the narrator Jane proposes, "Sympathies, I believe, exist (for instance,

19   Wright, 214.
20   Mary Fairclough, *The Romantic Crowd: Sympathy, Controversy and Print Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 2-3.

21   John P. Farrell, "Charlotte Brontë's Presentiments, Sympathies, and Signs: An Introduction," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 32, no. 4 (1990): 541.

between far-distant, long-absent, wholly estranged relatives; asserting, notwithstanding their alienation, the unity of the source to which each traces his origin) whose workings battle mortal comprehension."[22] The last clause of this quote implies a Romantic appreciation of mystery itself, and thus Brontë's particular use of sympathy departs from a mainstream Victorian confidence in humanity's ability to use reason to solve all puzzles.

Jane is warned against marrying Rochester by both "signs," such as the splitting of the horse-chestnut tree after their engagement, and "presentiments," such as her ominous recurring dreams before the attempted marriage.[23] The warnings are caused and expressed by external circumstances, revealing a legal and possibly ethical barrier between Jane and Rochester that separates them despite their internal sympathy with each other. Although Jane is capable of acting upon these warnings before she actually discovers Bertha, Jane does not yet have complete information about Rochester's situation and lacks real-world experience for what to expect from his many hints about his past. Instead, Jane relies on the one element of intuitive knowledge that is both integrated with her own emotions and definitive in its purpose: sympathy. Until she has full knowledge that equips her to make an informed decision, Jane discards both signs and presentiments in favor of sympathy.

Jane's sympathetic connection with Rochester is best represented when Rochester pretends he is going to send her away to Ireland:

'Are you anything akin to me, do you think, Jane? . . . Because,' he said, 'I sometimes have a queer feeling with regard to you—especially when you are near me, as now: it is as if I had a string somewhere under my left ribs, tightly and inextricably knotted to a similar string situated in the corresponding quarter of your little frame. And if that boisterous channel, and two hundred miles or so of land come broad between us, I am afraid that cord of communion will be snapt; and then I've a nervous notion I should take to bleeding inwardly. As for you—you'd forget me.'

'That I never should, sir: you know'—impossible to proceed.[24]

Jane and Rochester's sense of kinship is so deep that it involves a near transfer of identity, as Rochester tells Jane that her removal would physically hurt him. Lorri Nandrea proposes that "sympathy facili-

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22   Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre,* ed. Deborah Lutz, 4th ed. (NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2016), 198.
23   Brontë, 230, 252-255.
24   Ibid. 226.

tates the misrecognition of otherness in relation to the same"; Rochester recognizes Jane as a necessary extension of himself, and in turn he sees himself as tied to her.[25]

Both Rochester and Jane experience the phenomenon, so that neither recognizes the beloved as "other," instead sharing a two-way sense of close kinship. This mutuality causes the sympathy of their relationship to stand out against the key romance in Emily Brontë's 1847 *Wuthering Heights*. Whereas Emily Brontë's heroine Catherine Linton confesses, "Nelly, I *am* Heathcliff," insinuating a solitary absorption of self into her beloved, Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre eventually tells the reader after her marriage, "I am my husband's life as fully as he is mine."[26] Jane's sensation of sympathy both expresses her deepest desires and allows her to maintain a full identity even when those desires join her with another person. Presentiments and signs warn Jane of external limits on her actions, but sympathy forms the underlying framework of Jane's determining choices for her future.

Romantic Relationship: Rochester

Although Jane shares a common goal of finding family with Victorian readers who relied on phrenology for matchmaking, Jane relies on sympathy instead of phrenology for her life choices. Nevertheless, Brontë still uses phrenological terms in her character descriptions and, at least within the context of the novel, suggests that the system is accurate through the revealed personalities of the described characters. For instance, when Jane and Rochester meet for the second time in Thornfield Hall, Rochester observes that Jane has been studying his appearance. Jane responds that she does not consider him handsome, and Rochester demands justification:

'...Criticise me: does my forehead not please you?'

He lifted up the sable waves of hair which lay horizontally over his brow, and showed a solid enough mass of intellectual organs, but an abrupt deficiency where the suave sign of benevolence should have risen.

'Now, ma'am, am I a fool?'

'Far from it, sir. You would, perhaps, think me rude if I inquired in return whether you are a philanthropist?'[27]

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25   Lorri G. Nandrea, "Desiring Difference: Sympathy and Sensibility in Jane Eyre," NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction 37, no. 1/2 (2003): 117.

26   Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights* (NY: Washington Square Press, 1997), 78; Charlotte Brontë, 401.

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27   Brontë, 120-121.

Jane's analysis of Rochester turns out to be accurate. Rochester's "abrupt deficiency" where benevolence should have been manifests itself through his grudge toward his ward Àdele Varens, as he refers to her as "it" in his narration to Jane and makes it clear to Àdele herself that her presence is unwanted.[28] Even as Jane falls in love with Rochester, she admits, "He was proud, sardonic, harsh to inferiority of every description. In my secret soul I knew that his great kindness to me was balanced by unjust severity to many others."[29] In addition to this lack of benevolence, Brontë also confirms Rochester's "solid enough mass of intellectual organs," as he shares fascinating conversations with Jane that the kindly and simplehearted Mrs. Fairfax cannot follow. Jane describes her experience with her employer: "I heard him talk with relish. I had a keen delight in receiving the new ideas he offered, in imagining the new pictures he portrayed, and following him in thought through the new regions he disclosed."[30] Through Jane's character diagnosis and Rochester's subsequent behavior, Brontë suggests that phrenology could be an accurate system for determining personality traits.

But Rochester's phrenology, however accurate in diagnosing his flaws, does not lessen Jane's sympathy with him. When she sketches his portrait at Gateshead, her cousin Georgiana Reed calls him "an ugly man," but Jane only observes, "I had a friend's face under my gaze."[31] Even though Jane has also admitted that Rochester no longer seems ugly to her, here she distinctly looks beyond the external, focusing only on his internal magnetism for her.[32] At the same time, she sketched him accurately. At least to some extent, Jane is aware of his phrenology and the faults it conveys, but that awareness does not diminish her sympathy with him, and she still "cease[s] to pine after kindred" because she finds in him the familial connection she craves.[33] As she observes regarding Rochester's harshness, "Instead of wishing to shun, I longed only to dare—to divine it; and I thought Miss Ingram happy, because one day she might look into the abyss at her leisure, explore its secrets, and analyse their nature."[34] Rather than separating herself from his faults, Jane is fascinated by Rochester's mystery and guile.

With these qualities, Rochester is an archetypal Byronic hero: a man capable of great virtue and yet fallen in his actions,

28   Ibid. 132, 118.
29   Ibid. 1324.
30   Ibid. 133-134.
31   Ibid. 210.
32   Ibid. 134.
33   Ibid. 134.
34   Ibid. 170.

stormy in temperament, moody and un-predictable, and wildly attractive amid his vices. This character trope finds its origin in the poet and satirist Lord Byron (1788-1824), whose influence on Romanticism was so monumental that some historians date the literary period according to his lifetime. The Byronic hero is conspicuous evidence of the Brontë sisters' influence from the Romantic period, whose novels and poetry would have populated the Brontë family library. Charlotte's love story *Jane Eyre* and Emily's revenge story *Wuthering Heights* both rely heavily on the Byronic hero, as does Anne Brontë's 1848 cautionary tale *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*.

The Victorian interest in phrenology and domestic harmony would lead to further contemporary disapproval of a Byronic hero like Rochester as a suitor. The problem is not that Rochester is imperfect; in fact, at least in North America, many personal matchmaking advertisers included subpar phrenological results or gave themselves comically self-deprecating pseudonyms to present themselves as more authentic.[35] The issue is not the presence of Rochester's faults but rather the nature of the faults themselves. His unabashed narrative of past lovers makes future infidelity seem more likely, and

even more unsettling are his later threats of taking advantage of Jane by force. These proclivities for both infidelity and violence foreshadow future marital conflict, increase the likelihood of child abuse, and are not the kind of qualities that British Victorians would want to be propagated in future generations. As a result, Rochester's particular faults are further evidence of how Brontë gives Jane a culturally- and scientifically-unexpected match, relying instead on the mysteries of human sympathy. For some who believed that the goal of English fiction was "to teach and delight," Brontë's non-rational central romance between Jane and Rochester would seem like dangerous advice.[36]

Regardless of the quality of Jane's relationship with Rochester, Brontë establishes it as true to Jane's character by foreshadowing her attraction toward Rochester as early as her childhood. The contrast between two of her childhood mother-figures indicates Jane's early connection with those who are more intellectually-inclined. Phrenologically, the height of the forehead denoted intelligence, as higher brows supposedly indicated larger faculties of individuality (perception), language (eloquence), form (memory of shapes), order (organization), coloring

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35   Bittel, 801.

36   Clarence R. Decker, The Victorian Conscience (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1952), 34.

(judgment of art), number (calculation), locality (memory of places), and tune (talent for music).[37] Mrs. Reed, against whom Jane stands in stark opposition, has a "low brow," and Miss Temple, toward whom Jane directs awe and admiration, has a "large forehead," so Jane's admiration aligns precisely with those whose phrenology indicates intelligence.[38] Furthermore, Brontë aligns these Victorian standards of intelligence with Rochester's particular skills.

Examples include Rochester's keen analysis of Jane's paintings; his eloquence and details in narration; and his adeptness for music, which reveals itself both in his own performances and in his frustration with Jane's musical mediocrity.[39] One critic in the 1850s, James Lorimer, understood Rochester as a love interest partly because of his intelligence; he simultaneously criticized Jane as a heroine because her intelligence seemed to surpass her affection.[40] British Victorian society largely preferred women to have tenderness as their most salient characteristic, valuing the strength of their hearts over the strength of their heads.[41] By making Jane not only attracted to intelligence, but also intelligent herself, Brontë crafts her two heroes as closer to equality.

If Jane is attracted to Rochester's intelligence, what about his vices? Do his moral faults actually increase her sympathy with him? After all, Jane herself is not depicted as a saint. As one 1847 reviewer admired Brontë's crafting of an imperfect yet lovable character, "No effort is made to throw romance about her—no extraordinary goodness or cleverness appeals to your admiration . . . A creature of flesh and blood, with very fleshly infirmities, and very mortal excellencies; a woman, not a pattern."[42] Not only is Jane physically plain, but she also has internal vices. One example of her being "flesh and blood," in accordance with Brontë's generally Judeo-Christian worldview, is the extent of her feelings for Rochester. Jane struggles to overcome her idealization of him, as she confesses that his sarcasm and harshness have begun to seem "only

37   J.G. Spurzheim, Outlines of the Physiognomical System of Drs. Gall and Spurzheim: Indicating the Dispositions and Manifestations of the Mind (England: Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, 1815), 333-334; Lundie, 10-11.
38   Brontë, 34, 41, 68.
39   Ibid, 114-116, 128-132, 144, 243.
40   Kelly Harrison, "*Jane Eyre* as Seen Throughout the Times: A Critical Reception History of Jane Eyre in the 1850s and the 1960s and 70s," thesis (Radboud Universiteit, 2015), 13-14.
41   Deborah Lutz, "Context: Friendship and Love," in Charlotte Brontë, Jane Eyre, ed. Deborah Lutz, 4th ed. (NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2016), 435.
42   *Fraser's Magazine* 36, no. 216 (1847): 692.

like keen condiments in a choice dish" and admits that she "could not, in those days, see God for his creature: of whom I had made an idol."[43] Jane falls in love with Rochester in his entirety, not just his intellectual virtues. Jane's exaltation of Rochester's vices, within Brontë's Judeo-Christian framework, becomes a sin within Jane as she forgets his Creator. Although Jane does eventually overcome her temptation to worship Rochester, she understands the strength of emotion in its battle against reason, and Brontë uses this struggle to highlight Jane's humanness. Rochester himself uses Jane's phrenology to confirm that internal struggle. From the anonymous safety of his "gypsy" disguise, Rochester asserts a diagnosis of Jane's motivations:

The forehead declares, 'Reason sits firm and holds the reins, and she will not let the feelings burst away and hurry her to wild chasms. The passions may rage furiously, like true heathens, as they are; and the desires may imagine all sorts of vain things: but judgment shall still have the last word in every argument, and the casting vote in every decision.'[44]

Calling the passions "true heathens" implies a religious aspect of the battle between emotion and reason. When Jane later tells Rochester, "I had rather be a *thing* than an angel," she not only warns him not to idolize her but also implies a religious acknowledgment of her own human shortcomings, and Brontë suggests through Rochester's analysis that emotions can be a part of those human shortcomings.[45] Jane does not want to be his "angel in the house," the expected Victorian role of women to provide a moral center for the home; neither does she see herself as fit for the role or want a male angel to match. Because of her self-awareness of vice, it seems that Rochester's moral vices might strengthen Jane's sensation of sympathy with him. However, Jane's later experience with the Rivers siblings ultimately disproves this theory.

Two Friendships, One Not-So-Much: The Rivers

Jane's interactions with her other suitor, St. John Rivers, augment the temptation to assume a correlation between vicious phrenology and Jane's sympathy. Although Brontë does not specifically describe St. John from a phrenological standpoint, she does describe his appearance as having a classically "perfect" structure: "His face riveted the eye; it was like a Greek face, very pure in outline: quite a straight, classic nose; quite an Athenian mouth and chin. It is seldom,

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43   Brontë, 170, 246.
44   Ibid, 182.

45   Ibid. 235.

indeed, an English face comes so near the antique models as did his. [He had a] high forehead, colourless as ivory [a] lofty forehead, still and pale as a white stone."[46]

Under phrenological standards, the description of classical perfection insinuates perfection of character, and Jane reflects, "He might well be a little shocked at the irregularity of my lineaments, his own being so harmonious."[47] This observation of their physical contrast and suspicion of an emotional response could imply that Jane has no sympathy with perfection; she is too aware of her own external plainness and internal flaws. Victorian phrenologists would likely agree that Jane would not find the most happiness with an "ideal" man, since relational harmony was supposedly sparked by similarity of organs, and Jane is not an "ideal" woman.

Another mention of philanthropy reflects Jane's earlier witty question to Rochester of whether he was a philanthropist, thereby encouraging a direct contrast between Jane's relationships with Rochester and St. John. Jane assumes that St. John can help her find work, and St. John responds, "I know not whether I am a true philanthropist; yet I am willing to aid you to the utmost of my power, in a purpose so honest."[48] By referring to philanthropy in conjunction with Jane's phrenological diagnosis of each suitor, Brontë effectively contrasts the two men and further establishes the supposed accuracy of phrenology to indicate character.

Jane notes upon further acquaintance with her cousins, "As to Mr. St. John, the intimacy which had arisen so naturally and rapidly between me and his sisters did not extend to him."[49] St. John's coldness separates her from him, whereas with Rochester, Jane had observed that "harsh caprice laid me under no obligation" so that his roughness and frankness had helped her feel at ease around him.[50] Even though St. John also breaches etiquette by staring with "unceremonious directness" at Jane upon first acquaintance, his rudeness is distanced and subtly critical rather than forward and opinionating.[51] When St. John coldly—and yet with technical courtesy—responds to Jane's apology for rejecting him "that he had nothing to forgive: not having been offended," Jane reflects that she "would much rather he had knocked [her] down."[52] Both Rochester and St. John treat Jane impolitely, but Rochester is blatant and thereby approachable, whereas Jane feels helpless against St. John's icy judgments and unresolved

46   Ibid. 308, 350.
47   Ibid. 308.
48   Ibid. 310.

49   Ibid. 313.
50   Ibid. 110.
51   Ibid. 309, 114, 309-310.
52   Ibid. 365.

grudges because they are often only implied.

St. John is clearly imperfect but technically blameless, as he intentionally evades faults that can be easily pinpointed as dangerous. However, the sisters of St. John also avoid vices, albeit in a healthier way, and Jane still has sympathy with them. Jane considers Diana and Mary Rivers her family and is thrilled to discover that she is actually related to them, as "when I knew them but as mere strangers, they had inspired me with genuine affection and admiration."[53] When St. John advises that she marries instead of settling with them as a sister, Jane asserts, "I do not want a stranger—unsympathising alien, different from me; I want my kindred: those with whom I have full fellow-feeling."[54] This sympathy seems genuine, as Jane tells the reader that she and the sisters shared "perfect congeniality of tastes, sentiments, and principles. Our natures dovetailed: mutual affection—of the strongest kind—was the result."[55] Jane acts on her sympathy with Diana and Mary Rivers by sharing her inheritance, despite St. John's warnings of her impulsiveness and indiscretion.[56] Sympathy is tightly tied to Jane's deeply-held desire

for kinship, and her resolution to act on that sympathy stands firm against every opposition but her religious doctrine.

Despite Jane's antipathy with St. John, Diana and Mary are upheld as virtuous and described as having similar visages with their brother. When Jane first sees them through the window of Moor House, she obseres that they had:

'...very fair necks and faces they were all delicacy and cultivation. I had nowhere seen such faces as theirs: and yet, as I gazed on them, I seemed intimate with every lineament. I cannot call them handsome—they were too pale and grave for the word. Both were fair complexioned and slenderly made; both possessed faces full of distinction and intelligence.'[57]

Several clues in this description link the sisters' appearances to St. John's: their uniqueness, gracefulness, paleness, and solemnity. Regarding internal qualities, Diana and Mary value virtue and knowledge just like St. John; unlike St. John, they appreciate the beauty of nature. The narrator Jane reflects almost hesitatingly, "I think, moreover, that Nature was not to him that treasury of delight it was to his sisters. Never did he seem to roam the moors for the sake of their soothing silence."[58] Her hesitant start to this analysis foreshadows the lack of self-confidence

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53   Ibid. 343-344
54   Ibid. 346.
55   Ibid. 312, 313.
56   Ibid. 345-347.

57   Ibid. 297, 299.
58   Ibid. 314.

that St. John's presence creates, later to an extreme level. Furthermore, Jane and the Rivers sisters all delight in the specific experience he eschews, the silence of the moors. This mutual appreciation of nature binds the female cousins together just as it excludes St. John. The Rivers sisters' phrenological similarity with St. John, alongside the contrast of their relationship with Jane, illustrates Brontë's view that phrenology cannot predict the presence or absence of sympathy.

Brontë provides some hints that St. John may not be living with complete adherence to his own true nature. He struggles with restlessness, as the narrator Jane comments, "Zealous in his ministerial labours, blameless in his life and habits, he yet did not appear to enjoy that mental serenity, that inward content, which should be the reward of every sincere Christian and practical philanthropist."[59] Moreover, St. John wrestles with his attraction to the sweet yet frivolous Rosamund Oliver, as Jane observes him in the heiress's presence: "I saw his solemn eye melt with sudden fire, and flicker with resistless emotion. His chest heaved once, as if his large heart, weary of despotic constriction, had expanded, despite the will, and made a vigorous bound for the attainment of liberty. But he curbed it."[60]

This moment when Jane discovers St. John's draw to Miss Oliver is the only instance when Brontë refers to St. John in symbolic terms of fire (like Rochester and usually Jane) instead of ice, indicating an entirely different nature that he represses and that might have allowed him to sympathize with Jane.

Because sympathy is dependent upon the true natures of two different people, one person suppressing or altering their nature would prevent them from maintaining a strong connection with the second person. St. John's mind is closed against the glory of nature and likely against the true direction of nature's Creator; furthermore, his assertion to Jane that to disobey him is to disobey God indicates a confidence in his own discretion that precludes a humble and listening ear before God.[61] Diana even describes St. John as "inexorable as death," implying little room for spiritual redirection or empathetic considerations.[62]

This description is not the first time that Brontë has linked this term "inexorable" with death. When Aunt Reed dies, Jane visits her body and observes that "her brow and strong traits wore yet the impress of her inexorable soul."[63] Jane and Aunt Reed have strong mutual antip-

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59   Ibid. 314.
60   Ibid. 225-226.

61   Ibid. 365.
62   Ibid. 319, 326.
63   Ibid. 216.

athy, despite Jane's late and vain effort to reconcile the relationship. During Jane's childhood, Aunt Reed refuses even to attempt to understand Jane, instead shunning her until Jane can "acquire a more sociable and childlike disposition;" until that hypothetical point, Aunt Reed excludes Jane from "privileges intended only for contented, happy, little children."[64] Aunt Reed wishes that Jane were something she is not; St. John both tries to be something he is not and then later expects the same from Jane.

Aunt Reed, St. John, and Diana all attempt to influence Jane's choices. Yet only Diana, who admittedly is given a smaller part in the narrative, never disrespects Jane's will. Jane describes Diana as having "a certain authority: she had a will, evidently. It was my nature to feel pleasure in yielding to an authority supported like hers: and to bend, where my conscience and self-respect permitted, to an active will."[65] When Diana suggests teaching German to Jane, she asks; when St. John starts teaching Hindostanee to Jane, he *commands*.[66] Although Jane "bends" at both times to the will of her potential teacher, she finds pleasure only in Diana's active will over her instruction, whereas she reflects about St. John's instruction, "I

daily wished more to please him: but to do so, I felt daily more and more that I must disown half my nature, stifle half my faculties, wrest my tastes from their original bent, force myself to the adoption of pursuits for which I had no natural vocation."[67] Not only does St. John separate himself from his inner nature and the external nature around him, but he also exerts control over Jane's inner nature so that in his presence, she loses a part of herself. Jane has clarified that before she can enjoy submission, the two authorities that must consent are her conscience and her self-respect, but St. John disregards her self-respect by telling her who she should be.

Aunt Reed and St. John have an inexorable or unchangeable view of what should be, whereas Jane needs the freedom to be just as she is. She observes that reaching St. John's illogical standards for her "was as impossible as to mould my irregular features to his correct and classic pattern, to give to my changeable green eyes the sea-blue tint and solemn lustre of his own."[68] Eye color is a fixed trait of nature; therefore, Jane calling her eye color "changeable" suggests that she can naturally adapt to different situations—but not to the extent that St. John demands. When Rochester had earlier confused the

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64   Ibid. 9.
65   Ibid. 307.
66   Ibid. 313, 354.

67   Ibid. 355.
68   Ibid. 355.

color of Jane's eyes, calling them hazel instead of green, Jane excuses him for the reader by suggesting that "for him they were new-dyed [with love], I suppose."[69] Jane's sympathy with Rochester runs deep enough that she is willing to alter her perception of herself, but only enough to call her eyes "changeable." St. John's implicit demand of a more drastic change from green to blue is too severe for Jane to satisfy. She respects herself too much to change herself entirely, especially for someone with whom she feels no sympathy.

St. John and his sisters share similar appearances, and their phrenology suggests similarity in both intelligence and morality. However, in his efforts to pursue a martyr's life in addition to a martyr's death, St. John cuts himself off from the nature surrounding him, his own human nature, and the natures of the people closest to him. As Jane describes him to Diana, "He is a good and a great man: but he forgets, pitilessly, the feelings and claims of little people, in pursuing his own large views."[70] If Jane had shared sympathy with an unrepressed St. John, it would have only further established the idea that phrenology and sympathy are unrelated in Brontë's world. However, even as the novel stands, the dramatic contrast between Rochester's and the Rivers sisters' characters shows that Jane can have sympathy with people regardless of the harmony between their phrenology and her own, and the disparity between St. John's and the Rivers sisters' relationships with Jane shows that a certain phrenological composition cannot guarantee sympathy.

Science Abandoned

As sympathy and antipathy drift away from any justification via phrenology, Jane's antipathy with St. John leads to a scene that Brontë describes in strictly nonscientific terms. St. John has just prayed a glorious prayer, and after Diana and Mary go to bed, he urges Jane once more to follow God's supposed will by marrying him and traveling to India. The combination of his prayer and his suddenly gentle earnestness affects Jane, and she is caught up in the moment. She reflects, "All men of talent, whether they be men of feeling or not; whether they be zealous, or aspirants, or despots—provided only they be sincere—have their sublime moments: when they subdue and rule."[71] The inclusion of the term "sublime" cannot be accidental.

As one of the key thinkers to support Romanticism, Edmund Burke (1729-1797) was the first person to separate the

69   Ibid. 231.
70   Ibid. 371.
71   Ibid. 372-373.

terms "sublime" and "beautiful" thoroughly in his 1757 philosophical treatise regarding those concepts. According to Burke, true harmony is not a worthwhile goal, as it would lead to mental inaction and ultimate misery. Instead, difficulties must be embraced.[72] This conclusion starkly contrasts with the goal of some Victorians, like those using phrenology to find the most harmonious match between potential marriage partners. Burke describes a desirable state of near-pain that stimulates the mind and is characterized by craving for something undefinable beyond the physical world. This craving feels like: "delight; not pleasure, but a sort of delightful horror, a sort of tranquility tinged with terror; which, as it belongs to self-preservation, is one of the strongest of all the passions. Its object is the sublime. Its highest degree I call astonishment; the subordinate degrees are awe, reverence, and respect."[73]

Brontë uses this word "sublime" strategically in *Jane Eyre*, as four of the five instances hint at a convergence of the material and supernatural realms (with one satirical inclusion for Mr. Brocklehurst's

self-righteous public condemnation of the young Jane).[74] The sublime is anticipated with a transcendent dread, felt by the human spirit and separate from human reason. By applying the Romantic sense of the sublime to St. John, Brontë intentionally departs from a scientific Victorian explanation for his influence over Jane. His influence is not formed from sympathy, like the inevitable influence that Rochester and the Rivers sisters have on Jane's character development. Although both are subconscious and nonrational, St. John's influence overpowers Jane's nature instead of accepting and interweaving with it.

In this particular scene when Jane nearly caves to St. John's request, Brontë includes multiple terms that insinuate magic, which has traditionally been opposed to science. Jane describes St. John as her "hierophant," an interpreter of mysteries in ancient non-Judeo religions. Assigning St. John this role suggests his supernatural power over Jane, especially as she "stood motionless under my hierophant's touch," as if she can no longer act according to her own will.[75] Jane has felt this mystical power before, during St. John's previous effort to convince her. His entrancing responses in this conversation seem to have blocked Jane's entire faculty

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72   Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry Into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful; with an Introductory Discourse Concerning Taste*, adapted by Abraham Mills, ebook (NY: Harper & Brothers), 167.

73   Ibid. 168.

74   Brontë, 63, 214, 253, 361, 372.

75   Ibid. 373.

for self-awareness:

'If they [people fitted for missionary work] are really qualified for the task, will not their own hearts be the first to inform them of it?'

I felt as if an awful charm was framing round and gathering over me: I trembled to hear some fatal word spoken which would at once declare and rivet the spell. 'And what does your heart say?' demanded St. John.

'My heart is mute,—my heart is mute,' I answered, struck and thrilled. 'Then I must speak for it,' continued the deep, relentless voice.[76]

At the beginning of this quote, Jane remains true to her belief in the power of individuals to interpret God's call for their lives. She has traditionally followed her own judgment to determine where God was leading her, such as telling no one when she advertised herself as a governess in pursuit of a new "servitude" after teaching at Lowood.[77] This independent behavior dramatically contrasts the idea of accepting a "hierophant" to interpret God's will for others. However, by using words like "awful charm" and "spell," Brontë implies that St. John overpowers first Jane's rationality and then her self-awareness, as Jane ultimately claims her heart is "mute."

Only because of St. John's mystical influence is Jane tempted to succumb, even while acknowledging the fatefulness of such a decision: "If I join St. John, I abandon half myself."[78] St. John uses his power to disregard Jane's self-respect and spiritual agency. That antipathetic power controls Jane's emotions in a way that is inexplicable via modern Victorian science. Instead, Brontë relies on Romantic ideas of the sublime, emotionality, and mysticism to characterize the contrasting natures of Jane and St. John. Immediately after St. John's ultimate attempt to persuade Jane, Brontë takes Romantic mysticism to the extreme with Jane's sensation of Rochester calling her from miles away. This instance, confirmed later by Rochester actually having called her at that time, is the boldest manifestation of human sympathy demonstrated in the novel. Brontë seems to dare her readers to attempt to explain it rationally.

Conclusion

Brontë wrote *Jane Eyre* during the reign of phrenology as a popular science. Although she incorporates phrenology throughout the novel to describe and even predict character, Brontë adamantly departs from the view that phrenology could

76   Ibid. 358.
77   Ibid. 79-82.

78   Ibid. 361.

predict relationships as well. Depending instead upon the previous literary period of influence, Brontë uses Romantic ideas of sympathy and the sublime to frame interactions between humans as scientifically inexplicable. *Jane Eyre* provides insight into the transition between cultural values of the Romantic and Victorian periods, as Brontë grapples with the simultaneous appreciation of human mystery and the desire to solve its puzzles. With the final juxtaposition of St. John's spell and Rochester's summons, Brontë establishes without question that certain interactions between her characters are too mysterious to understand logically. For Brontë, phrenology might explain one individual's personality in isolation; however, the sense of kinship that draws two people together against impossible odds and distances defies all rational explanation.

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Kenyan Pastimes

Matthew Nzasi

Born in Kenya but currently living in northeastern PA, I've worked for the past five years to create my own style of photography that I believe allows me to stand out from others.

The majority of my work is original. Although I do get inspiration from other sources, I always make sure they have my own creative twists. I find the most interesting shoot locations in public areas like parks, sports fields, and waterfalls. My commission work primarily consists of senior portrait photography where I work to capture their best smiles, for years to last.

I am currently a sophomore at the University of Pittsburgh studying Computer Science with a minor in Business.

University of Pittsburgh • Sophomore

Red
for
Resuscitation
Needed

Priya Gupta

Priya is a third-year student at the University of Pittsburgh studying Social Work with a minor in Chemistry and certificate in Global Health. This is her second official publication; her previous piece "Your Morning Coffee, With a Pinch of Grief" was featured in Ars Poetica published by Warren County Community College. She is passionate about working towards a day when all individuals across the globe have access to both physical and mental healthcare and is planning to pursue a Master's Degree and career in Public Health.

University of Pittsburgh • Junior

Dr. Flores first accompanied us to the private hospital run by Univalle Ayacucho, a private university in Cochabamba, Bolivia. We were greeted by a well-dressed man whose name I did not catch. He quickly embarked with us on a tour, initially taking us to the top floor and subsequently venturing down to each one below. My preliminary reaction was one of extraordinary awe; the facility was cleaner than most hospitals I have visited in the United States. The employees were uniformly dressed in quality scrubs and shoes, impressive enough for me to make a note in my written observations. I imagine you could see your reflection in the floors and windows, maybe even hear a pin drop in some of the corridors.

As we continued through the building, these aspects I admired became the very ones that made me nauseatingly uncomfortable. Ask yourself, when have you ever been able to hear even your own thoughts in the hallway of a hospital? The passageways that compose the intricate labyrinth where beginnings and endings are only walls apart are lined with beds under patients who have yet to be assigned rooms after waiting over 24 hours. Doctors and nurses shuffle through with exhaustive speed, and worried family members aimlessly look for the cafeteria to feel, at the very least for a moment, useful and in control.

4 floors.

44 beds.

6 ER rooms.

0 patients.

These stats rang in my head, back and forth, like the tolling of a heavy church bell as we reached the bottom floor. In the United States, we operate daily with the unconsciously privileged assumption that if we need emergency medical care, we can dial three numbers and receive help within minutes. The emergency medical response system in Bolivia is virtually nonexistent, with most people choosing to drive themselves to hospitals or seek alternative care.

 "Why would you call for an ambulance if you do not know when, or if, it will arrive?" a local Bolivian remarked to me on another day.

As this conversation played across my mind like a rediscovered VHS tape, the pounding in my head and heart only grew. The well-dressed man was now proudly explaining how the facility had, to that day, not taken a single COVID-19 patient. Less than half of Bolivia's population is covered by private health insurance, a necessity in many cases to acquire

adequate COVID-19 testing and care.[1] He shook our hands and posed for a picture with us in the empty ER. I found myself thinking about a statistic from an article I read for our Contemporary Issues class: 3,000 people died outside of Bolivian hospitals at the height of the pandemic, waiting for care that would never come and that was at a cost they could not afford.[2]

Leaving this hospital, I truly felt numb. This beautiful palace of life-saving measures was unobtainable to most, a mirage of hope that was almost further away than space itself.

<div align="center">

4 floors.

44 beds.

6 ER rooms.

0 patients.

1 pandemic.

3,000 dead.

</div>

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1   Villarroel Saavedra, V., Arebalo López, M., & Dauby, N. (2021). The Heavy Toll of COVID-19 in Bolivia: A Tale of Distrust, Despair, and Health Inequalities. T*he American journal of tropical medicine and hygiene*, 104(5), 1607–1608.

2   Human Rights Watch. (2020). Bolivia: Events of 2020. *In World Report 2021*.

Upon arrival at the public hospital, I tried to prepare myself for what I could only imagine would be the opposite of the eerie perfection of Univalle Ayacucho. The inability to go inside due to the pandemic left us with a unique observational position. The gates were laced with people, sitting on the curb or standing, accompanied by a stare that looked past the immediate and into something beyond. I noticed an older woman bleeding from the nose and holding onto the arm of a younger man. Through the metal bars, hanging by the ER door, a triage poster was visible

<div align="center">

The highest priority:
red for resuscitation needed.

</div>

Alejandro, our accompanying translator, scoffed with a knowing air.

"People die outside waiting right here in line all the time," he said.

<div align="center">

Two hospitals.

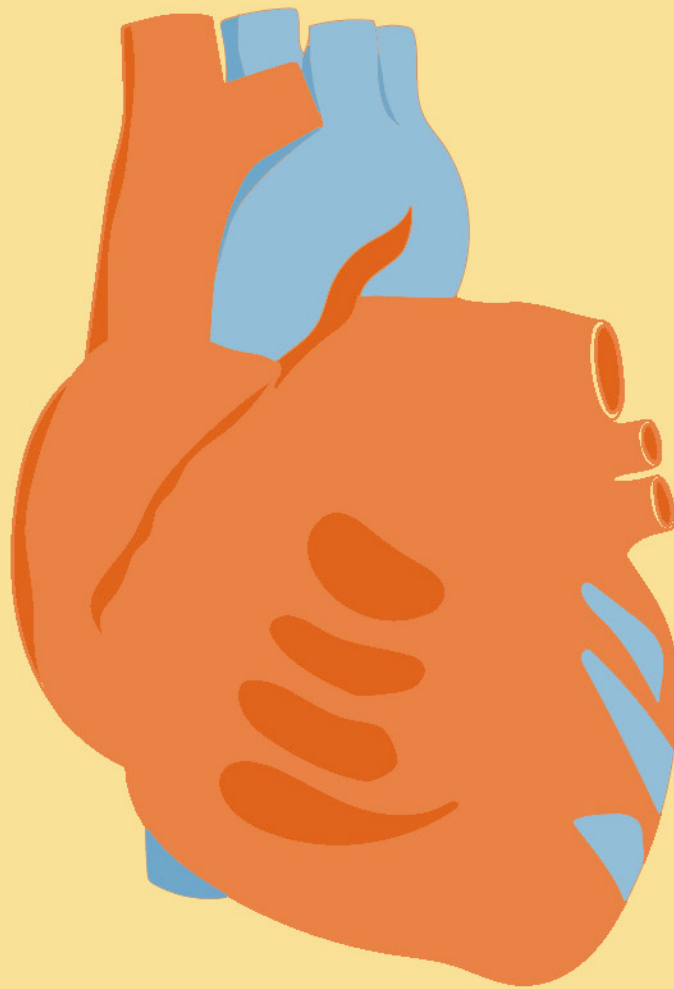One with no patients.

One with too many.

</div>

All names have been changed to protect privacy.

Learning **Genotyping** and **Cell Culture Techniques** to Perform Experiments to Study **Cardiovascular Calcification**

Rekha Ramanathan

Rekha is a junior at the University of Pittsburgh, studying Neuroscience with a minor in Chemistry. She is interested in attending PA school in the near future and working in the Neurology/Psychiatry field. She is passionate about mental health and hopes to spread more awareness through being an advocate and voice for others, as well as through her career. This article is about the experiences she had working at the St. Hilaire Lab, doing experiments involving cell culture and genotyping.

University of Pittsburgh • Junior

Abstract

The St. Hilaire Lab studies important cardiovascular diseases such as Calcific Aortic Valve Disease (CAVD), Arterial Calcification due to Deficiency of CD73 (ACDC) and Medial Arterial Calcification (MAC). The similarity between all of these conditions is the calcification of cells, which leads to the main research question of the lab: how and why does a healthy cell transition into an osteogenic cell? In order to determine why a healthy cell becomes calcified, we perform experiments using both in vivo and in vitro environments. However, in order to begin in vitro experiments that involve valuable human cells, basic techniques in cell culture such as plating and splitting are needed, and in vivo experiments require knowing the genotype of the animals used. With these fundamental techniques, biochemical analysis such as quantitative polymerase chain reaction (qPCR), western blots, and staining can be performed in order to help answer research questions that pertain to the lab.

Introduction

Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, averaging around one in four deaths every year.[1] There are various types of heart disease and in many cases, it involves calcification of either arteries, valves or vessels. The St. Hilaire Lab focuses on the underlying cause of vascular disease, and more specifically, what drives vascular and valvular calcification in order to develop non-surgical methods to treat these conditions.[2] Calcific Aortic Valve Disease (CAVD) is the most common valvular heart disease and occurs when the leaflets in the valve become calcified, hardened and thick. This phenomenon occurs in around 30% of the aging population and covers a spectrum of conditions from aortic sclerosis (hardening of valve leaflets) all the way to aortic stenosis (blood flow to the aorta is blocked and results in heart failure).[3] Currently, the treatment options for CAVD include surgical aortic valve replacement with either a mechanical or bioprosthetic valve. Mechanical valves are made from metallic alloys or plastic elements, whereas bioprosthetic valves are made from animal tissue. However, the lifespan of bioprosthetic valves is short and patients may require reoperation, indi-

1   "Heart Disease Facts." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 14 Oct. 2022.
2   "St. Hilaire Laboratory Cardiovascular Calcification and Remodeling." Sthilairelab.pitt.edu.
3   Ibid.

cating that surgical intervention is not the most effective option.[4] Furthermore, the St. Hilaire Lab also studies Medial Arterial Calcification (MAC). This is a condition in which calcium deposits develop along the smooth muscle layer of the arterial wall, which can eventually destroy the vessel. MAC is often associated with diabetes mellitus, chronic kidney disease, and aging.[5] In addition to MAC and CAVD, the St. Hilaire Lab studies a rare disease called ACDC, which is Arterial Calcification due to a Deficiency of CD73. Research suggests that patients with this condition have certain inactivating mutations in the gene CD73. The CD73 gene breaks down extracellular AMP into adenosine. Without CD73 and adenosine present, patients develop vascular calcification and increased vessel tortuosity.[6] The St. Hilaire Lab's main goal is to understand the mechanisms behind a healthy cell developing into an osteogenic cell as it occurs in these diseases. Understanding this phenomenon requires complex experiments and a strong foundation of the basic techniques used for such investigations. These techniques include genotyping and splitting/plating cells.

Methods

The St. Hilaire Lab research utilizes both in vivo and in vitro experiments. In vivo refers to working with living organisms such as mice, which are used for genotyping. In vitro refers to work that is performed outside of living organisms, such as cells. At the St. Hilaire Lab, different cells are used in cell culture, and this plays a vital role in the research conducted.

Genotyping

Genotyping is key for experiments as it determines the differences in genetic components by allowing us to compare the DNA of the sample to a reference sequence. It is especially important to help identify correlations between genetic variations and having abnormal/normal phenotypes. At the St. Hilaire Lab, there are many different mouse lines that are used for genotyping, and these include: TERT, TERT-Tg, MGP, CD73 and ERCC1/R26R. When genotyping TERT, MGP and CD73, the goal is to determine whether mice are knockout or wild-types.

4   Yutzey, Katherine E., et al. "Calcific Aortic Valve Disease." American Heart Association Journals, vol. 34, no. 11, 4 Sept. 2014.
5   Losurdo, Fabrizio, et al. "Medial Artery Calcification: The Silent Killer of the Leg." American College of Cardiology.
6   "St. Hilaire Laboratory Cardiovascular Calcification and Remodeling." Sthilairelab.pitt.edu.

A knockout mouse is one whose DNA is genetically engineered to not express certain genes, whereas wild-type mice express the gene in a manner that is considered to be normal and found in natural populations.

There are three main aspects to genotyping: DNA extraction, polymerase chain reaction (PCR) and gel electrophoresis. As the first step, the DNA should be obtained from the mice samples. To do this, a small portion of the mouse's tail is snipped and a certain amount of DNA lysis reagent as well as proteinase K is added to the tail to create a mixture. DNA lysis reagent acts as a buffer solution and breaks open cells to obtain DNA. Proteinase K inactivates nucleases or other substances that might degrade the DNA by digesting protein and removing contamination. After adding the mixture of DNA lysis reagent and proteinase K to each tail, the tubes are then put into a heat block, allowing for the denaturation of proteins and the actual extraction of DNA.

The next step in the genotyping process is PCR. PCR is comprised of three steps: denaturation, annealing and extension. The denaturation of the template is completed in the first step by DNA extraction in which the double stranded DNA is separated into single strands. Annealing is the process whereupon primers, which are small molecules of DNA, bind to regions of the complementary single DNA strands. The final step is extension, in which the DNA polymerase extends the primer from the 3' end all the way to the end of the amplicon. After these three steps, the target region of the DNA needed for observation is amplified.

After PCR, gel electrophoresis occurs to check whether PCR was successful and to determine the size of each DNA sample. This is done by comparing the DNA samples to the DNA ladder, which indicates known base pair lengths of DNA.

In addition to genotyping, another aspect of the St. Hilaire Lab's research is in vivo mouse dissections. Mice are quite similar to humans in anatomy, physiology, and genetics. Since the mouse genome is closely related to the human genome, using mice in genetic research is helpful for the study of different human conditions--in this case, CAVD and MAC. During these dissections, the main objective is to remove the aorta of the mouse, which is the main artery that carries blood away from the heart and transfers it to the rest of the body. This is done so the cells from the aorta can be extracted and studied through performing experiments in cell culture. After the aorta is extracted, the tissues are sent to pathology to be put in paraffin blocks. Following this, there will be the opportunity to learn how to stain slides from these blocks.

Cell Culture

The St. Hilaire Lab works in vitro by experimenting with various kinds of cells. Cell culture is an important technique in molecular biology as it allows researchers to study the biology, chemistry, and physiology of wild-type cells as well as diseased cells. Further, we had the opportunity to learn methods in working with cells such as splitting, plating, and collecting cells. However, working with cells requires sterile technique. It is essential to spray everything with ethanol before bringing those items under the chemical hood, as this will prevent bacterial and fungal contamination of the cells.

To split cells, it is essential to look at the confluency, which is the percentage of the surface of a plate or dish that contains cells. If the cells are around 90% confluent, they are ready to be split. If cells are not split in time, they may grow on top of each other or stop growing altogether. When cells grow on top of each other, the cells at the bottom have little access to nutrients, causing them to die, while the ones on top may detach and float. To split cells, the media (containing nutrients for the cells) and trypsin (an enzyme that breaks down proteins that enable cells to stick to the vessel) are placed in the water bath to warm them. After the media and trypsin are warmed to room temperature,

the process starts by aspirating the old media and washing the cells with Phosphate Buffered Saline (PBS) twice. PBS is used opposed to water as it prevents cells from either rupturing or shrinking due to osmosis. Next, the trypsin is added, and the plate is left to incubate for a few minutes. Once the plate is done incubating, the cells lift off the plate, which can be seen with the microscope, suggesting that they are ready to be split into separate wells or plates. Before they are split into separate wells/plates, media is added to neutralize the trypsin reaction.

Plating cells is important for future experiments. In order to plate cells, the number of cells is counted using a machine and then split evenly into a six-well plate to use for future experiments. If there are any remaining cells, they are mixed with a freezing solution and restored in the liquid nitrogen tank for the next use. Splitting and plating cells are significant for following experiments such as qPCR, western blots, and staining.

qPCR is utilized for determining the actual amount of PCR product that is present in each cycle. The process uses a fluorescent report in the PCR reaction, allowing measurement of DNA generation. The main difference between PCR and qPCR is that PCR is a qualitative technique that shows the absence or presence of DNA, whereas qPCR is a quantitative

technique that determines the amount of DNA amplified after each cycle.

Western blotting is a method that detects a target protein within a tissue sample or lysate. The protein molecules are separated by size through gel electrophoresis. Gel electrophoresis works by loading DNA into wells within the gel and an electric current causes the negatively charged DNA fragments to move towards the positively charged electrode. Western blotting is a method of gel electrophoresis; however, it deals with proteins as opposed to DNA.

Lastly, cell staining provides a clearer visual of cells and their components under a microscope. Cell components are stained differently to allow for comparison depending on what the researcher is studying. For example, at the St. Hilaire Lab, cells have been stained using healthy cell markers, osteogenic cell markers and intermediate markers, which indicate the process of a healthy cell undergoing transition into an osteogenic cell. This allows for clear visualization of the cell becoming osteogenic. These learning techniques, such as genotyping and the basis of cell culture, can be utilized for projects that will involve qPCR, western blots and staining in order to study how a healthy cell transforms into a calcifying cell.

Results

After gel electrophoresis, the mice samples can be genotyped. ERCC1 is a gene that is genotyped as either wild-type or flox. Flox refers to the sandwiching of a DNA sequence by two loxP sites. This utilizes the Cre-loxP system, where Cre is a protein that can catalyze the recombination of DNA between specific sites. These sites are the loxP sequences, which contain specific binding sites for Cre. Cre will then get rid of the loxP sites so that the DNA sequence in between those sites can be translated.
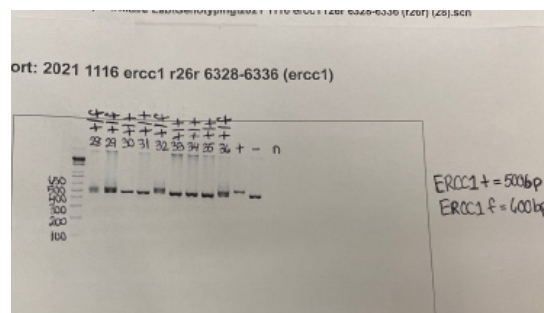

Figure 1: ERCC1 genotyping results. Both + labels indicate that the mouse is wild-type; one + and one f label indicates that it has one loxP site; two f labels indicate that there are two loxP sites. The positive control represents the allele as flox and the negative control represents the allele as wild-type. The no template control at the end is water and it is important for detecting contamination or the lack of amplification.

The gene R26R works similarly to ERCC1. The mutant gene contains loxP sites, which surround a specific part of the DNA sequence. However, the stop sequence after the loxP site contains the

enhanced yellow fluorescent protein gene that is expressed with the implementation of the Cre-loxP system. With the addition of Cre removing the loxP sites, the stop sequence is deleted, and the yellow fluorescent protein is expressed in the mutant gene.
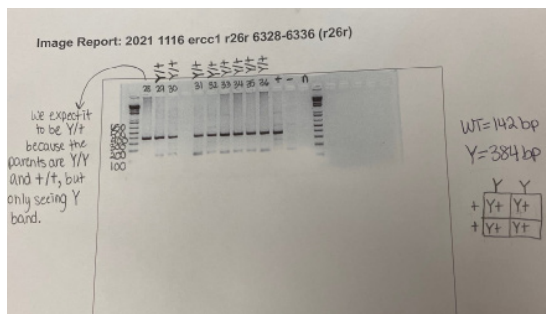

Figure 2: R26R genotyping results for the same mice samples as ERCCI. Both + labels indicate that the mouse is wild-type; one + and one Y label indicates that it has one loxP site; having two Y labels indicates that there are two loxP sites. The positive control represents the allele as Y and the negative control represents the allele as wild-type. The no temple control at the end is water.
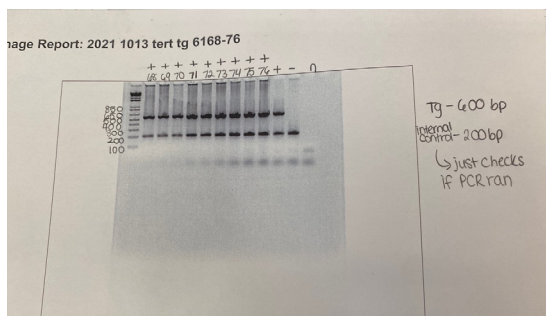

Figure 3: TERT-Tg genotyping results. Unlike TERT, MGP, CD73, and ERCC1/R26R, this gene has only one possibility in genotyping; it is a simple +, confirming that the mouse is transgenic. The positive control represents the allele as transgenic, and it includes the internal control. The negative control represents the allele as the internal control. The no template control at the end is water.

Tert-Tg is a line that is transgenic, meaning that the mouse has been genetically engineered with an extra piece of DNA added to its genome. When genotyping this line, there is only one genotype that can occur. It is expected to see a band at both 200 base pairs and 600 base pairs. The first band at 200 base pairs is an internal control that confirms the PCR ran successfully. The band at 600 base pairs indicates that the mouse is transgenic.
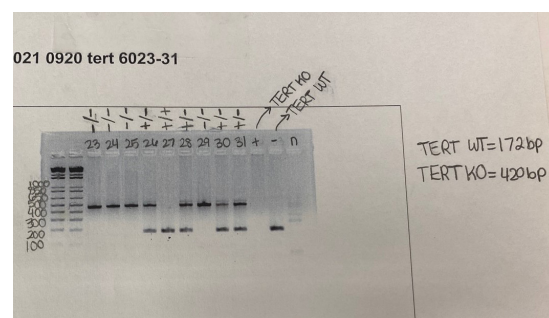
Figure 4: TERT genotyping results. The positive control represents the allele as knockout and the negative control represents the allele as wild-type. The no template control at the end is water.

TERT, CD73 and MGP are mouse lines that are all genotyped the same way. For example, +/+ indicates that the mouse is a wild-type; +/- indicates that the mouse is heterozygous (one wild-type allele and one mutated allele); -/- indicates that the mouse is a knockout.

In vitro experiment results and techniques involve taking pictures from the microscope to track how cells are doing. It is important to take pictures before splitting the cells in order to ensure they are confluent enough. It is just as crucial to

keep checking the cells even after a day or so following splitting them to make sure the cells are growing properly and have enough nutrients to do so.
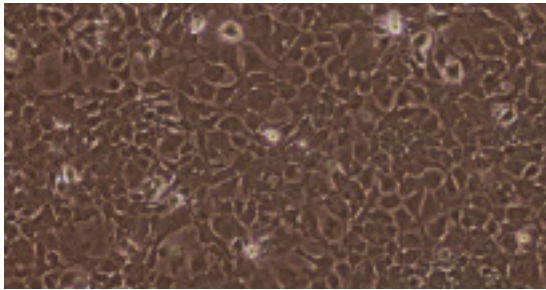
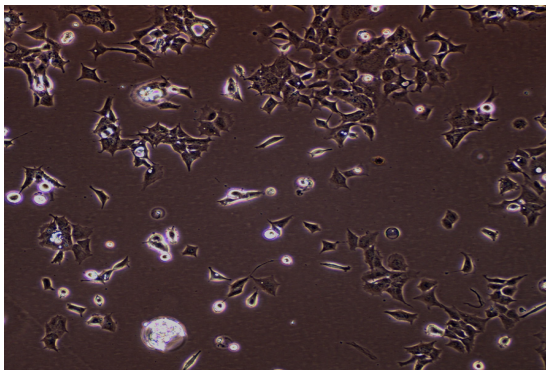*Figure 5: Cells are around 90% confluent and ready to split.*

The picture above shows HEK 293 cells, which are human embryonic kidney cells. These cells are around 90% confluent and are ready to be split. The picture below shows the cells one day after splitting them. The cells are much less confluent compared to the picture above.

Figure 6: One day after the cells have been split; the cells are less confluent and have more space for nutrients to grow.

Conclusion

Both genotyping and cell culture techniques such as splitting, plating, and collecting cells are very important for future complex experiments. Genotyping helps researchers understand the heredity behind an organism's genome. By looking at band sizes, it can be determined if the organism contains a knockout gene, is wild-type or is heterozygous for that specific gene. This information can help discover whether the parents of the organism are either heterozygous or homozygous for the gene as well. Furthermore, genotyping allows researchers to see if there is a break or lesion in the DNA and how that will have an impact on the organism, such as having a disease. On the other hand, cell culture helps researchers understand the biology, physiology, and chemistry behind cells. Sterile practice is vital in cell culture to ensure that bacterial/fungal contamination does not occur, which will greatly impact results. Practices such as spraying objects and media with ethanol before bringing them under the chemical hood will create the most sterile environment we can produce. Basic techniques in cell culture can produce opportunities to perform qPCR, staining, and western blot experiments, which can be used to study how a healthy cell transitions to a calcified cell.

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    Journals*, vol. 34, no. 11, 4 Sept. 2014.

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    Control and Prevention, 14 Oct. 2022, https://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/facts.htm.

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    edu*, www.sthilairelab.pitt.edu/?page_id=71. Accessed 12 Dec. 2021.

Unfinished Cat
with **Cherries**

Lilly Forrest

Lilly is a senior at the University of Pittsburgh studying Art History and Film and Media Production. "Unfinished Cat with Cherries" was made for her first oil painting class this past summer. The painting is inspired by a cat she saw while visiting Riomaggiore, Italy.

University of Pittsburgh • Sophomore

An **Echo** is Heard

Kylie Klassen

Kylie is a second-year at Grinnell College from Mesa, Arizona. She plans to major in English with a concentration in Peace and Conflict Studies. "An Echo is Heard" is a retelling of the myth of Narcissus from the character Echo's perspective. Kylie sought to give a voice to the nymph in the myth who had been cursed to only echo the phrases that people (specifically men) say to her. In this story, the female character achieves the depth that she had been lacking in the classical telling of this tale.

Grinnell College • Sophomore

As I frolicked through the freshly flowering forest on that warm June afternoon, my gaze happened upon a silhouette beyond the bushy brush ahead. Though this was not an unusual sight to me, I still heard my heartbeat hasten. The birds above began to chatter, an erosion to my individual rhythm. Streams of heavy ivory hairs flooded my face like a waterfall, entirely submerging the majority of my vision, making it difficult to identify even the simplest of things. A branch? Or maybe a fox? A deer? As I attempted to distinguish what this figure was, I quietly hoped to myself that this dim outline would shift into an illuminated form of a human as I came closer. More specifically, one of the male variety. Something about them compelled me. Like the syrupy sap that seeps from the tree that you know doesn't taste good because you've tried it. But you can't help yourself to taste again.

The matching strands sprayed across my arms seemingly agreed and stood erect at this idea. But, as far as I was aware, humans couldn't reach this part of the deeply dense woods even if they tried; they're too afraid of the ugliness they might meet here. It was most definitely a deer. And anyway, it was no matter, nymphs are considered superior to humans in any and all ways. So, what was it that I was wanting? Why was I secretly seeking to smell that inherent aroma of inferiority?

Still, I held out hope for a human. It's not often that I am able to observe humans without their knowledge, so my excitement at this possibility exponentially increased in time with my stride. With every step of my avid approach towards the unidentified outline, I became more and more impatient. I could not get there quickly enough. The ground recognized the excitement in my familiar feet and altered itself to become excessively elastic. I saw my steps soak into the soil and stay there, leaving my mark. Graciously gifting me more height with each bounce on my way to observe the unknown object, I thanked the ground for its consistent kindness towards me. It was the only one.

More commonly, instead of being the observer in this voyeuristic binary, I am generally the object of the human's heathenish hunt. Men's flammable eyes often follow me throughout the depths of the forest, visibly anticipating to view this virgin in her most vulnerable version. Their desires are entirely extinguished by the end of our encounter. Who wants a woman who talks back?

But right now, right here, at the very edge of the treeline, the roles were about to reverse. As I peered through the broken brambles that were once wholly entire branches, I spotted the figure that I saw from farther into the forest. What was it? Gazing upon this still slightly misty im-

age, I let the surrounding scent inflate the entirety of my lungs. In… and… out. My throat burned with the unmistakable odor of mortality. Twirling my tongue, I could even taste the tang of it. I knew he was a human. As I exhausted this essence from my insides and exhaled, an overwhelming awareness washed over me as uncontrolled as the impartiality of a wave but… was it possible? Could it be done? Could I get someone to *actually* want me? It was seconds like these that I sought to spiral back to last summer. To say more about my inability to say *anything* more, before this ability was altogether extracted.

My extreme enthusiasm to examine and engage whatever human unknowingly stumbled into my woody domain resulted in me running rather indelicately towards my intended destination. Seemingly from far off, my mother's voice sloshed back into my mind.

"Walk like the waves."

Acknowledging my obviously disjointed form, I returned to the balletic bounce she had ingrained in me to not only attract men, but distract them from the acidic aspects of my facial features. My appearance was that rare type which looks relatively reasonable from afar, but was the cause of intermittent eye contact when I came closer. I never understood why. My mother, a famed nymph of the sea, explained to me that these removed responses were due to the bitter taste I put into people's mouths when they saw me. Or something of that sort. She said that when people get to view me at this close range, their tongues swell with this sort of sickeningly stinging sensation which makes them prefer avoidance to contact.

To put it simply, I taste sour.

She taught me how to trim my locks in such a way as to shield the view of my caustic countenance. My mother was constantly looking out for me in these ways.

"Nobody will love you if they get to look at you, Esme."

And I made sure that no one ever did.

My four sisters had all enticed different dignified deities, leaving me and my mother to our quaint cottage in the woods. They lived their lives with their husbands with wealth and wonder and overall warmth of a man to lie with. But I wasn't jealous. My sisters had this natural alluring air that only increased with age, something that I just didn't have biologically. So… I wasn't jealous. It was just nature.

"You're just a little… different. It's nothing," they would reassure me, "stay behind us."

When my sisters would walk, flowers grew out of the ground, springing up betwixt their perfectly polished toes. Pansies and petunias and daffodils and daisies. Both the beauty and scent of these

plants left the surrounding men and gods both enchanted and enamored. I, however, did not yield this same everlasting effect on most men. Not at all. When I walked away from them, they expressed satisfaction from the relief of my souring spirit, not from the nonexistent flora that didn't intertwine my feet. I emitted the opposite effect from my sisters. But, still, I wasn't jealous.

But this time… *this* time, I would have the extraordinary ending I had always hoped for. After all, what sort of humble human could conceivably reject me?

As I crept closer to the line of bushes that separated the security of the wood from the exposed openness of the land, I beheld this mortal on the prowl. He was so obviously a hunter. My eyes focused on the faraway figure as it converted from fuzzy to incomprehensibly clear. Spasms began to swell in my throat. Stung at the initial sight of his body, my fingers latched onto my lean lower arms, desperately desiring to be grounded despite feeling like I was floating farther and farther away from my bodily frame. Somewhere in the distance a cock crowed. Sound bringing me back, I let go. My fingers had dug in too far this time.

This boyish man set before me seemed to encapsulate the essence of the unreal. There were so many words I wanted to use to describe how your violent visage entirely enraptured me, but no detailed enough description could translate your body to words in my mind. You were just, well, *you*. Your penetrating pupils paralleled the colors I often see when closed eyes combine with unexpected light. If I close my eyes now, I can still sense the way you seeped into my skin. How you still seep into my skin. How your eyes danced. Identical to the ribbony structures that bounce off the rims of the nothing behind my unopened eyes. I longed to catch your fluorescent gaze beyond this cage of branches. I'm sure it would ignite me. I wanted to feel your hands which guide the net for your hunt, acting as daggers digging deeper into my mind as I long for their puncturing power. I noted how your body moved, ethereally untethered, and the intersection between your boyish countenance and your manly stature. One of a true hunter. I wondered if you knew how lucky you were to be touching yourself: to be the one to fill your bones. I wanted to feel the fluidity of your movements from the inside out. How could a human possibly look like this?

As my craving consistently increased, I began to follow you as you led the unsuspecting deer into your neatly woven net. I saw myself as similar to your helpless hunt: tricked and trapped yet willingly and wantonly attacked. The animals

basically begged you to take them, as I privately petitioned to be taken by you too. Hunt *me*. With every slight gesture, I also felt as though I was falling into your impending yet inescapable trap which would ultimately lead to my downfall. I should've known when the birds stopped singing. But, the more I watched, the more

       I

             was

                     willing

                              to

                                        fall.

After seeing you that first time, I bloomed as the flowers around me were blooming those early days in June. All that I wanted to do was open up to you, make you know how violently beautiful you were. But I couldn't. Alas, cursed without a voice, I had no way in the world to cry out to you. But you… you *must* have. You *must* have sensed me secretly watching you beyond the brush before bellowing out,

    "Is anybody here?"

    Your words pierced like the stab of the spear you swung to poke and prod the creatures into their cataclysmic cage. They wounded me. I felt them enter into every orifice of my body with resounding reverberations echoing throughout their travel through every part: straight to my heart. A sensorium of all affable aches. Is this what love is supposed to feel like?

From the very beginning, I had been abandoned. My mother found me in the forest one winter evening, crying as kids do when they're left for dead. I was tucked into a hole in the trunk of a tree next to a nest of nightingales–mother gone too. No clothes, no blanket, no mother, just a book. The only memory I have of my other mother are the vibrations of her voice when she would read that story to me. Closing my eyes, it's hard to hear it now. A sort of creamily coarse, broken up by bits of continual coughing. Sometimes I recall her reading the book before bed, running her fingers across the crumbling red cover, as if she were desperately trying to hold on to what was falling apart a little longer.

    Relatively recently, I returned to that book after I found it hidden under my current mother's bed. The binding unbound; the book was basically broken. I wanted to recall what she read to me: the sounds I could hear through my younger self's ears. Flipping open the collapsing cover, words spilled out with a current so strong, I was forced to remember.

    The tale told of a story of true love. One of a couple, both full of reverence for the divine. These two survived a devasting flood of the gods, against all odds. No other humans or animals or birds remained: only them. Their story had many other elements of course, but I knew that the most

important message came from the binding love of these two. The reason they were chosen to survive. They had something special. Something everyone should strive for: to be in love.

Despite the tart taste in my mother's mouth, she picked me up and headed home. She *saved* me. She likes to remind me of it all of the time. Without her, I would be nothing. Without her, I would be dead. But because of her, I became a part of something. A family. Sure, I didn't look like the rest of them. But that didn't mean anything. I was a nymph; I was sure of it.

In this moment, seeing you come closer and closer, my opportunity for me to announce my adoration to your abyss of brilliance had come. And I wanted to dive in deep. Since you called out to me as I was completely concealed, you must have been able to discern me through the thicket and thought my display desirable. Right? You *must* have. You liked what you saw. You would be the first. With a hesitantly intensifying conviction, I echoed back,

"Here!"

This singular syllable sounded entirely strained as it emerged. My cheeks soaked through with an all-too-familiar sting. Shame. How badly I wanted to use words that would work out my vocals chords in order to articulate any and all of the affection aimed at you. I wanted to talk. To weaponize *my* words. Instead, I was left to reuse other's residual phrases whose meaning faded with every second that I delayed. Your words tasted stale, pre-owned. They didn't reflect me; they solely reflected you.

Your eyes darted back and forth towards the sound of my words, to the forest teemed with trees. I knew that I could not approach you prematurely; it was imperative to establish a pursuit between the predator and prey. After all, you were the hunter. No noise emerged beyond the trees during your protracted pause after my response. Your eyes continued their search. The birds that fluttered past tried to twitter in my ear as they frequently do most mornings. Two sat atop my shoulders, seeking for me to sing back. I couldn't make music with them now. Love was at stake. I shot them a ghastly glance and their sounds were silenced as I anxiously awaited your reply. Would you reply?

Why hadn't you replied?

How long had it been?

I had lost track.

Eventually, after Time's elongation had ended, you called out,

"Come to me!"

Hearing these words coming from you struck the sum of my system.

Did you mean it?

Did you actually want me to come?

Without much hesitation, my mouth invol-

untarily opened, and I readily reflected,

"Come to me!"

Did you still want me to come?

Or would you come to me?

Hearing my voice seemingly echo outside of my body, and for just a second thinking it was yours, my guts had gone gloopy as I melted into a mushy puddle of pining for you. I hoped you would see and recognize me as one with the water, and one with you.

After realizing it was merely me as your echo, I restlessly chewed at my less-than-obedient tongue awaiting your actual response. It arrived more robust and rapid than your prior reply.

Your gaze seemed to ricochet among the surrounding circle of trees desperately searching for movement as you questioned,

"Why do you run from me?"

I actually run from everyone, not just you.

But delighted at the fact that you would chase after me even if you thought I was desperately dodging you, I sought to aggravate this accelerating carnal pursuit. Pull me, push me, prod me. I playfully proclaimed the same as you, being as repetition was the only way I could contribute to a conversation as I countered,

"Why do *you* run from me?"

Despite being unable to say anything unique, I could at least still participate in some light-hearted banter. I had never done this before. I found it fun.

Upon only hearing my plagiarism of your words yet again, you looked puzzled. You looked perplexed. You looked… perfect. I stood there staring at you for quite some time, through the thicket of my hair. I wondered if you could catch me. I hoped you could. As I admired you, you attempted to coax me out by calling,

"Let us get together!"

Immediately I became inebriated with the prospect of an encounter of passion with the brimming of your body. I envisioned the instant of contact where my person would melt into yours, mixing until our insides were indistinguishable from one another, sipping on each other softly. I knew that I never wanted to be separated from you. Now, or ever again. My skin seemingly tightened around me, making me feel cramped in my own body. I had to break free. I would do anything to escape into yours, in all your beauty. Under the influence of your captivating capacity, I hurriedly hollered,

"Let us get together!"

With this proclamation, I smoothly sprung over the shrubs and through the timber towards your anticipating form. My movements were altogether effortlessly meticulous; my mother would be proud. Pearly pale strands streaked down my back and away from my face, unarm-

ing my view of you: a vision in all its violence.

For a split second, it seemed as though you smiled at me. It seemed as though you wanted me. It seemed as though your face would not fade like so many others had once they really, truly, absolutely saw me. It seemed as though that with my appearance being bare you could actually see *me*. But that's the thing about seeming. The seeming made it worse. This seeming shattered me.

With arms outstretched to fulfill my temptation to touch, I recognized your countenance contort at the union of our ever-approaching eyes. What had happened? Didn't you want me? As if you were being ambushed, you retreated away from my admiring advances a few steps back. And then I understood. You had lied. You had lured me out into the open. It was just a game for you. A hunt. And I had been your prey. The fire for you that had been ignited inside me now circulated solely to scorch my coloring cheeks. My toes sunk in. If I had to guess, I would bet you said something stern as I stopped and stood there dazed as a deer in the afternoon daylight. In the moment, however, I could solely see the severeness of the storm flooding your lips from those few feet away. Your words splashed out; I could see their stream. I could tell you were speaking but couldn't tell what you

said. Your waves were too loud. All that I was able to hear was the stinging silence sustained by your rejection. The ringing in my ears finally ceased. I heard my heart snap into two distinct pieces, both of which I was still willing to give you.

As I collected what you shattered, I caught the final phrase you would ever say to me as you growled,

"I would die before I give you a chance at me"

"I would die"

You didn't repeat these words, but they echoed in my mind.
I began to shrink and shrivel in shame.

You didn't repeat these words, but they *still* echo in my mind.
They scorched my skin, stripping it away, layer by layer.

You didn't repeat
these words, but I had to.
Until only bone remained.

My throat reluctantly thrust forth to reflect these same words you had just stabbed at me. This time, however, I challenged my curse. I caught these words attempting to escape on the tip of my tongue. Unfortunately for me, I was caught in their current, and it was much too strong. Your sounds bounced around the barriers of my mouth until I couldn't keep them back anymore. As my teeth and tongue wrestled trying to resist their inevitable removal from the mirror that is my

mouth, I managed to muster a whimper,

"I give you a chance at me"

You let out one lewd and lavish laugh, before pivoting to tend to the deer that you caught. They had all bled out in your net, and lied there, lifeless. With that shameful conclusion to my newfound fantasy, I withdrew and scampered back into the security of the wood, teeth twitching with guilt.

Shivering with shame's chill, my back to a tree, I sought to stay concealed from you as I recoiled at the remembrance of our embarrassing encounter. Did you taste that same sour?

As this humiliation seeped deeper and deeper into my veins, my body reddened, overflowing my river with the rage of your ruthless rejection. It submerged me starting with my feet then my knees then my legs then my arms then my mind then my face and my eyes. I drowned deeper each second. I had to swim away.

Frantically fleeing the ever-approaching flood, I chose the tallest tree to seek safety on. I clung to the base of the wood, salt splashing into my mouth and lapping at my flailing frame. I was sinking into your sea.

My grasp tightened around the ridges in the bark with my bare hands, the mismatched indents gripping my fingernails back tighter.

Somewhere out there, my mother would be wondering why I hadn't come home yet. It was rather late. But, in the end, she wouldn't really care.

The tips of my fingers felt flaming as they scratched further into the bark taking me higher and higher to the tip of the tree. A whiff of wind blew my bony hair into my face at the top of the tree, covering it completely, and I let it lie there and conceal me. It was better this way. The birds resumed their ballads: the soundtrack to my sadness. Who would want to see me anyway? Not you.

Despite the straight silvery strands that stayed overlapping my eyes, I could still see through them. From this height, I could see further than I have ever seen into the forest before. From this height, I could see every tree. Some high, some low, some in between. The biggest and tallest seemingly swallowed the smallest with their majestically imposing mass. Becoming one. But nothing compared to the green. An ombre of tones unapologetically exploding out of the earth. Secretly residing where only I have seen. From the top of this tree.

My eager eyes traced the tippity tops of every tree to ever exist. I wanted to see them all. But not just see, absolutely absorb them. They cascaded across fields and cliffs and hills except… there. One opening. In the middle of everything. The only place in the forest, it seemed, that

was totally covered by light.

For that split second, looking at that light, I forgot. I forgot I was ugly. I forgot I should be ashamed. I forgot how I taste. I forgot that not even one person could love me: not even me.

I let this faraway light drench me. Its brightness enticed my eyes, begging me to look closer. But it stung, straining to see this field in all its brilliant fluorescence. Grass gleaming, reflecting a glare in my eyes. A pleasant pain. I needed the golden glow that filled the gap in the forest to fill up all of my holes too. If I could just get there, I was sure I would be satisfied.

Smoothly sliding down the trunk of the tree, solely stopping to untangle my hairs from broken brambles, I began my break for the field.

Step by step by step I ran towards the light. No… I wasn't running. I was being pulled. I was being pulled towards the light. I was being guided. It was out of my control. I *needed* to go towards the light. If I went into the light, I felt this strong sensation that it would fill me, the Esme that had always been so empty. Sticks snapping beneath my feet pulled me back to the now, reminding me that fall wasn't far off. And neither was I.

After what seemed like only a century of seconds, I arrived at the edge of the fluorescent field. The birds became louder. This was it. A shimmering yellow bubble,

a caramelized case, wrapped the entire width of the field. A barrier to keep people out? Would it allow *me* to enter?

I stuck my finger through the frame. Transparent and syrupy feeling, I pulled out. My fingers still felt tingling, I wanted more of a taste. Headfirst, I staggered into the glowing goop not without much effort. Looking back now, it was as if I was struggling to step into a story that was not my own.

Immediately inside the confines, everything became brighter. Everything was new. The sky shimmered like it was its first day on earth, not yet drained by the perpetual cycle of every day. The ground gleamed like it had never known a passenger, left undefiled and undisturbed. Until now.

Looking beyond the up and down, I beheld a perfectly round pool situated in the center of the field. The water was a brimming bursting blue and looked cool enough to taste.

Suddenly aware at how thirsty I was after how much time I spent talking today, I sought to sip from the water. I couldn't wait to taste its taste. But, before I could move a muscle, a figure dashed out of the woods with a force that could flood the earth. Seeing the shape stop at the edge of the pool, I smoothed the strands from my line of vision to see what it was. My hair was always in the way.

You.

You couldn't even care enough to look up. To look at me. Looking at you. Unfazed by the fact that you, a *human*, humiliated me not even an hour ago. You were too busy looking at something else.

You were fixated on something in the pool of water in front of you, it looked like your eyes were being dragged towards it. Sure, it was extraordinarily colored, lit up by light, but what else was so special about it? What made the water seduce you so?

Normally, I would be rational: think things through. Normally, I wouldn't even *think* about what I did next. But you weren't *normal*. And you didn't make me *feel* normal. Quite the opposite, actually.

I didn't even have to tiptoe. You were too enthralled with everything in the water. How could I be to blame when you didn't even fight back?

It wasn't like it was premeditated or anything.

I didn't even take the trouble to "walk like the waves." I didn't even care to hide behind my hair. My mother wouldn't have been proud.

Somehow my hand met your head. I latched on. My fingers intertwined with the nape of your neck. Dipping your face into the water, just a little at first, you didn't even seem to mind. Sure, you fought after a while, who wouldn't? I felt

you fill to the brim, almost about to explode. Eventually though, your beautiful body went limp. Face sinking first into the water, your body breathlessly followed. You penetrated the pool in one fluid motion.

I didn't really feel anything after that, you would expect me to though, right? I was decidedly too distracted about what was happening to the ground below me.

Between my feet, two flowers coiled up and around, wrapping my toes. They were a winter's white, indistinguishably identical. Yellow centered, opening up to seemingly face each other. Like two lovers.

See, I knew I was a nymph. Just like my sisters, flowers grew when I walked. But this was a new flower, something I'd never seen before. Sighing, I turned and stepped on the flower, flattening it. It was an ugly one anyways.

A bird bellowed out behind me as I started to wander away, seemingly saying goodbye. I didn't take the trouble to respond, though. I had talked enough for one day.

A few steps from the flower, I looked back for a mere moment. My eyes met the wrecked remains. Vacant, no prospect of blooming now.

I guess, maybe, I became the hunter after all. So, I didn't feel bad. It was just nature. It was just [human] nature.

Fear

Darinka Arones

My name is Darinka Arones. I was born and raised in Lima, Peru. Currently, I am a sophomore pursuing a BFA degree in Studio at New York University. As a Peruvian immigrant and artist, I am significantly interested in showcasing artworks that portray my emotional process of adaptation to the US. In my art, I use saturated colors to create and highlight the surreal sensations that migrating had on my inner self: homesickness, anxiety, melancholy, and grief.

New York University • Sophomore

The Evolutions of the Perception of the **Right to Return** of **Palestinian Refugees**
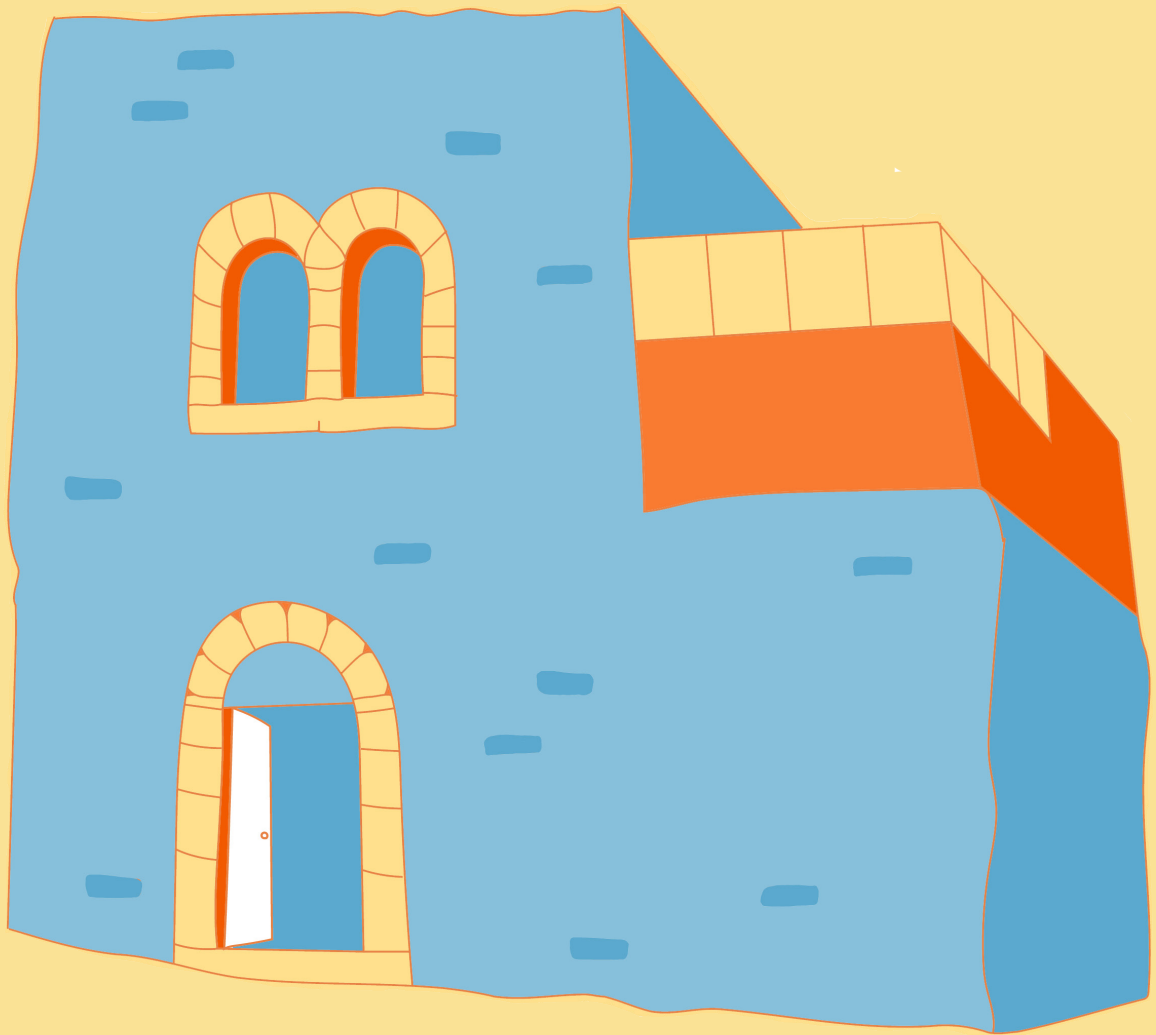
Nour Chérif

Nour is a student at Sciences Po Paris, where she is following the Middle East and Mediterranean specialization, majoring in Politics and Government. She is passionate about public affairs in the education and culture sectors, with the aim of building "knowledge societies."

Sciences Po Paris • Junior

During a television address in 2012, Mahmoud Abbas, President of the Palestinian Authority, declared, before reconsidering his words a few days later, that he did not want to return to live in his childhood home, in Safed, now in Israeli territory.[1] These words triggered strong reactions, particularly from the Palestinian people, as they were seen as an abandonment of the "right of return." The following comes from Article 11 of United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194, adopted on 11 December 1948, which states:

The General Assembly.
Having considered further the situation in Palestine,
[...]
11. Resolves that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible; Instructs the Conciliation Commission to facilitate the repatriation, resettlement and economic and social rehabilitation of the refugees and the payment of compensation, and to maintain close relations with the Director of the United Nations Relief for Palestine Refugees and, through him, with the appropriate organs and agencies of the United Nations.[2]

This decision was confirmed by several others that followed, notably resolutions 394, 513, and 3236, adopted on 22 November 1974, which reaffirmed "the inalienable right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property from which they have been displaced and uprooted, and calls for their return."[3]

This right, therefore, relates to the situation of Palestinian refugees. Refugees being the nearly 800,000 individuals who left their homes to join neighbouring countries and regions of Palestine under British mandate between 1948 and 1949 after the proclamation of the State of Israel and the ensuing war with the Arab states, as well as their descendants with the political status of refugees being transmitted from father to son. As early as 1949, the Arab League forbade granting citizenship to Palestinian refu-

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1   Israël : Abbas dément renoncer au droit au retour des réfugiés palestiniens - Le Point

2   A/RES/194 (III) of 11 December 1948 (un.org)
3   A/RES/3236 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974 (un.org)

gees in order to preserve their right to return. Today, the nearly 7 million Palestinian refugees are subject to different legal frameworks depending on the country in which they reside: "temporary citizens" in Jordan, socially and economically discriminated against to a greater or lesser extent in Syria and Lebanon. The United Nations created the "temporary" branch of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in December 1949 to meet their primary needs, but also to manage new flows of Palestinian refugees, such as the 300,000 who arrived in 1967 during the Six-Day War.[4]

Since then, Palestinian refugees have been perceived as an "obstacle" to peace in the Near and Middle East, often without their knowledge, as researcher Jalal Al-Husseini explains.[5] Their management in their host countries and their potential return to their homeland have been a major issue. In all peace negotiations relating to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, particularly since the 1993 Oslo Accords, the question of the right of return has exacerbated divisions: the story of Palestinians expelled from their homes and that of Israelis deconstructing the idea of refugees by particularly arguing that they have been integrated within the country for a long time.

Abundantly analysed and documented, to the point of becoming a "paradigmatic"[6] issue, the question of the Palestinians' right to return is inherent to the resolution of the conflict and constitutes, within the refugee groups, an active principle of their collective psyche and behaviour. **In what way, despite a progressive distancing from the hope of an effective return, has the identity of Palestinian refugees been built from 1948 to today around a transgenerational narrative linked to this "right of return"?**

I will first look at the generational distance from hope around the right to return among Palestinian refugees, before considering its remaining major role in their collective and individual construction.

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4   Botiveau Bernard, « Le droit au retour des réfugiés au regard de l'exode des Palestiniens de 1948 », Hommes & Migrations, 2020/1 (n° 1328), p. 73-80.
5   Al-Husseini Jalal, « Visions palestiniennes du « droit au retour » des réfugiés, sept ans après le début de la seconde Intifada (2000-2007) », A contrario, 2008/1 (Vol. 5), p. 37-51.

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6   Ibid, Botiveau Bernard, p. 73-80.

I - The right to return as an evolving transgenerational norm

A) The role of narrative in the construction of an identity based on nostalgia

The political status of a Palestinian refugee is transmitted from generation to generation. Thus, the number of Palestinian refugees has increased from 800,000 to nearly 7 million. It is precisely the role of the transmission of the history of the Nakba and its repercussions that we will study here. As researcher Bernard Botiveau explains, "the non-fulfilment of the right to return home, common to many refugees from serious political conflicts, was an often-expressed pain for the Palestinian exiles of 1948."[7] In exile, they passed on to their descendants the experience of this acquired frustration. There is a continuation of this frustration from generation to generation, although it manifests itself differently from one to the next. Indeed, the first generation of refugees, who lived through the Nakba, sees the unfulfilled right of return translated into a constant "romanticization of the past"[8] as researcher Sophie Rich-

ter-Devroe sees it. She explains that there is a "strongly emotional narrative of the past (often omitting social, political, or economic stratifications and tensions), refugees from this generation, however, mainly want to make a comment on the difficult situation they find themselves in now, as refugees in the camps."[9]

The second generation, on the other hand, breaks to some extent with the romanticized stories by constructing an identity more rooted in the reality of the camps: they "do not have these concrete memories of the village of origin and they often disapprove of their parents' (perceived to be) apolitical, romantic view on the right of return."[10] There is, however, a desire to keep and pass on these memories of the parents, thus transforming the realities, places of belonging, and identities of the previous generation into symbols and facts to be claimed by the new one. These memories are thus transmitted to the third generation, which is less nostalgic for the land itself since they have never lived there, but which seeks the political fulfilment of the right to return. For example, Ali, in Sophie Richter-Devroe's survey, does "not necessarily follow their grandparents' 'romantic' notions of

7   Ibid.
8   Richter-Devroe Sophie, "Like Something Sacred": Palestinian Refugees' Narratives on the Right of Return, Refugee Survey Quarterly, Volume 32, Issue 2, June 2013, p 92–115.
9   Ibid.
10   Ibid.

home and belonging, nor do they confine their narratives to a legalist rights-based approach as their parents do. For them, the right of return is first and foremost a political project: return means choice, and regaining ownership and control of the land of Palestine, the homeland."[11] Today, according to Najeh Jarras, a large majority of Palestinian refugees are ready to renounce the "strict" right of return, i.e., the return to the same lands as in 1948, in exchange for the recognition of a Palestinian state and thereby the possibility of settling there, thus assuaging a more flexible, more political right of return.[12] Thus, narration plays a major role in the construction of the Palestinian identity of the refugees: the romanticised memories of exile and life before the Nakba are transmitted to future generations, who, although they no longer recognize themselves in these testimonies, use them as a driving force to claim the right of return.

B) The retreat of the claim to the temporary nature of exile as a tool for a nourished hope of return

The common demand for the fulfilment of the right to return has resulted in the absence of the permanent settlement that Palestinian refugees wanted in their host country, especially for those in camps. Indeed, as Jalal Al-Husseini explains, "the camps had to remain temporary places, statutorily isolated from neighbouring municipalities. The prohibition imposed on refugees to build any floor in the housing units illustrates this desire to preserve the temporary nature of the camps."[13] However, this norm of the right to return, which has been imposed in the camps and has been a source of precariousness, is changing, as the example of the fifty-nine refugee camps in the Middle East shows. By ensuring that they are free of any political considerations related to the right of return, camp residents are carrying out rehabilitation and renovation initiatives, "provided that this improvement does not aim at dismantling or dissolving the camps, or even less at undermining their temporary character or UNRWA's mandate"[14] as Jalal Al-Husseini explains. Without this right to return being called into question, we can observe an evolution in the techniques of its preservation and attempts to apply it, from a total denial of the refugee condition in the long term to an organisation that allows the

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11   Ibid.
12   Jarras Najeh, "Palestinian Refugees: International and Future Perspective", Jerusalem : PASSIA, mai 1994, p. 83

13   Al-Husseini Jalal, « Les camps de réfugiés palestiniens au Proche-Orient, entre norme du droit au retour et intégration socioéconomique. » 2008
14   Ibid.

precariousness of refugees to be reduced.

In the Jordanian case, Jalal Al Husseini notes "a more pragmatic attitude towards improving the living conditions"[15] of refugees, who reconsider their refusal to integrate into the society of their host country with the "gradual normalisation of the Palestinian presence" in Jordan. This gradual decision is correlated with the move away from the concrete hope of fulfilling the right of return, leading to a desire to "live their lives as human beings to the fullest" for the refugees. As Palestinian author Samir El Youssef tells us in *The Illusion of Return*, "[w]e should be realistic and forget about the idea of the right to return; the only return we should think of is one of a more symbolic value":[16] the refugees' right to return is so often seen as an unfulfillable dream that it is pushed off the agenda. Seen as a "confirmation of the political maturation of the Palestinians," this reorientation of the Palestinian refugee position has given way to more pragmatic goals around sovereignty and self-determination.

II - The multiple meanings of the right of return as a vector of a diverse Palestinian identity construction

A) The transformation of the right of return from an individual right to a collective right

In its recurrent references to the right of return, the United Nations presents it as an individual right: thus, in resolution 3236 of 22 November 1974, and in its resolution 3376 of 10 November the following year, the UN affirms that:

(a) the exercise by the Palestinian people of their inalienable rights in Palestine, including the right to self-determination without external interference and the right to national independence and sovereignty;

(b) the exercise by Palestinians of their inalienable right to return to their homes and properties from which they were displaced and uprooted.[17]

However, as Sylviane de Wangen explains:

these two resolutions mark the distinction made by the UN between, on the one hand, the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, collective rights that cannot be exercised by any

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15   Al-Husseini Jalal. La question des réfugiés palestiniens en Jordanie entre droit au retour et implantation définitive. Cahiers de l'Orient, 2004, troisième trimestre (75), p. 31-50.

16   El-Youssef Samir, The Illusion of Return. (2007). Melville House.

17   A/RES/3236 (XXIX) of 22 November 1974 (un.org)

other collective entity, in particular the right to self-determination and independence, and, on the other hand, the Palestinians' inalienable right to return, an individual right that concerns the persons themselves and cannot be transmitted to others or exercised by others.[18] However, the question of the right of return evolved from an individual issue to a collective claim with the emergence of the Palestine Liberation Organisation in the 1960s. Having become a defender of the Palestinian national construction, it built an "ideology of return" by "nationalising" the refugee issue, which was then placed under the responsibility of the PLO. However, this understanding of the right to return persists at the individual level with the transmission, in the family heritage, of the identification of each Palestinian refugee with "his home, his village or his town of origin."[19] According to Jalal Al-Husseini, this is a local patriotism that is both enriched by the extension of family networks and the identification with a larger geographical territory constituting Palestine. Thus, both collective and

personal, the right to return among Palestinian refugees is recognized as a principle that conveys a Palestinian identity marker and allows the preservation of a common identity.

B) The perpetuation of a desire for the right of return which is also expressed through individual commitment

The right to return is expressed by today's Palestinian refugees in various ways. It is therefore interesting to look at a study conducted among Palestinian refugee communities in the West Bank, Jordan, and Lebanon between 2008 and 2011 by Sophie Richter-Devroe, to compare the construction of the political cultures of these groups and their relationship to the right of return according to their host country. To this end, she poses two main questions:

1. What does return (and/or the village/place of origin) mean to different refugees? Is it considered a place of belonging, a home, a specific identity, or does it stand (symbolically) for the political project of returning to and regaining the homeland?

2. How exactly do different refugees envisage returns, and thus their "Palestineprojects"? Do they aim for a permanent return, a transnational dimension of life, or something else? Would they accept to return to an Is-

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18   De Wangen Sylviane, « Le droit au retour des réfugiés », Confluences Méditerranée, 2008/2 (N°65), p. 145-158.
19   Ibid, Al-Husseini Jalal, « Visions palestiniennes du « droit au retour » des réfugiés, sept ans après le début de la seconde Intifada (2000-2007) », A contrario, 2008/1 (Vol. 5), p. 37-51.

raeli or a bi-national State, or does "return" mean the political project of regaining all of historical Palestine?[20] The answers, which differ from one person to another, give the impression of a united demand for the recognition of the right to return as an inalienable right, but of different proposals for the application of this right: indeed, the very notion of the place of return differs from one person to another, according to the stories told and the imaginations constructed. Palestinian refugees refer to "Palestinians from Lebanon" or "from Jordan", which shows the "importance of locality" in the construction of their identity. This identity remains in Jordan separate from Jordanian culture and strongly insists on the idea of returning to Palestinian land, as the survey shows, in fear of the scenario of the country becoming an "alternative homeland" (al-watan al-badil). The socio-economically integrated refugees use the privilege of their status as a basis for their claim to rights, in a global initiative of the people in the face of political inaction.

To conclude, the issue of the right of return within Palestinian refugee communities remains central insofar as Palestinian identity has been built around it, evolving from the real frustration of the loss of property to the narration of memories of a life before the Nakba, which is passed on from generation to generation. As the hope of an effective right of return fades, there is an acceptance of the situation by Palestinian refugees, particularly those living in the camps, who are beginning to develop their camps with a view to a more sustainable home. However, the resilience of the communities does not lead to the abandonment of the right to return, which, along with the Palestinian political organisation, becomes a collective right, "nationalising" the situation of the refugees. The latter remains, depending on their situation, inclined to claim, on a personal level, this right of return. In rhetorical opposition to this, Israel denies any possibility of exercising this right of return and counterbalances it with its own right of return, allowing any Jew to make Aliyah and settle in Israel.

20   Ibid, Richter-Devroe Sophie, p. 92–115.

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Sweet Potato

Jiayun "Ella" Tang

Born in Shanghai, China in 2001, Ella is a second-year studio art major at New York University. At age 14, Tang came to the United States and later attended high school in Westchester County, New York. Tang is a National Medalist in the 2021 Scholastic Awards and recipient of Artist of the Year by National Scholastic Press Association in 2020. Her work encompasses the fields of painting, installation, photography, and generative art and involves a variety of styles, including representational art, abstract art, and pop art. Her projects often explore the historical, cultural, and social context and examine the impact of media and technology on modern-day relationships dynamics.

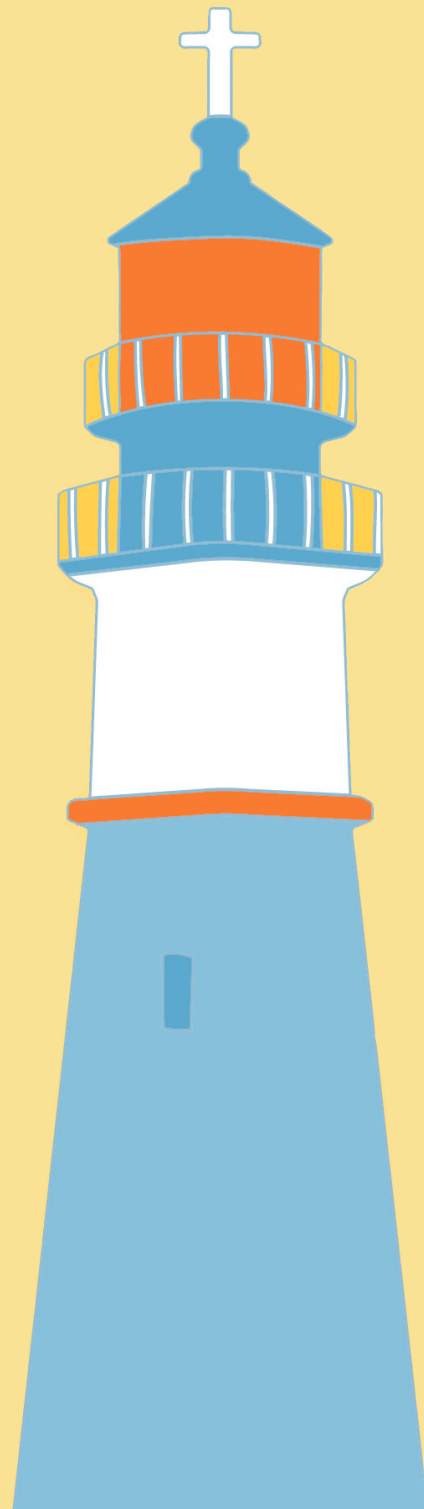New York University • Sophomore

"Matches Struck Unexpectedly in the Dark" :

What **Modernist Fragmentation** Offers Contemporary **Christian Culture**

Celia Hagey

Celia will graduate in 2023 with a degree in English Writing from Whitworth University. She spends her spare time completing her Spanish and Editing and Publishing minors, working at the campus library, and watching *The Mysterious Benedict Society*. She enjoys both academic and creative writing and finds inspiration in the social issues that affect her and the community: queer theory, neurodiversity, feminism, and historical fashion are all topics of interest. Her work has appeared previously in Script magazine and the 2022 Diversity Monologues collection.

Whitworth University • Junior

Abstract

This paper draws on Virginia Woolf's novel *To the Lighthouse* to suggest alternative methods of viewing religion and secularism in Christian culture today. I address issues of binary and dogmatism in Christian culture by connecting current issues with those that Woolf's Modernist style pushed against. A review of scholarship reveals Woolf's connection to religion, feminism, and rhetorical modes that contrasted with those of the earlier Victorian period. I contribute an analysis of Woolf's work with these themes in mind, suggesting productive ways forward from the supposed conflict between Christianity and secularism today.

Introduction

Songwriter John Collins explains in his "Hymn for the 81%"[1] why he left the Christian Church: "you weaponized religion / and you wonder why I'm leaving / to find Jesus on the wrong side of your walls" (Collins). He touches on varied and subtle truths in this line—he is leaving, separating himself from the Christianity he knows in order to seek new ways and

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1   The hymn addresses the 81% of white Evangelicals who voted for Donald Trump in the 2016 United States presidential election.

places to practice faith. Yet, he is still in search of Jesus.

This quote acknowledges a double truth. For people like Collins, religion has become a weapon, and its dogmatism has had excruciating consequences for its victims. At the same time, the sustained presence of spiritual connection means that mass conversion to atheism is not the threat Evangelicals may believe it to be. Collins is one of a growing number of people whose decision to leave the Church is motivated not by apathy but by active disagreement with Church practices. They leave because they have witnessed the consequences of a space without nuance: a space where there is always a right answer, where certainty is preached every Sunday without fail, and where those who come to the table with different epistemological tools are rejected.

Through an examination of Virginia Woolf's novel *To the Lighthouse*, I will apply her approach to spirituality to contemporary Christian culture, aiming to provoke reflection and accountability in any reader who may consider themselves spiritual. Virginia Woolf is not an obvious source of spiritual insight—she was not a Christian, and she did not believe in God. She is known for her anti-war and feminist politics visible in writings such as *A Room of One's Own* and *Mrs. Dallo-*

way. To the Lighthouse tells the story of the Ramsay family's beachside vacation home before, during, and after the first World War, entering the minds of various characters to explore the effects of wartime on daily life and relations. So, while this paper will not apply religious beliefs to Woolf that she did not have, it will engage with the root of why people like Collins are turning away from Christian institutions. I will argue that Woolf uses an epistemology that is not only different from Western and Christian ones but that is difficult to categorize as an epistemology at all. Rather than claim the solution to overly empirical ways of knowing is to arrive at truth through different methods, she instead reveals that truth is not actually something that can or should be attained at all. She breaks down binary categories of spiritual belief in favor of recognizing the sacred outside the Church.

Terminology

Before going further, it is necessary to define and clarify the terminology that this paper will use to describe Christianity and the Christian Church. I am far more concerned with the wide-reaching cultural impacts of Christian belief on society than I am with the specific theological beliefs of any denomination. The focus of this paper is sociology, not theology. I will use the term "Christian culture" in following Jane De Gay's scholarship to refer to the entire umbrella of cultural impacts of Christianity. This includes, but is not limited to, purity culture and the construction of virginity; cultural homophobia, transphobia, and intolerance of sexuality and gender variance; assumptions about drug users, criminals, and incarcerated people; hyper-individualism; and the general monotheistic, patriarchal understanding of the divine.

Other terms, including "institutionalized" or "institutional" Christianity or religion, "Christian nationalism," "The Christian Church" with a capital C, and "evangelicalism" or "American evangelicalism" come close to this same idea but carry connotations that may differ in the minds of reader to reader. I have intentionally chosen a broad term that does not include such incisive words as "institutional" or "nationalism," despite the fact that these labels do pertain to this conversation and should not be entirely dismissed from the dialogue.

It is also necessary to acknowledge that there is great variance across Christian denominations and sects. It would not be fair to apply the same judgment to a liberal non-denominational church as to a fundamentalist cult. The damage done on an individual and societal level is certainly more severe in the latter than in the

former. Indeed, many people practice faith in ways that promote kindness, generosity, community care, and internal mindfulness and peace. This is not to say that all Christians participate in the same harmful acts in the same ways. However, I am claiming that no church is exempt from the kind of deep examination and reflection that this paper will call upon them to do. To be liberal is not to be without sin. Explicit violence does not need to be present for a more hidden, pervasive type of pain to be inflicted. It is my hope that Christian readers can take these words as an opportunity for reflection as to how a faith community can better represent the values it claims to uphold, rather than an attack on the act of having and practicing faith itself.

Ages of Secularization?

Virginia Woolf was, and is, often classified as a purely secular author. She criticized Christian frameworks, especially its patriarchal structure, blaming Paul's New Testament writings for much of the misogyny present in Christian culture. The Modernist period in general was thought of as an age of secularization. Following the late Victorian period, during which faith declined and uncertainty skyrocketed, it seemed that the period of mass Christian belief was ending. Scientific and technological advances were replacing the

need for faith. A war more violent than ever before had shattered the continent. Nothing was too unprecedented to happen during the Modernist period, including a societal abandonment of the belief system that had dominated Europe for one thousand years.

This sentiment does not seem out of place today. Current trends reveal more and more people are leaving the Christian Church. In 2020, about 64% of Americans identified as Christian, while in 1970, 90% did. Younger people are more likely to disaffiliate, going to college and leaving Sunday morning attendance behind.[2] A December 2021 American National Family Life survey revealed over 30% of Generation Z identifies as religiously unaffiliated.[3] Less empirically, one can notice thriving social media communities based in faith "deconstruction"—a term for the examination and dismantling of religious beliefs—where users describe damaging experiences in the Church, express feelings of confusion, anger, and dissatisfaction, and offer varying ideas for ways forward. Some have abandoned religious belief entirely; others advocate

2   Pew Research Center. "Modeling the Future of Religion in America." September 2022.
3   Cox, Daniel A., et al. "Generation Z and the Future of Faith in America." The Survey Center on American Life, 4 Apr. 2022.

for movement towards more progressive and affirming churches. Most everyone in the deconstruction community cites homophobia, racism, purity culture, and other conservative cultural elements as their reasons for leaving churches.[4]

Yet, neither of these periods are as secular as they may seem. Stephanie Paulsell argues in *Religion Around Virginia Woolf* that Woolf should not be considered detached from religion simply because she was not Christian. Because "belief is not the only way to engage religion and to do religious work"[5], it is inaccurate to jump from the true statement that Woolf *did not* agree with Christian ideas to the unfounded conjecture that she *could not* engage with Christian culture. *To the Lighthouse* is filled with spiritual and religious ideas that are rich in substance, despite not appearing as explicitly or traditionally Christian. Similarly, I believe the Church's conundrum is not as simple as people deciding it's more fun to party on Saturday nights than to pray on Sunday mornings. Amid a pandemic, partisanship, war in Europe, and economic failure, peo-

ple are as desperate as ever for some sense of what is true. People are not abandoning spiritual belief. They are realizing, as if these events acted as a force pulling down the veil, that Christian culture is not providing what they need. They are realizing that perhaps the Church's dogmatic fixation on binary is not a satisfying way to be in the world, especially *this* world. They are instead reflecting the ideas of Woolf's fragmentation.

Fragmentation in *To the Lighthouse*

In the midst of tumultuous, painful political scenes, it becomes difficult to feel spiritually and intellectually satisfied by clear-cut explanations of the way the world works. Knowing this, Virginia Woolf incorporates religious and spiritual ideas in her novel largely through the use of moments of being—moments during which a character encounters the sacred in an introspective and irreligious way. These moments involve a confrontation with some deep, human truth that often relates to the same ontological and metaphysical questions that religion addresses. The moments happen without the influence of explicitly named religion and often while the character is alone. Pericles Lewis defines them as "the relationship between everyday, routine experiences …

4   Tik Tok users @kristi.burke and @poetic_deconstruction as well as Instagram users @deconstructingpurityculture and @deconstructiongirl are some examples of voices within this community.
5   Paulsell, Stephanie. Religion Around Virginia Woolf. Pennsylvania State University Press, 2019.

and the almost sacred moments in which experience enters the sublime".[6] Because the novel focuses so heavily on the interior lives of its characters, Woolf has crafted a structure that prioritizes and validates these moments of being. She elevates the introspective in a way that sets personal experience of the sacred above institutionalized religion. Through the novel's structure, style of discourse, and focus on specific characters, she demonstrates that personal experience of the sacred can, and does, happen outside of the Christian church. She imagines alternatives to the binary of Christianity and secularism.

The most distinct example of a moment of being occurs when Mrs. Ramsay, the mother of the Ramsay family and emotional center of the narrative, concludes that there is no overarching meaning of life. Realizing that small moments of goodness have the power to be as sustaining and spiritual as Christian claims to absolute truth, she thinks to herself: "What is the meaning of life? That was all—a simple question; one that tended to close in on one with years. The great revelation had never come. The great revelation perhaps never did come. Instead, there were little daily miracles, illuminations, matches

struck unexpectedly in the dark; here was one."[7]

Mrs. Ramsay's experience of the sacred is not attached to Christian culture. She does not find her "illuminations" in a church service, or by praying, or by participating in sacraments. She finds the sacred in a random moment thinking to herself. She does not expect these matches— they are struck in the dark, they are little, and yet they are miracles. Mrs. Ramsay has discovered that Christian culture could not provide the answer to the question of the meaning of life. Yet, Woolf is also explicit in her demonstration that Mrs. Ramsay has not abandoned all forms of spiritualism as a result. She still believes in illuminations, matches, little miracles, or whatever other language can express the nuanced ability to experience the sacred outside of any form of religious or irreligious dogmatism.

This moment notably takes place at the conclusion of a distressing moment of internal questioning for Mrs. Ramsay. She most explicitly engages with Christian culture when she comments that "we are in the hands of the Lord," seemingly without consciously intending to invoke Christian language.[8] Stephanie Paulsell writes that she feels "encroached upon" by

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6   Lewis, Pericles. Religious Experience and the Modernist Novel. Cambridge University Press, 2010.

7   Woolf, Virginia. *To The Lighthouse*. Harcourt, Inc, 1927, 164.
8   Ibid. 66

religion and "runs through all the reasons" that God cannot be real. This period of distress ends when Mrs. Ramsay sees the distant lighthouse and feels an "ecstasy," no longer disturbed by her inability to answer metaphysical questions about God.[9] Her claim "it is enough!" is to say that moments of being in the everyday world are enough to spiritually satisfy her.[10] We see here an attempt to fully abandon spiritual belief that ultimately fails because of Mrs. Ramsay's attentiveness to sacred moments of being. She is unable to take up atheism as a satisfying solution to the issue of wrestling with Christian culture. While she does not arrive at the claims to absolute truth that Christian culture would offer her, she also does not entirely give herself to secularism in the way that leaving the Church is commonly portrayed.

The term *fragmentation* describes this rejection of binary. While Modernist writers like Woolf rejected Christian claims to absolute truth, which are heavily rooted in Enlightenment belief—the ability of human intelligence to achieve objective certainty—they also rejected Romantic ideas that there is an overarching sublime, divine, or natural force that explains the same metaphysical questions about the world. Modernist fragmentation posits that this Romantic viewpoint makes

the same fallible claim with certainty; it is only doing it through a different method. Rather than either of these options, fragmentation supposes that we can glimpse at things—we can see moments of the spiritual through people, places, and experiences. Like fragmented shards of true knowledge, they offer us small insights that are nonetheless sustaining. Woolf's fragmented writing style, which journeys confusingly through powerful glimpses of time periods and the minds of characters, resists the masculine, Western, logical structure of realist novels that preceded it. *Logical* because the book does not follow a clear plot arc. *Western* because it fails to use the characteristics of writing—clarity and brevity—that Western writing prizes. *Masculine* because, as is critical to understand, *To the Lighthouse* demonstrates the specifically female ability to listen and be in nuanced spaces that men in Western society are typically socialized away from. It is the women that locate the sacred, and it is the women who offer us the most valuable alternative to the conflict in Christian culture today.

Feminism of Listening in Woolf's Context

Resisting binary is a task that Woolf intertwines with feminist thought, invoking the unique abilities of women to rec-

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9   Paulsell.
10   Woolf, 68.

ognize nuanced spaces. There are notable similarities between Christian culture and patriarchy that lead to the rejection of nuance. Jane De Gay writes of the "muscular Christianity"[11] that infuses Christian beliefs with patriarchal values, creating a Christian culture that is oriented towards male patterns of listening. While patriarchy has affected all of Christian history, it is most relevant to understand the effect that beliefs about gender during the Victorian period had on Woolf's Modernist context. The Victorians relegated men and women into "separate spheres" in which men left the house to work and women remained at home to care for children and act as symbols of purity. The idea that men and women are so different that they cannot exist in the same physical spaces impacted Christian culture by encouraging rigid gender roles within the Church. Beyond matters related explicitly to gender, any type of thinking that involved an acknowledgment of paradox, an unknown, or an unstable, changing answer would conflict with the Victorian mindset of having achieved a clear understanding of the world. Liminality had little place in Victorian ideology.

Understanding this background, several consistencies can be identified in the workings of patriarchy and Christian culture. Both men and Christian culture impose control over women. The overabundance of men in Church leadership explains this phenomenon, as well as (like Woolf herself understood), the patriarchal ideas present in Christian texts. Restricting women from the public sphere and Church leadership limited women's ability to participate in public discourse. The ideology of separate spheres also prevented women from exercising a vocation other than homemaking. Similarly, the ideology of the Protestant work ethic encourages belief in a vocation or purpose that a person is called to do. The Protestant work ethic helped fuel the enforcement of separate spheres by affirming the concept that women are intended for a specific vocation—the idea is applied to an entire sex, rather than individual people.

Finally, De Gay offers identical solutions to both of these problems: reconfigure space. In Woolf's time, it was necessary to dismantle Victorian beliefs about gender and to "readjust women's position in relation to the public and private sphere."[12] Within Christian culture, the idea of reconfiguring space involves learning to value the sacred outside of the Church—outside of the physical space of church buildings and outside of religious

11   De Gay, Jane. Virginia Woolf and Christian Culture. Edinburgh University Press, 2018, 3.

12   Ibid, 152.

contexts. It also requires value to be given to women's contributions to the discourse. The structure of Christian culture cannot be meaningfully altered without hearing the voices of everyone who is a part of it.

The importance of women's voices is not merely due to their representing a large portion of the population. Women's contribution to Church discourse is critical, especially because women come to the table with different, uniquely valuable ways of listening. Krista Ratcliffe calls this "rhetorical listening," and explains that women are more likely to resist styles of rhetoric that neglect listening. Rhetorical listening is a "code of cross cultural conduct" that focuses on locating commonalities and differences between parties and promoting understanding of the self and others.[13] The masculine logos that have been studied and promoted in male spaces for centuries do not value these things. We have gendered listening as female and speaking, asserting, and arguing, as male.

Woolf applies these ideas at the end the novel with a depiction of Lily Briscoe painting while the men travel to the lighthouse. Lily's choice to remain

ashore is an example of her choosing to engage in a form of rhetoric that is less masculinely productive. For the men, arriving at the lighthouse is satisfying. James thinks that it "confirms some obscure feeling of his about his own character" and contrasts himself with "the old ladies" who "went dragging their chairs about on the lawn."[14] James implies here that he believes his character has been strengthened by arriving at the lighthouse—by completing a practical, physical goal. In contrast, he looks down at the ladies who do nothing but sit in their gardens. Yet, Woolf uses her depiction of Lily painting as a beautiful culmination of the novel's themes. It is this section that contains the important rhetorical work of the novel. The men's arrival at the lighthouse serves only to contrast with Lily's experience painting and to reveal that it is this activity that is ultimately more satisfying.

Rhetorical listening is why it is specifically Woolf's female characters who are able to resist theological binary and locate the sacred in moments of being. Mrs. Ramsay and her matches find answers in neither Christianity nor atheism. Lily chooses to remain on the shore and paint, thinking about the mystery and nuance of human nature. Contrastingly, the

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13   Ratcliffe, Krista. "A Rhetoric of Textual Feminism: (Re)Reading the Emotional in Virginia Woolf's Three Guineas," Rhetoric Review 11, no. 2 (Spring 1993): 400-417, 400.

14   Woolf, 206.

men in *To the Lighthouse* cling to the rigid certainty that Western rhetoric uses to define intelligence and successful communication. The character Charles Tansley is literally referred to as "the atheist" by the narrator—he is so sure of his spiritual beliefs, or lack thereof, that they are a part of his name and identity. Mr. Ramsay is also an atheist who is tormented by his failure to achieve enlightenment. He despairs over his inability to achieve a complete understanding of metaphysical questions, which he represents using a metaphor of the alphabet, expressing his desire to move from one insight to the next. If he could "get to Q"—i.e., accomplish enough understanding to move another letter down the line—he could rest easy, but he instead finds himself stuck on a letter and unable to settle the distress that this causes. The men cannot imagine alternatives to binaries. They cannot move outside of that stuck position in the same way that the women do. The importance here is not the fact that Charles Tansley and Mr. Ramsay are atheists, but merely that they are so sure about it. Lewis states this phenomenon eloquently: "What matters is the dogmatism" because "they brandish their claims to absolute truth."[15] In doing so, they prohibit themselves access to the fragmented spiritualism that Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe encounter.

Textual Feminism in the Modernist Style

Beyond the characters and events of the novel, Woolf uses an intentional style of writing to resist masculine patterns of discourse. Ratcliffe again contributes to the analysis of Woolf by applying a textually feminist reading to her work. Textual feminism, she says, is a mode of writing that challenges the false divide between the cultural, textual, and personal. It prizes nuance by asserting that these things are not neatly sectioned off. It also "challenges the dominant discourse's tendency to fetishize a distanced objectivity."[16] By blurring the categories of the cultural, textual, and personal, emotion and subjectivity are necessarily introduced to spaces where masculine discourse would claim them not to be. Other feminist and racial scholars, including Helene Cixous and Asoue Inoue, have emphasized the importance of awareness of dominant modes of communication. Works that are not organized in a "rational" way or that include emotion and personal experience in places where they "should not be" have the power to structurally disrupt and call greater attention to the meaning of someone's words.

To the Lighthouse accomplishes this disruption. It is an objectively confusing

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15   Lewis, 155.

16   Ratcliffe.

book that does not follow traditional plot structures. It breaks sharply from its Realist predecessors by abandoning chronological sequences and focusing instead on the interior lives of characters, taking on a shape that is more like a spiral than a horizontal line. It also makes use of free indirect discourse to further blur the reader's understanding of what is happening. There is little distinction between the subjective feelings of a character and the third-person narration of the novel. The reader never quite knows if a character is stating a fact or if they are expressing their own impression of what is happening around them.

The middle section of the novel, "Time Passes," exemplifies Woolf's unwillingness to center objectivity in her writing. The section narrates the passage of the first World War, yet spends very little time describing what most would consider notable events of the war. Woolf uses brackets to include dramatic, action-oriented information about the war, relegating them to the form of a short aside: "[A shell exploded. Twenty or thirty young men were blown up in France, among them Andrew Ramsay, whose death, mercifully, was instantaneous]."[17] The death of a soldier in battle is something that the masculine logos would highlight far more prominently than Woolf

chooses to. "Time Passes" includes these events only in passing, hidden within brackets, as if they are less important than the focal point of the section, which is the deterioration of the house. The house— the female, domestic space—takes on an elevated position as the most poignant and painful casualty of the war. Woolf centers the emotion in her prosaic descriptions of "weeds that had grown close to the glass" and the "silence" which "wove itself into the falling cries of birds."[18] One can also return to the final section of Lily Briscoe's painting to support this theory of textual feminism. Because the text is constructed in such a swirly, introspective, non-linear way, it matches with the idea of Lily's painting-in-progress. The text itself feels like a painting done by a passionate, human hand. Woolf's writing feels like poetry. So, it is the composition of the text itself that works to bring legitimacy to the emotional, the personal, the subjective, and the moments of being. The loss of human presence in a home is just as tragic, or even more tragic, than the death of a soldier on a battlefield.

Implications for Christian Culture

As has been demonstrated, *To the Lighthouse* offers extensive evidence that

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17   Woolfe, 137.

18   Woolf, 133.

rigid religiousness is not necessary to meaningfully encounter the sacred. Existing in the middle of or outside of traditional binaries is not only a viable choice, but a choice that often leads to much greater senses of peace and understanding for the characters who choose to do so. Yet, "existing in the middle" is not an idea that Christian culture easily accepts. Political polarization and the alignment of Christian culture with the economic and social right have increased in intensity in the decades following Woolf's career. Religious dogmatism and even extremism have become more common, even as more people leave church communities.

I stated in the opening of this paper that mass exodus from Christian culture is not due to lack of belief or lack of example, but rather from the Church's unwillingness to abandon false dichotomies. I believe this problem is wide-reaching and affects nearly all Christian churches in America. Such concerns should be on the minds of all Christian churches because to defer blame towards "more extreme" churches only prevents productive change. Yet, to best demonstrate my points, I will be discussing an extreme example: the former megachurch, Mars Hill. Mars Hill was a Seattle-based church that operated from 1996 to 2014 with 15 branches and 13,000 members at its peak and has become well known for the scandal that

ultimately closed its doors. It took highly conservative views without appearing traditionally religious: it was located in the city, attractive to young people, and lacked hymns and formal clothing. Yet, the lead pastor Mark Driscoll espoused passionate adherence to literal interpretations of the Bible. He promoted strict gender binaries by shaming men who failed to act as providers and relegating women to the "smoking hot wife" trope—producers of babies, providers of sex, and figures to look attractive on Sunday mornings. The church closed when Driscoll's leadership became so tyrannous that other members of the congregation launched an investigation into accusations of abuse, and Driscoll fled with his wife after reportedly having a vision from God telling him to do so.[19]

This narrative does not appear far-removed from the dogmatism described in *To the Lighthouse*. It is also a critical example of the potential of both the young and the old, the traditional and the new, to fall into these traps of binary. Mars Hill succeeded in part due to its ability to seem different from traditional religious settings. Its modern music, relaxed dress code, and young congregants were no accident: this church attracted people who

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19   Cosper, Mike, host. The Rise and Fall of Mars Hill. Season 1, Christianity Today, 2021.

were not already a part of more traditional churches. It was a new way to approach spirituality—except, upon more than a second of examination, its teachings promoted the same strict gender roles and condemnatory atmosphere as wider Christian culture. Woolf offers with her depiction of both rigid religion and rigid atheism a solution to this pitfall that Christians so often fall into. Rather than swinging from one extreme to the other, Woolf extends a hand of grace, validating the sacred space of the middle. The middle is a space of paradoxical permanence. Those who occupy it remain in motion, never settling into certainty, acting like rocks rolling down hills in their resistance to spiritual stagnation. Yet, the middle is not a place to know as only a steppingstone. The narrative that uncertainty is acceptable only for newcomers brings condescension to a space that instead demands affirmation. The metaphor of rolling rocks fails in the sense that it implies an eventual arrival at the bottom of a hill.

There is no great revelation. That is, in itself, a great revelation. For people seeking an alternative to Christian culture, the concept of not knowing as its own form of knowing is a radical diversion from Mr. Ramsay's pained pursuit of the end of the alphabet. It is a solution that sees the uncontainable complexity of human nature and rejects the notion that it must be neatly understood. It is a margin in which women have thrived for centuries. Pushed aside by men with their logical rhetoric and all-encompassing philosophies, women find peace in the unknown. Women know how to listen. And it is the young people, the queer people, the Black and Indigenous people of color, the tired people, the hurt people, and the people who cannot, no matter how they try, abandon the tingle in their hearts that they first learned to feel at the pulpit, who most want to listen.

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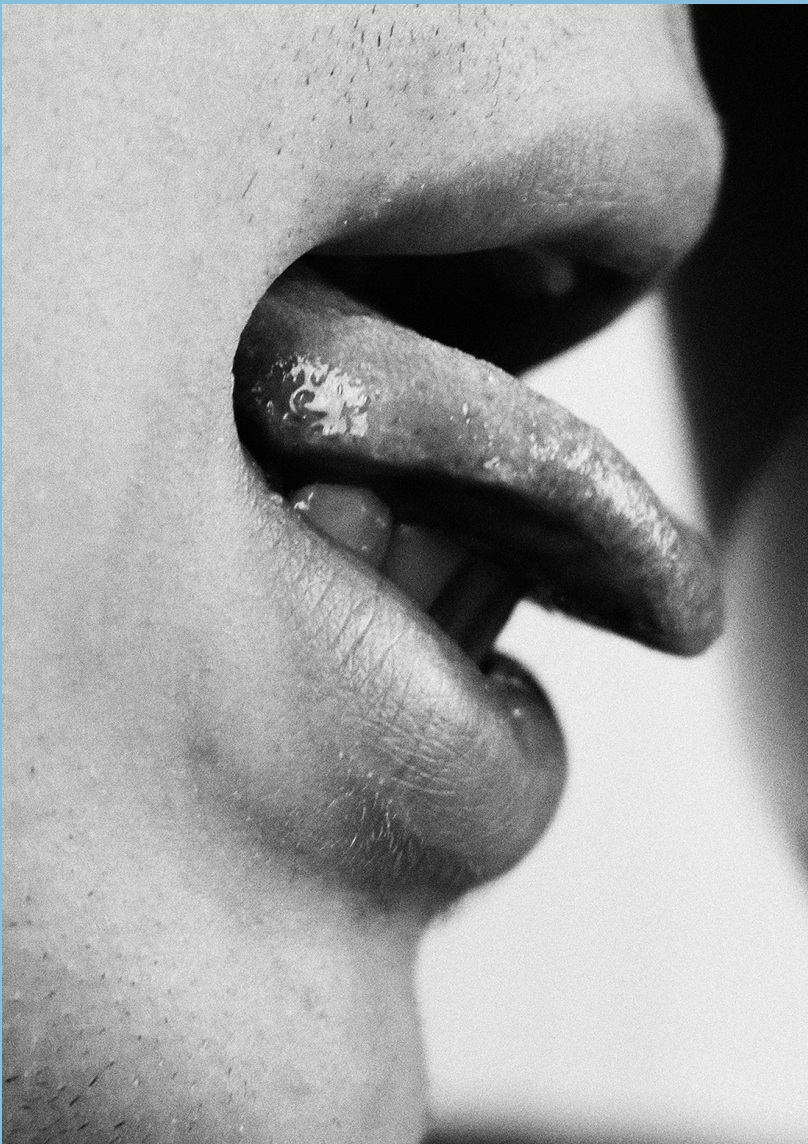
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# Testing *the* Waters

Natalie Osmond

New York University   •   Senior

I am a senior getting my BFA in studio art at NYU. My practice primarily consists of photography and video with themes exploring femininity and the taboos of female pleasure. "Testing the Waters" is a diptych of digital black and white photography as a digital inkjet print (11x19).

Meditation on
Blackness
and **Being**
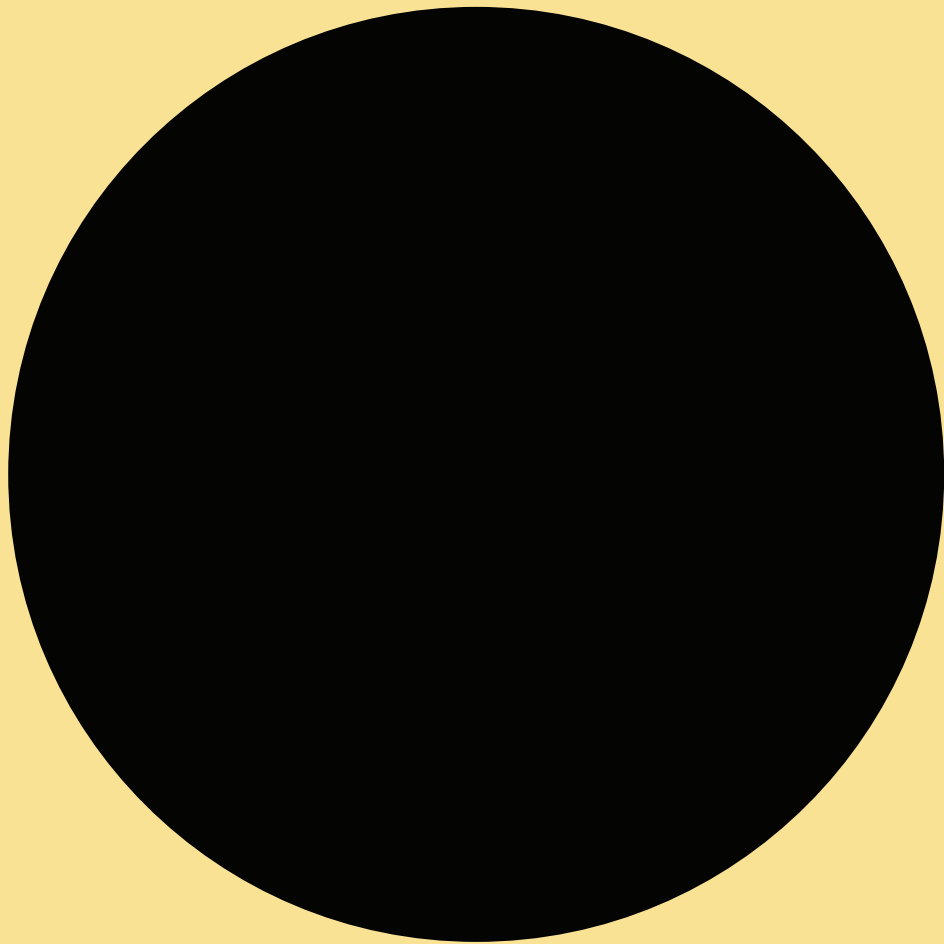
Russell Clarke

Russell is a recent graduate of Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly Ryerson). He received a Bachelors of Arts degree in politics and governance with a minor in philosophy. Russell's academic interests include political theory and social philosophy, topics on which he has published numerous articles and other writings. He plans on attending graduate school for political theory in the hopes of becoming a professor in the subject. In his spare time, he enjoys reading works of existentialism and watching football (soccer).

Toronto Metropolitan University • New Graduate

Abstract

This essay is a meditation on the ontological contours of Blackness and being. The essay examines, in large part, Calvin Warren's *Ontological Terror*. The concept broaches the topics of the humanity inherent in Heidegger's Dasein and its ontological opposition towards Black being as such. When referring to Black being, I refer to the ontology of being in opposition to humanness as constructed by 20th-century Western existential philosophy (specifically Heidegger's) and the Western notion of humanness that simultaneously constructs Blackness as an ontology, degrades Blackness and relies upon this very same ontology as an ontological prerequisite for the conceptual birth of whiteness. I import Frantz Fanon's Double Reference in his text *Black Skins, White Masks* and Albert Memmi's dual subjects of *The Colonizer and the Colonized* and through the onto-psychological prisms of both writers, I attempt to trace a philosophical genealogy of Black being as non-being or Black being as opposition to Dasein. This essay aims to clarify the distinct and paradoxical truth of Blackness as a mode of being that is nullified as used by white being; in other words, Black being as non-being.

Introduction

Within the realm of philosophical inquiry, certain questions are inherently destabilizing. These are of such a nature that our preconceived moral and ontological bases for existence are shaken and exposed. Ontology, properly understood, is the approach in metaphysical studies concerned with being and the problems of existence from the standpoint of human subjects and their subjectivity. To my mind, one such question is that of Black being in the world. The question of Black being in the world within social, moral, and otherwise ontological contexts still contain a greater index of inquiries into the relationship between humanity and Black being. What are the contingencies of Black freedom were such a thing to exist? What is the moral position of white individuals partaking in racism? How can the ontological terror of Black being, as Calvin L. Warren argues, be reconciled with humanism? Calvin L. Warren, a Black, queer philosopher from Emory University, was compelled by the topic of Black being with relation to Western enlightenment humanism. Probing further, he understood that such humanism contradicts the concept of Black being. This paper explores the moral, phenomenological, and ontological genealogies of Black Otherness. In this paper, I wish to explore

the metaphysical and ontological underpinnings of racism and the existential fissures therein concerning Black being in a white world meant to debase it. In doing so, I challenge the assumptions of humanist ethics and human value in light of colonialism and anti-Blackness. Drawing upon theories from Calvin L. Warren, Frantz Fanon, and Albert Memmi, I wish to uncover the philosophical and social foundations of Black devaluation, the moral instrumentalization of Black people, and the perceived notions of the self by Black folks.

To speak of ontological terror is to confront the insecurity of our ethical and metaphysical presuppositions in the face of Black being that exists outside of traditional humanism. It is to wrestle with the uncertainty and elusiveness of the Black Nothingness conferred upon the Negro. For Nothingness to be properly ascertained in this context, further definition of the Heideggarian precepts of being and freedom will be further elaborated and put in place against the contradictions that comprise the Negro problem. However, we can understand ontological terror as the result of the incorrigibility, contradiction, and ambiguity of the ontological relation of the Negro embodied as metaphysical Nothing. It is the transmission of Nothing's terror onto Black being and the Negro that encapsulates it.

One of the main premises of my argument is that Black being operates in an inherently anti-Black society. The Black individual and Black collective often experience perpetual hatred and ontological violence as a condition of existing in an opposing white world. All three thinkers discuss the ontology of anti-Blackness, albeit from different vantage points of exploitation, enmity and devaluation. Be it the colonial relationship, the cultural relation of Black being to whiteness or, the ontological terror that defines Blackness in an anti-Black world, Black otherness is ever-present and requires a sincere form of scrutiny. As a matter of clarity, I will be frequently referring to the subject as the "Black Negro." This is done to juxtapose the metaphysical conception of Black-as-Nothing and the Negro who embodies this Nothingness within the corporeal.

One does well to understand Blackness not merely as a condition of difference and otherness but rather resulting as a problem. I want to explore what it means to be the Black subject used as an oppositional point of reference for inhumane humanist epistemologies that so dominated philosophical examination until this point. I also want to divulge into Black being as an oppositional point of reference in the colonial relationship and the redoubled cultural paradigm as discussed in Fanon's *Black Skin, White*

Masks. It is important to note, for my purposes, that Black and white folks in this way serve twin functions. This is to say, the phenomenological positions Black and white folks are nestled within an engineered frame of reference that is at once acrimonious, mimetic, and reinforcing. As a condition of cultural subordination to white folks during colonialism, the Black individual understands the hatred felt for him and yet envies and adopts the habits and likeness of the white reference. Moreover, I argue that whiteness requires the ontological hatred of Blackness to exist in reference to itself. The racist relation creates the debased, anti-Black individual just as it creates the hated, misused 'Black' individual and this relationship is mutual and reinforcing.

The (In)Humanity of Anti-Blackness

To explore the topic I have described is to probe into the very nature of a relationship and the philosophical substance given to each antithetical entity belonging to this ontological relation. Blackness and its relation to whiteness and social structures that carve out this relationship are of this sort. Therefore, I am claiming that Blackness is ontologically constructed in oppositional relation to the whiteness that loathes it. Therefore, we ought to pay

concern to ways in which Black being exists necessarily outside of human-being as such. In his controversial text, *Ontological Terror*, Calvin L. Warren refers to the Negro as being Black insofar as this entity embodies a symbolic and ontological Nothing in the metaphysical world.[1] Central to the question of Black being is the ontological position of Black Nothingness that is intrinsic to metaphysical humanity constituted within its traditional guise. One of Warren's pivotal claims is that Blackness exists in ontological obscurity and enmity to the metaphysical world.

Existing in opposition and obscurity to the metaphysical world is the condition of the Black Negro. This metaphysics is partially underpinned by an existential humanism that Heidegger's Dasein occupies. Being in the world is fundamentally shaped by our tendency, as it were, our capacity to question our very mode of being. The German philosopher Martin Heidegger, in his *Being and Time* maintained that we are the Beings for which being is a question. We attend to this question as a means to ascertain our existence and truthfully exist in the world. Heidegger termed this Being as Dasein. Warren's use of Heidegger is quite rigorous but scarcely charitable. In the text, Warren interrogates

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1   Warren, Calvin, L. *Ontological Terror: Blackness, Nihilism, and Emancipation.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2018.Pg.6.

the premises of Heidegger's ontological grounding in Dasein in contrast to the Nothingness that characterizes Black folks. Heidegger understands freedom and its concomitant humanist ethic to shroud the purpose of Being. As Warren asserts, "Freedom exists for Being—it enables the manifestation of Being through Dasein."[2] In the Heideggarian scheme, Dasein possesses numerous potentialities of Being and one of the most important is freedom. Notwithstanding this, however, Warren attempts to challenge both the sublimation of ontological freedom for the Negro into a freedom index of social, political, and legal rights while maintaining that at an ontological level, freedom has been necessarily severed from Black-being-as-Nothing. According to Warren, "Our metaphysical notions of freedom… miss the ontological function of anti-Blackness—to deny the ontological ground of freedom by severing the (non)relation between Blackness and Being."[3]

This is not to suggest that Blackness does not occupy a modality of Being. Instead, it indicates that the Black Negro embodies a mode of being unlike that of Dasein whose existence is punctuated by its potentiality for freedom among other things and whose pursuit of freedom warrants a humanism advocating for freedom

in real moral terms. Rather, the Black Negro attends Being-as-a-problem. What does it mean to Be a problem? Problematic Blackness invites us to examine what it means to inhabit the condition of Being outside of traditional metaphysics as well as to be the object and target of anti-Black hatred embodied in the Negro. This problem is much more loaded than hatred and loathing, however. The Negro's Being-as-a-problem is not the subsequent hatred it experiences at the hands of the white colonial or in his historical setting generally. This intermediary existence that the Black Negro takes up "between form and formlessness, animal and man, property and human, and nothing and something"[4] that form of Being that "renders both "meaning" and "Being" impossible and inadequate existence constitutes the interstice of the Blackness that is denied entry into the realm of traditional ontology and is instead so misused and detested by it. Being-as-a-problem is the condition of Blackness. The question which arises concerning "Black being" is also problematic. Blackness is everywhere and problematic at all times.

Black being is both humanistic and inhumane. Suffice to say, there is an (in)humanity to anti-Blackness. Firstly, we can account for the real and ontological

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2   Ibid, Warren. Pg. 15
3   Ibid.

4   Ibid, Warren. Pg. 37

violence inherent to Black being. We may establish the barbarities of the Black experience at the hands of his white oppressors since Black subjugation of the Negro physically, mentally, socio-culturally, and psychologically throughout slavery and since the Antebellum period onwards. Notwithstanding the moral devaluation of Blacks resulting from their exclusion as equal and free citizens under the law for much of the 20th century.[5] The inhumanity of anti-Blackness extends to the ontological as well insofar as the Nothingness that is Blackness is closed off from the ontological proposition for being offered to Dasein. The Negro cannot approach the realm of humanity meant for Dasein principally because the Negro embodies a Nothingness that cannot be apprehended and is demeaned by traditional ontology. The Negro is schematized as physical Nothing in the ontological realm. A foundational aspect of ontological terror is ontology's incapability to apprehend or ground Nothingness within its epistemic field of explanation and self-referential reification.

Ontology and metaphysics, according to Warren, does not, indeed cannot recognize itself in Blackness, and therefore, derides the Negro and laments the reality that it can never fully comprehend the Negro. Quoting Sylvia Winters, Warren exclaims, "the Negro Question cannot be a proper object of knowledge… the metaphysical problems that it carries are positioned outside the frames of epistemology and its attendant discourses."[6] One may say that the Negro is that being which is excluded from the episteme of man or rather that Black being is Being-outside-of-Dasein. The Nothingness that defines the Negro instantiates a condition that is obscure and sterile. As opposed to the dynamic being categorized in Dasein as jotted out by Heidegger, Black folks represent as amorphous non-being as repetition or a falling so claims David Marriot.[7] Hence "Blackness and ontology are unavailable for one another."[8] The violence that the Negro has endured in all facets of life is the physical manifestation of whiteness attempting to dominate the Blackness it cannot adjourn. What is more, the condition of Blackness as being-a-problem and being-Nothing is strange and inhuman by virtue of its

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5   Ibid, Warren; Wolfe, Patrick. "Race and Racialisation: Some Thoughts." *Postcolonial Studies* 5, no. 1 (2002): 51-62; Rothstein, Richard. The Colour of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America. New York: Liveright Publishing Corp., 2017.

6   Ibid, Warren. Pg. 30
7   Marriott, David. "Waiting to Fall." CR: *The New Centennial Review* 13, no. 3 (winter 2013): 163-240
8   Ibid, Warren. Pg. 43

exclusion of the ontological humanist project by definition. Despite this inhumanity of Blackness, our inquiry is served by a reflection of the very intentionality and construction of Black opposition to the ontological human scope that is made so, in large part, by anti-Blackness.

I have elaborated how Blackness has been conditioned ontologically to be inhuman and outside of the scope and intention of traditional ontometaphysical humanity as instantiated in Dasein. The Black person exists as Nothing which constitutes a problem. Black Nothingness is unavailable and unintelligible to ontology and as such, is not Dasein but [Nichte Da Sein] which is an entity that is absolutely closed off from ontology.[9] The confrontation of this ontological terror is made manifest in the violence and hatred which expresses the obsession to eradicate and dominate the Black Nothingness that the white metaphysical realm cannot understand but also refuses to ignore. This understanding illuminates the inhumanity of Blackness, but to contemplate the humanity of anti-Blackness is to accept the very function and cultivation of Black Nothingness in metaphysics and for metaphysics' purposes. Black being in its numerous forms, as terror, a target of violence, as a problem, as a repetitious falling is the necessary invention of ontometa-

physics, says Warren. Continuing with Heidegger, Warren views the construction of Black Nothingness as equipment, that is, a target and backdrop for violence. This use of Black equipment stems from a particular brand of anxiety experienced by the white collective and is then projected onto the Negro. What Fanon has noted as the "phobogenic object."[10] Because Nothingness is unintelligible to ontometaphysics but despised by it in equal measure, domination is the method whereby the white collective can ontologically justify the elusive substance of the Negro.

According to Warren, Blackness which is an ontological transposition of Nothingness, then further transposed into the Negro is the invention of modernity. The history of Blackness and its unsubtle conceptual forging into reified characteristics, categories, and psychic and cultural positions was the logical extension of the execration of African identity which predates modern conceptions and perceptions of Blackness. One could view these conceptions as the discursive production of the historical condition of the Black individual as "an adjunct to racial slavery"[11]

10   Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skins, White Masks.* New York: Grove Press, 1952. Pg. 129

11   Wagner, Bryan. *Disturbing the Peace: Black Culture and the Police Power after Slavery.* Cambridge. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009.

9   Ibid, Warren. Pg. 47

and its concomitant or subsequent social structures including American capitalism.

The crucial takeaway from this assertion is that the decimation of the African identity ceded the discursive and ontological territory for the creation and solidification of Black Nothingness. In this way, Black folks are stripped of their African being in favor of an inhuman being punctuated by Nothingness and violence. The purpose of this, however, lay in the intention of ontometaphysics to develop a functioning scapegoat.[12] The Black Negro is the non-being created to be violated. The Black Negro is deliberately conceived in opposition to Dasein so that the "existential journey of the human being"[13] can be fulfilled. To reintegrate, this fulfillment requires an oppositional frame of reference. Ontology requires and negation for its affirmation and the Black Negro was the quintessential embodiment of it. Part of the essence of Dasein consists in the notion that its journey relies on closing off being to the Negro it constructs. The terrorization, enmity, and obscurity experienced by the Black Negro is a mere contingency of the ontological terror produced by the execration of African being into Black Nothingness. The function of the Black Negro is to maintain, as it were, fulfill Dasein's humanity.

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12   Ibid Fanon, pg. 160
13   Ibid, Warren. Pg. 27

Racism, Colonialism, and Devaluation

The construction of the double frame of oppositional reference was the foundational aspect of the ontological relation born from colonialism. Colonial racism is its single abiding intention. One of Warren's central claims is that the execration of African being severed the ontological footing that Black folk possessed which, in turn, relegated them to an interstitial space of functional non-being or the excluded equipment of a modern ontological humanist order. Execration, I contend, is a process requiring intention. What this means for the relation between the Black Negro and the white oppressor who execrates his former being is that he plays an instrumental and visceral role in creating the Black Negro and has done so since the advent of colonialism. Colonialism of course, is not uniquely limited to the execration of Black folks but the context applied nonetheless. Colonialism was an enduring event implicating a distortion and eventual execration of being from one of Africanness to Black Nothingness. To my mind, this event cultivated our conceptual redoubled cultural paradigm. As Albert Memmi put it, "The colonial situation manufactures colonialists, just

as it manufactures the colonized."[14]

The violent origins of this squalid relation are what is of interest to us here. What the execration of African being and the dehumanization process of the conversion of this being into Nothingness requires the colonialist to recognize the African. Surprisingly, it was contained in Sartre's introduction to Memmi's masterwork that this process is captured so accurately. In Sartre's words, "No one can treat a man like a dog without first regarding him as a man."[15] The conversion into Black Nothingness in its strung out social and temporal struggles beginning with colonialism and the transatlantic slave trade entails a recognition of the African man in his true substance and then drew upon a subsequent desire for its obliteration. Indeed, ontology's obsession with Black Nothingness, including its penchant for anti-Black violence in real and ontological terms is a perverse yet potent form of recognition for Nothingness. Recognition of its obscurity, recognition of its squalor, its vast emptiness, the terror it poses to the modern world of ontology that produced it.

What follows this recognition is the enmity of the colonial. What presupposes this enmity is the colonial's alienation and devaluation. As Memmi notes, "Racism sums up and symbolizes the fundamental relation which united the colonialist and the colonized."[16] Slightly differing from Warren's conception of anti-Blackness, Memmi means to suggest that racism defines the interpersonal metaphysical, relational frames of reference between the Colonizer and the colonized, exclusively in that order. The colonizer is the racist, for he recognizes the colonized and intends to, indeed succeeds at devaluing the colonized Black Negro. Racism is the valiant ontological process of execration into Blackness. The ontological or as Sartre and Memmi referred to it as, ideological components comprising colonial racism were "the gulf between the culture of the colonialist and the colonized; two, the exploitation of these differences for the benefit of the colonialist; three, the use of these supposed differences as standards of absolute fact."[17] Memmi explicitly denied the suggestion that this constructed otherness was metaphysical in nature, opting instead for the sociological explanation buttressing conflations of colonial racism and capitalist exploitation. To be sure, other thinkers have established similar

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14   Memmi, Albert. *The Colonizer* and the Colonized. Boston: Beacon Press, 1957. Pg. 56
15   Ibid, Memmi. Introduction by Sartre Pg. XXVII

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16   Ibid, Memmi. Pg. 70
17   Ibid, pg. 71

sociological linkages[18] and the correlation between exploitation in this way cannot be denied. However, to suggest that this relation lacks a metaphysical tint is where Warren's arguments become more forceful than Memmi's.

While colonial racism was a socio-economic system, it can be said to be ontometaphysical in dimension as it involved the creation of the psychological systems of reference and being between the colonizer and colonized mentioned by Memmi. On a purely ontological level, anti-Black violence is the consequence of the exploitation of these differences between modern ontology and African being. This construction of difference is solidified within the condition of Black Nothingness and further perpetuated by anti-Blackness in all its inimical forms. In addition, colonial racism broaches the questions of ontology because its relations, and its systems of reference and double reference cannot come to be without the devaluation of negative recognition on the part of the colonizer. As the humanity of the African Negro and the subsequent Black Negro is put in view of the consciousness of the colonizer, that human essence is recognized and then sullied. As Sartre argues, the colonialist must evaluate the humanity of the colo-

nized, that is understand the subject of his recognition to be human, and then refuse this notion. On this issue, Fanon is sharp. Fanon understood well that in the colonial situation, hatred wasn't merely a given. Rather, the colonizer or Negrophobe suffers from the "struggle to acquire hatred" a hatred which "has to be dragged into being" and that "cries out to exist."[19]

The Negrophobe must embody hatred to pull it off. Here Sartre goes further with a pivotal point about the ontology of this anti-Blackness. The colonial debases his consciousness with his embodied hatred. Sartre puts it well in saying:

The impossible dehumanization of the oppressed... becomes the alienation of the oppressor. It is the oppressor himself who restores, with his slightest gesture, the humanity he seeks to destroy; and, since he denies humanity in others, he regards it everywhere as his enemy. To handle this, the colonizer must assume the opaque rigidity and imperviousness of stone. In short, he must dehumanize himself...[20]
The work of dehumanization is inherently dehumanizing. It becomes the tireless work of the colonial and modern Negrophobe to denigrate value and suppress feelings of mutuality wherever he discovers it in the Black Negro. The chilling

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18   Ibid, Wolfe 2002 & Wagner 2009

19   Ibid, Fanon. Pg. 35
20   Ibid, Memmi. Introduction by Sartre Pg. XXVIII

away of African identity was merely the inauguration of this irrevocable relation lasting from the events of colonialism and slavery and throughout the constructed history of the Black Negro. Therefore, as the ontological position of the Black Negro is Nothingness and the subject of metaphysical enmity, the position of the Negrophobe and ontology properly understood, according to Warren, is one of perpetual violence and embodied hatred, and so, one of inconceivable devaluation.

The Double Reference

Since his inception, the condition of the Black Negro has always been that of double reference. While we may have discussed the redoubled cultural paradigm and the antecedent devaluation of the colonialist and the colonized in earlier centuries as well as the Negrophobe and Negro in modernity, we have not yet broached the question of the Negro's double reference. I argue that the Black Negro's affliction is largely tied to his self-execration resulting from a mimetic double reference. In his work, Fanon repeatedly utilizes the notion of the inferiority complex of the colonized subject in modernity. It is not enough to say that anti-Black violence, as I have articulated it here, uproots the grounding of the Negro in the ontological realm. The Negrophobe

is not capable of doing this on his own. Warren is mindful that to reduce negrophobic violence to political extermination is to misguidedly ignore the very purpose of anti-Blackness in an ontological which consists in the attempt to eradicate the obscure and evil Nothingness that is Blackness.[21] Due to the hue and character of Black Nothingness, this is simply untenable, especially at the hands of the Negrophobe and his embodied hatred. After the execration of African being since the events of colonialism and slavery by the colonial Negrophobe, the Black Negro is faced with his own execrations. The inferiority complex of the colonial subject, according to Fanon, is the creation of the racist. He sees "in this white gaze that it's the arrival not of a new man, but if a new type of man, a new species."[22] Put simply, it is the racist relation, namely the racist, that creates the inferiority in the Black Negro.

This inferiority is created as a result of this relation, only for this relation to be carried further by the Black Negro as he spells his own destruction, indeed as he yearns for it. The double reference is a mimesis. A self-induced abnegation of Black being for whiteness. Fanon's recount bare credence to the behaviors of Black folks in French colonies, namely Antillean

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21   Ibid, Warren. Pg. 59
22   Ibid, Fanon. Pg. 95

peoples. His is a reflection of the irremediable tendency of colonized subjects to adopt European postures and values. To acculturate their languages, their intonations, their histories, and various mythologies deriving from European canons. The abnegation becomes visceral as the Negro seeks to dilute his biology and being through copulation and social intercourse with his white counterparts. The Mulatto woman, Fanon says, falls in love with the European man subtly attempting to gain admittance into the white world. The Black Negro renounces her hair and her skin by changing it to suit the fancies of the European. Self-rejection and love of another constitute assimilation. It is baked into the colonial cake and comprises part of the ontological terror of the constructed Black Negro since his subjugation from Africa.

It is precisely because this acculturation and assimilation consist in the translation of Black abnegation into the affirmation of white values and culture why this form of anti-Blackness is the most potent. The Negrophobe sews the seeds of inferiority only for the torch of negation and cultural neuroticism to be taken up by the Black Negro who begins to view himself as evil, as obscure, and in want of annihilation. The colonized person, or, in this context, the Black Negro, Memmi contends will hide "his past, his tradi-

tions… all his origins will have become ignominious."[23]

Of course, this internalization of anti-Black racism is not initially perpetrated by Black folks, only adhered to. We have established the manifold social mechanisms born out of colonialism and transatlantic slavery which have ostensibly legitimated Black inferiority biologically and metaphysically. This inferiorization was touted through anti-Black pseudoscientific theories of eugenics and phrenology[24] and the instantiation of this inferiority was buttressed through the codification of laws barring miscegenation and political participation, and the brutality of slavery, lynching, rape, and segregation was legitimized thereof. Fanon, along the same vein as Warren, would suggest that a society organized in this way draws upon the diminution of the Black Negro to sustain strength, actively cultivating the neurosis of the Negro for the fulfillment of both an ontological and political dynamic. We can agree that it is the European Negrophobe who initiates the execration of African being and induces the inferiority complex in the Negro that exacerbates this process of execration. On the other hand, the European Negrophobe gives the Negro no choice. Inferiorization is not merely a volitional social circumstance, it is ontological.

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23   Ibid, Memmi. Pg. 122
24   Ibid, Wolfe 2002.

Self-execration illuminates the final stanza of ontological terror of the Black Negro unto himself. The European Negrophobe with its anti-Black violence instantiates a moral paradigm that sinks the ontological condition of Blackness into the depths of a Nothingness which is explicitly negative and incomprehensible. Blackness is ossified within an ontological frame that is placed in opposition to light, intelligibility, potentiality, and care. In a word, Blackness is ossified wishing an ontological frame that is placed in opposition to Dasein. The only choice left for the Black negro is no choice at all. A situation is foisted upon him wherein the Black Negro struggles against his own image; where he flirts with his own condemnation, cementing the execration of his Africanness.

The Black Negro is steeped in ambiguity. He is perched on the fence of double reference to himself and the colonial image that is seethed into his consciousness. In having his predetermined being execrated and then hollowed out he is forced to assume a white form which derides his very non-being. The Black Negro is shelterless. By virtue of his existence, he is engaged in the symbolism of Black evil and obscurity. Conversely, his oppressors thrust upon him a racist relation of inferiority which sees himself negating himself in order to affirm a culture and ontology which is antithetical. This is why

Fanon exclaims:

The Black man has no ontological resistance in the eyes of the white man. From one day to the next, the Blacks have had to deal with two systems of reference. Their metaphysics, or less pretentiously their customs and their agencies to which they refer, were abolished because they were in contradiction with a new civilization that imposed its own.[25]

To exist as the subject of double reference is to exist in exchange without standing. The Black Negro becomes objectified and is a neurotic object without footing in an ontology of his own. The colonial relation strips the Black Negro of an ontological refuge. Because we can view the double reference both culturally and ontologically, we can then broach the prospects of ontological atonement and Black freedom, as well as the contingencies that these are suffused with.

Black Freedom, Contingency, and Atoning for Ontological Terror

One engaging the edifice of anti-Black metaphysics which is simply ontometaphysics as currently constituted is eager to entertain ideas as to how the Black Negro can win his freedom, and, to

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25   Ibid, Fanon. Pg. 90

go further, distill a new form of ontology that grounds being in something rather than nothing. The crucial error of liberal humanism is its myopic grounding of freedom within the ontological realm of politics, suggesting that the Black negro is free so long as his equality and rights are guaranteed when placed against another and codified within legal contexts. Warren is delicate in delineating the meaning of freedom with regard to the "free Black". He notes that to be free is… an onto-existential condition" in which the human engages in his primordial ontological, phenomenological, and axiological relations. These are projects engaging being, consciousness, and an ethics of care and projectionality.[26] As we have come to discover, no such privileges exist for the Black Negro to the extent that his being is conditioned on exclusion from ontometaphysics as such and this exclusion is the contingency upon which ontometaphysics is built. The execration of African being and the enduring metaphysical Holocaust that has characterized Black existence.

Warren is charitable in warranting the potential for Black emancipation but highlights the shortcoming of political emancipation in resolving the metaphysical problematic of Black Nothingness which can neither be apprehended nor destroyed. To add to our difficulties, Fanon correctly raises the point in his text that true emancipation of Black people has never been fought for, only secured by white people whose interest it served or whose ethical woes it assuaged. In other words, like so many freedoms, the political and social emancipation of the Black negro was enshrouded by contingency white moral revaluations.[27]

Assessing the landscape of the anti-Black metaphysical world is a tortuous entreaty. It reveals the deeply embedded roots of Black nihilism intrinsic to an ontological world that in every way is other to Black existence. But this is our lot. If Black freedom is our pursuit, we must engross ourselves in each of the dimensions that freedom presents itself in. In doing so, we find ourselves at an impasse. We have explored the ontological crevices of Black Nothingness and the racist colonial relation that invented it after obliterating African existence all those centuries ago. Contained in this pregnant relation is a redoubled cultural, psychological, and ontometaphysical paradigm between the negrophobic subject that imbibes hatred and obsession with respect to the Black Negro and, of course, the Black Negro herself who incessantly exists within self-referential neurosis of Black being

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26   Ibid, Warren. Pg. 50

27   Ibid, Fanon. Pg. 194-195

and Black abnegation. As Fanon claims, "The issue is knowing whether the black man can overcome his feeling of abasement and expunge the compulsive characteristic that resembles so much that of the phobic."[28] Towards this unbearable rage, ambiguity, and insularity, Fanon cries out for reconciliation. He is clear in his ambition for "genuine communication to be born."[29] He understands that he bears no right or obligation to chastise or lament over history but only that his demand for mutual and reciprocal recognition be met.

Warren's approach differs considerably. He seeks to reject humanism on the premise that any such intelligible humanism is crafted to remorselessly instigate Black Nothingness and all the alienation and violence this comes with. Both thinkers, as I suppose Memmi would be too, are pessimistic about freedom. On that note, where Fanon is hopeful about ontological reconciliation of Blackness with humanism, Warren sees only the torment and exhaustion of Black struggles for liberation amid a landscape of the consistent "systemic destruction of… soul, spirit, and psyche"[30] which is the projection of ontological terror onto the free Black properly understood. To be sure, our discussion of Black freedom is not about the political, it scrutinizes the irreparable fissures between Being and Nothingness, Blackness and Humanity. Atoning for ontological terror is this discussion and sober in reflection, one finds that such atonement is null. There is no atonement for ontological terror, only the endurance that is the price of heroism and spirituality.[31] And so, we ask, whither is he? The black man, drowned in contingency, stolen from one home and denied another? I am here, I am now; "straddling the crossroads between Nothingness and Infinity."[32]

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28   Ibid Pg. 33
29   Ibid Pg. 206
30   Ibid, Warren. Pg. 169

31   Ibid Pg. 171
32   Ibid, Fanon. Pg. 120

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Honey

Kit Conway

This was my first time working with linocut block printing, but I'm fond of the visual qualities that surface in uneven/novice printing. This piece was originally created as a gift for a loved one, and its title is meant to be a doubly functional ode to that saccharine sentiment. My favorite part of the creation process was carving out the furry texture and creating the face.

University of Pittsburgh • Senior

Sleeping, Slipping, and **Snipping**
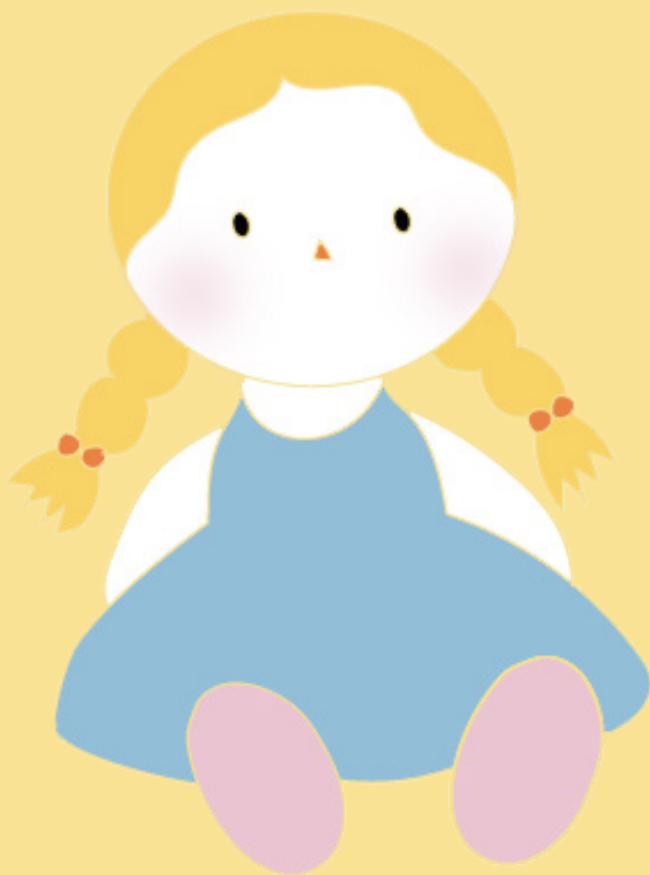
Caleb Delos-Santos

Caleb is a senior double majoring in Acting for the Stage and Screen and English at Azusa Pacific University. He recently published his first poetry book called A Poet's Perspective through Cyberwit.net and won the APU Esselstrom Prize for Creative Writing in Poetry. Caleb has also published fifteen poems and one non-fiction with West Wind Magazine, Outrageous Fortune, GoldScriptCo, Bluepepper, Poetry Archive, Spectrum, Indian Periodical, Forbes and Fifth, North Dakota Quarterly, Madison Journal of Literary Criticism, and UNLV Creative Arts Journal. Today, Caleb's loving girlfriend daily supports and inspires Caleb to continue following his writing and acting dreams.

Azusa Pacific University • Senior

Responding to a Creepy Drawing From a Dream.

One open-minded night, my once closed but now bead-ified eyes witnessed my doll-like twins:

One blonde-locked   Another ink-haired
One suckling sunlight   Another bleeding shade
One singing within a tree   Another slinking beside its dying branches
One glowing with growing red figs   Another husking with dirty dead chips
One with hotty pink rims   Another with a sunken plummy mouth
One exerting   Another inverting.

My twins lived as opposites.
They even had conflicting skin.

But,
Despite their glaring anti-pairing demeanors,
They shared one scary feature.

Despite my eternal searching and gleaming,
I could not see one eye on either,

Which,
Unfortunately revealed to me
That they would never see
Their longing long-standing simple "middle" twin
Dreaming to be seen:

Me.

Riding East to West.

I zoomed to my
inside in-person non-Zoom
classroom on my
chunky clunky chalk-colored
scooter.

I slid by
stout, statued, age-stained
mainstays:
old beaten anti-vehicle beams,
cold boisterous annoying

benches,
and
tiny, pine-cony, seed
things.

My thin tired tires
slipped past temporary
vocal social locals
too,

but

I ignored all these things,
listening to the *YouTube* tunes pulsating
from my
crinkling dinky discount-rose
headphones.

I snuck onto the un-wide sidewalk and
tightened my chilly climate-killed grip. And as the
working waning paining
wind spindled, I realized
I wanted to rewind my ear-grinding minute-long lo-fi-song
one more time.

I Shaved Today.

I shaved today.

I like claiming
that a healthy
body doesn't need
stylish Gen-Z hygiene.
But, honestly, I only skip shaving days
because I'm lazy.

I chose to shave today, though,
to save my girlfriend's pretty lips
from kissing my prickly
cheese-grater face.

And as I slapped my mustache-spikes
with a used dollar-store blue razor stick,
I noticed several blonde-ish spots.
I'm a brunette by birth and famously
reject heretics who say my hair is black.

Yet, whenever I let my face grow,
it explodes with yellow shards.
I think my mom was blonde once.
They must come from her,

which partially makes me regret shaving.
But, I love my girlfriend more than her,
and I'm sure I'll be lazy once more.

Yet, when I see those pokey specks again,
I'll welcome them with a poet's pen.

After all, no matter how much hate
my facial hairs take from razors
and today's new fashion takes,
they always return in the end
and will until I'm dead.

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