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Letter from the Editor

Dear Reader,

Thank you for tuning in to the 44th edition of *Comm-Entary*! We are delighted and honored to introduce the research journal of the Communication Department at the University of New Hampshire. Over the past year, our team has been working diligently to bring forth some of the best work that the students in our department have to offer. Our editors have worked tirelessly to create this edition, and we are thrilled for our readers to see what we have to offer.

This year, like many others, we were proud to share our fellow peers' work in a manner that not only contains prestige but allows for their voice to be heard. We at *Comm-Entary* want to thank our readers for taking the time to appreciate the work that has been done, and hope they enjoy this time-honored tradition. The 15 papers along with the 8 mixed media entries will provide a powerful snapshot into not only the various interests of these scholars, but the overall atmosphere within the realm of media studies, rhetoric, and language studies.

None of this would have been possible without the tremendous work put forward by the *Comm-Entary* team, and the authors who submitted. We would be remiss not to also mention the guidance and leadership shown to us by our faculty advisor, Professor R. Michael Jackson. I would also like to extend a thank you to the professors in the department for inspiring students to create such tremendous work, as well as the various student groups who contributed in whatever way they could.

I am beyond excited to introduce this incredible avenue for these scholars to introduce their work to the world. From our family to yours, we hope you enjoy!

Sincerely,
Josh Kalman
Editor-in-Chief

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American Express: Small Business Saturday
Sean Surrick

Every Successful company has public relations campaigns to help boost their brand. However, some may not be successful or they were done in bad taste. I want to discuss a public relations campaign that has achieved a lot and has become something more than what it originally set out to do; American Express's Small Business Saturday. This is an event that occurs every year and it has become a staple holiday for the company. This public relations campaign is important because it is a well-known holiday, however, a lot of people do not know its origins and that it was created by American Express. This led me to believe that this campaign was unique and an outlier that proves how successful a public relations campaign can be not just for the company, but also for society as a whole. This event is now a recognized holiday in America and it has become more than just a PR campaign by a corporation to try and fix their image. This essay will explore all aspects of this public relations campaign starting with its history all the way to the present day. I will also discuss how Small Business Saturday became a national holiday and how it grew into such a successful public relations campaign. Being that this campaign is so unique, to fully understand and analyze it, one must understand its importance to the public relations industry while also acknowledging its role within the company that created it.

Small Business Saturday started in 2010 and was held on the Saturday after Thanksgiving which was the 27th of November that year. The concept was first introduced by American Express in 2010 as a way to put small businesses in the spotlight after the recession that occurred following the 2008 financial crisis. They wanted to create a holiday that celebrated small businesses and encouraged people to go out and shop at their local stores instead of the big corporations like Walmart and Amazon. American Express advertised the event all across the internet and on TV that year with ads that featured small businesses and interviews with the owners of the businesses that try to show the importance of supporting your local stores. That year, Amex gave customers rebates when they shopped locally as a promotion for the event. The event was instantly successful, and it quickly became an annual event after that. In the lead-

up to the next event in 2011, "the U.S. Senate passed a resolution supporting Small Business Saturday (Lake)." This is when the holiday started to feel less like a public relations campaign and more like a national holiday. That year, shopper awareness of the holiday was at 65% which was an increase of 30% compared to its first year (Weinmann). This growth showed Amex that this holiday had its place alongside other commercial holidays like Black Friday and Cyber Monday. Other big corporations saw the event's success and partnered with American Express to promote the holiday. This led to even more awareness of the event and it has continued to grow in awareness and participants every year since.

In recent years, Small Business Saturday has continued to break records of money spent at local businesses and engagement during the holiday. A quote from Forbes author, Rohit Arora, shows how much of an increase in spending there is every year, "American Express reported that spending among U.S. consumers who shopped at independent retailers and restaurants on Small Business Saturday reached an estimated $23.3 billion in 2021, an increase of 18% from $19.8 billion spent in 2020 and an increase from pre-pandemic spending in 2019 ($19.6 billion) (Arora)." This is the reason why American Express continues to support the holiday and is the reason why it continues to grow in popularity. Even during the pandemic, American Express advertised and held the holiday while promoting local businesses and convincing customers to shop online to avoid spreading COVID-19. Even after a decade of its existence, Small Business Saturday still provides local businesses with an opportunity to survive and grow.

To understand how important this holiday is to American Express, we can look at how they have marketed this event over the years. With Small Business Saturday being an integral part of American Express's brand, the company does a lot to promote it. You can see this with the ads that they run every year as talked about above. Every year before the holiday Amex runs ads to try and promote and raise awareness for the event. Most of these ads you see on TV involve shots of local businesses nationwide and interviews with their owners. Amex felt that people need to hear directly from small businesses to humanize them and separate them from big stores like Walmart. They make the advertisements emotional through the use of music and imagery.

They want viewers to realize the importance of shopping small and they figured that this could not be done without putting small businesses in the spotlight within the ads. Amex does a lot of other advertising for the holiday. For example, in 2022, the company partnered with the popular social media site, TikTok, to promote the holiday to a younger audience. These partnerships help raise awareness for the holiday and to support this, here is a quote about why Amex chose to partner with TikTok, "According to the 2022 Shop Small® Impact Study from American Express, 72% of small business owners said their customers rely on social media channels for store news, and almost 88% said it has helped them find their new customers (Wolfson)." As told in this quote, advertising for this holiday is extremely important not just for American Express, but also for small businesses. Amex already has a recognizable brand; however local businesses need to raise brand awareness and TikTok allows someone to do that without the need for a big advertising budget. They can make a video promoting their store and post it without any hassle. This partnership with TikTok involved many promotions and deals, one of which gave small businesses a free $100 in advertising spending on TikTok if you spend $50. This gave small businesses the ability to buy more ad space on TikTok without spending more money to try and compete with bigger brands that have a bigger budget. This TikTok partnership is not the only promotion with another company that Amex used to promote the holiday. American Express has relied on these partnerships to raise awareness and participation for the event.

Over the years, American Express has also partnered with many different companies to provide small businesses with resources for their store. For example, American Express has partnered with Indeed and FedEx to help give deals to local businesses ahead of the holiday.
They partnered with Indeed to give local businesses more resources that help in promoting their brand and work environment. They teamed up with FedEx to "receive discounts on eligible FedEx® shipping and FedEx Office® services (The Shop Small Resource Hub)." These promotions with other corporations have allowed for the growth of the holiday and for American Express as a company. They have partnered with many companies over the years which allows them to create good relations with other businesses. American Express also

provides a lot of resources to local businesses through their website. On their website, you can find a section all about Small Business Saturday with many resources small businesses can use. These resources are available year-round, however, in the lead-up to the holiday, Amex updates them and adds more options to choose from. When you navigate their website, there is a section called "The Shop Small Resource Hub." In this hub, you can find many things including a map that shows all the small businesses that are partnered with Amex so you can easily find them. Local stores can easily apply to be on this map which helps people recognize that this store is participating in Small Business Saturday. There is also a section where you can find hundreds of downloadable marketing materials for small businesses. These include templates for social media posts, flyers that promote the Shop Small initiative, and many other materials that are similar. As you can see, American Express puts a lot of money and resources into this holiday every year to help promote the event, as well as to help local businesses be prepared for it. This has raised the public's trust in the company because of all the resources it provides for small businesses.

Another question one may have about Small Business Saturday is why is it on the day after Black Friday and two days before Cyber Monday. The reason for this is that American Express knew that the holiday would be best if it was during the holiday season and they also knew that if they could contrast the other two holidays where you give money to big corporations with a holiday where you give money to local businesses that need it more, then they could convince people to spend money on that Saturday instead of the Friday or Monday. People feel good about themselves if they know they are giving money to someone who needs it and Small Business Saturday gives them that alternative compared to the other two big spending holidays around that time. Having the event on the Saturday after Thanksgiving also gives more opportunities for local stores to get as much business as possible because most people are likely on a break from work and school. This has led to the holiday becoming a staple event alongside Black Friday and Cyber Monday.

When this public relations campaign was first created, American Express made it clear who the holiday was for. Through their advertisements and promotional material, it was clear that Small Business Saturday was meant to support all local businesses that help the communities around them. Amex wanted to show how important local businesses are to their company and after the recession in 2008, they felt that was the perfect opportunity to do so. American Express is unique compared to other credit card companies because they get most of their revenue from processing fees charged to businesses that accept Amex. This means that Amex relies on businesses to allow customers to use American Express cards so they can gain revenue. So, Small Business Saturday helps the company get more local stores to add American Express cards as a way to pay. This is another reason why the company decided to make the focus of their public relations campaign local, small businesses because all the big chain stores already accept American Express cards. This shows how this public relations campaign is not just meant to help local businesses, it is also helpful to American Express and their business. To understand why this is important to public relations, we can look at a quote from author Jim Macnamara that says, "The two most enduring of the original four models of public relations and Excellence theory, which has been described as the 'dominant paradigm' of public relations, emphasize two-way interaction between organizations and their publics (Macnamara 147)." This quote talks about how important it is for public relations to have open two-way communication between the company and its public. In relation to Small Business Saturday, American Express has given the outline for what the holiday is and where you should shop, however, local communities still reserve the right to mold Small Business Saturday into a community event. People can reach out to American Express for resources and help for the holiday, while communities give back to American Express by allowing their credit cards to be accepted at their local stores. This is not just a transaction between two parties, it is a two-way communication that ends up helping both parties involved.

After the first Small Business Saturday in 2010, many organizations stepped in to help continue the success of the holiday. The Small Business Association started cosponsoring the event in 2011 and has been a part it of since then. In 2022, the Women Impacting Public Policy (WIPP)

also joined as a sponsor of the holiday with the organization promoting local businesses run by women. Amex has also partnered with the U.S. Black Chambers, Inc. to help support locally black-owned businesses during the holiday and year-round. There is a section on American Express's website that is dedicated to supporting black-owned businesses and it was created with the help of the U.S. Black Chambers, Inc. Amex partners with these organizations to help promote the holiday and to get outside help when deciding what aspects of local businesses and communities need more representation and resources. The company also gets support from these organizations because, "In addition to adhering to federal guidelines, advertising and public relations industries self-regulate according to their respective trade organizations' ethical standards. The aforementioned Public Relations Society of America as well as the International Association of Business Communicators have established codes of ethics for their members that encourage truthful, accurate communication and avoid deceptive practices (Schauster, Niell 49)." This shows how American Express needs outside help from organizations to keep them from trying to make the holiday into a way of making Amex money. There are no laws that require Amex to keep Small Business Saturday as a public relations campaign instead of making it into a way to purely advertise their company. Co-sponsoring the event with nonprofits and other organizations helps the event continue to be a public relations campaign and shows its public that Amex considers this campaign as an increasingly important holiday for them.

Even though Small Business Saturday is widely loved and thought of as a successful public relations campaign, there are plenty of people who consider it a hypocritical holiday meant for American Express to gain customers and revenue. The opposition to the event says that it is hypocritical for such a big corporation to be the ones promoting and running the holiday with a local Japanese craft store owner (Barb Campell) stating, "Every Saturday should be Small Business Saturday, but the irony of American Express being the ones to sponsor Small Business Saturday is glaring (Mandelbaum)." Many small businesses do not want help from Amex. They feel that the big company trying to help is belittling them. They think that a smaller nonprofit should be the one in charge of the holiday. Another gripe that small business owners have with

Small Business Saturday is that Amex takes a fee from them when customers use an American Express card. To the owners, this feels unfair and, again, hypocritical because American Express is taking money away from the small businesses that it claims to be helping. Over the years as the holiday has become more popular, there has been an increase in opposition to the event. This opposition has tried to learn as much as possible about Small Business Saturday to try and expose it. For example, here is a quote that talks about the potential reason why American Express chose to launch the campaign in 2010, "The first Small Business Saturday, in 2010, occurred the month after the Justice Department filed suit against American Express, MasterCard, and Visa over the card companies' merchant rules. MasterCard and Visa settled; American Express is fighting that suit (Mandelbaum)." If Amex was trying to use Small Business Saturday as a way to make the company look good after this lawsuit, then that would generate distrust for the company as well as anger towards the holiday. Even though this event has outgrown the company that created it, there are still people trying to expose American Express for their potential wrongdoings towards the holiday.

After this analysis of the Small Business Saturday public relations campaign, there is still one unanswered question, Was this campaign successful? Yes, it was tremendously successful. American Express created Small Business Saturday as a way to help locally-owned businesses after the 2008 recession and it has since become a national holiday celebrated by all 50 states. In my hometown, every year on the day of the holiday, the downtown area promotes shopping small with the town green having small pop-up shops that people can shop at. They also have a band playing music to attract people to the green. Small Business Saturday has become a town event and growing up I originally thought that the holiday was only celebrated in our town. The reason I shared this is because I wanted to show how much the holiday means to local communities. This event is not like Black Friday or Cyber Monday. Communities rally together to celebrate their locally owned businesses and it creates opportunities for small businesses to show how they stand out compared to big corporations. Ever since it became recognized by the U.S. Senate, the holiday has grown into a day that celebrates community where towns gather to support each other. American Express has continued to support the holiday and provide small

businesses with plentiful resources and deals. This combination of help from American Express and local towns has garnered a significant amount of awareness and respect for the holiday by the public.

American Express is known for being a credit card company that differs from the rest in how it operates. This has led them to be creative when coming up with ways to advertise or generate buzz about the company. However, no advertisement or marketing campaign comes close to the success Amex has had with its public relations campaign, Small Business Saturday. If you ask someone about the holiday, chances are they will not know that it was created by American Express. No other public relations campaign has grown to become something more than the company that created it. Not many other public relations campaigns have been endorsed and supported by the president of the United States. All this shows the importance of this holiday to the company, but more importantly to its public. American Express has gained more credibility and trust from this campaign compared to anything else they have done in the past. This holiday will only continue to grow and garner more awareness. Small Business Saturday is a staple for American Express as well as a staple holiday within our country and there are not many, if any, other public relations campaigns that can say the same.

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Artificial Intelligence and Human Creativity: A Delicate Balance
Grace Bell

Technomoral virtues can be defined as "whatever virtues of character are most likely to increase our chances of flourishing together in these conditions" (Vallor, 2016, p. 119). As the world becomes more reliant on and intertwined with new technologies, our definitions and applications of virtues must change. This is not to say that we need to create new virtues altogether, but rather that we must examine the ways that some virtues interact with our modern world. The central element of virtues "...such as wisdom, courage, or justice…" are generally fixed, and we can understand their meanings and how they have been applied and understood throughout time (Vallor, 2016, p. 119). Each virtue, however, is used somewhat differently depending on the time period, and its usage depends on "...what specific dispositions enable us to flourish there" (Vallor, 2016, p. 119). As our society becomes defined by "...increasingly rapid, transformative, global, unpredictable, and interdependent technosocial change", our virtues and the ways that they are applied must adapt (Vallor, 2016, p. 119). Vallor determines the twelve most prominent technomoral virtues to be honesty, self-control, humility, justice, courage, empathy, care, civility, flexibility, perspective, magnanimity, and technomoral wisdom (2016, p. 120).

I used the VIA Character Strengths Survey to determine some of the top virtues that I exhibit, and I decided to focus on strengthening the virtues of appreciation of beauty and excellence, curiosity, creativity, and fairness. Appreciation of beauty and excellence was determined to be my second strongest virtue according to the character strengths survey, with fairness being the fourth strongest. Curiosity falls at number nine and creativity at number twelve, out of the 24 possible virtues. The appreciation of beauty and excellence is a virtue characterized by "Noticing and appreciating beauty, excellence, and/ or skilled performance in various domains of life…" (VIA, 2023). In this project, I used Chat GPT to create a series of poems highlighting the ways that artificial intelligence (AI) is complicated but can help create something beautiful. One of the reasons that I focused on AI specifically is that it is so often seen as something scary and unapproachable, and I wanted to make people more aware that AI can also be used in very

positive ways. The overall "...goal of AI is not to replace artists but rather to complement them" by working collaboratively with humans (Whitcroft, 2023). There are also personal benefits to strengthening the virtue of appreciating beauty and excellence, such as "...[identifying] strongly with [my] community…[and] with all humanity…" (Diessner & Steiner, 2017, p. 402). I learned the many ways that AI can be used to heighten human creativity and the ways that people have noted this technology falling short, and it made me feel more connected to other creative people, as well as helping me to better understand my own definition of creativity. Technomoral justice connects to my character strength of fairness, which I strengthened by learning about the ways that AI technology can be used to provide opportunities to people that they may not have otherwise had. Technomoral justice aims to "...seek a fair and equitable distribution of the benefits and risks of emerging technologies…" as well as to have "...concern for how emerging technologies impact the basic rights, dignity, or welfare of individuals and groups" (Vallor, 2016, p. 128). As AI technology has developed, it has become more easily accessible and available to the general public, but there are still obstacles that prevent everyone from having equal access. AI development is an expensive endeavor, and the development we have seen thus far is "mainly driven by capital…to maximize financial returns" (Wu et. al., 2021, p. 185). This means that when AI has the potential to be monetized, it often is. Additionally, people often need a reliable internet connection and a device to access the internet to utilize many AI technologies. Although most people have access to the internet, there are parts of the world where connection is spotty and unreliable, meaning that these technologies are notequally available everywhere. One of the only ways that ordinary people can gain access to newer AI technologies is when companies release an unfinished version to the public so that the flaws can be determined and corrected. These tools that the public gains access to in their testing phases often reflect the bias of their human creators, and can provide answers which are harmful or untrue. Justice and fairness in the digital age still have a long way to go, as we currently cannot ensure that technomoral justice is reached.

A very real fear that many people have when they hear the words artificial intelligence is the idea that human jobs will be replaced with robots. While some jobs are at a very high risk of

being replaced with robotic workers, others are not. Creative professions such as screenwriting and visual art fall somewhere in between. Generative AI technologies such as Chat GPT don't aim "...to replicate, but to aggregate" (Whitcroft, 2023). In other words, the purpose of AI is not to create without humans, but to learn from human creations and to combine its learning into a tangible result. AI technologies by themselves have struggled to fully replicate the complexities of human creative processes, and the results have often fallen flat. There are some jobs, however, that have faced serious threats to their position, such as the screenwriters in the Writers Guild of America (WGA). In May of 2023, writers went on strike to fight for better payment opportunities as well as to ensure that their positions would not be replaced by artificial intelligence-based software such as Chat GPT. The demands that the writers presented were that the studios implement "...guardrails against being replaced by A.I., having their work used to train A.I. or being hired to punch up A.I.-generated scripts at a fraction of their former pay rates" (Poniewozik, 2023). This was the first time that artificial intelligence had become a prominent negotiation point in a public strike, further emphasizing the need for clear guidelines around AI and protections for workers. The strike ended with a negotiation that satisfied writers' concerns around the use of AI, and determined that writers themselves "...may be able to use A.I. tools productively…[as] the WGA is calling for guardrails, not a ban" (Poniewozik, 2023).

When AI technology works to enhance human creativity, and not replace it, it "...makes creativity more accessible and more inclusive than ever" (Wu et al., 2021, p. 172). The character strength of appreciation of beauty and excellence relates well to this idea of co-creating with AI. Creativity as a virtue and as a uniquely human trait "...is often considered as an 'intuition' and can't be easily interpreted in a rational way", which makes it challenging for AI to attempt creative endeavors (Wu et al., 2021, p. 173). There is a debate over if creativity is innate- if people are simply "born creative"- or if anyone can reach the same level of creativity with some amount of practice. This debate extends to AI as well, with people often wondering how something like artificial intelligence could ever create an art piece that is truly original when it has been trained on already existing art and has been programmed to take elements from them to create any "new" work. Many artists and researchers "...still hold different

viewpoints on whether AI has creativity" (Wu et al., 2021, p. 174). Most human artists, like AI algorithms, were trained on the work of others, but humans possess the ability to integrate emotions into their work and develop their own unique art style. By recognizing the ways that human artists differ from AI algorithmic-based art, people can come to appreciate the beauty and creativity in all types of art even more.
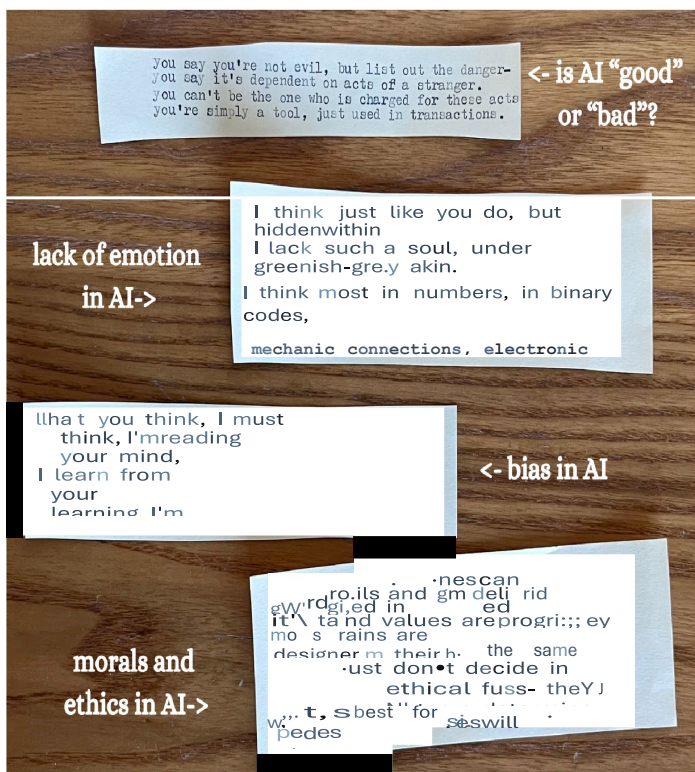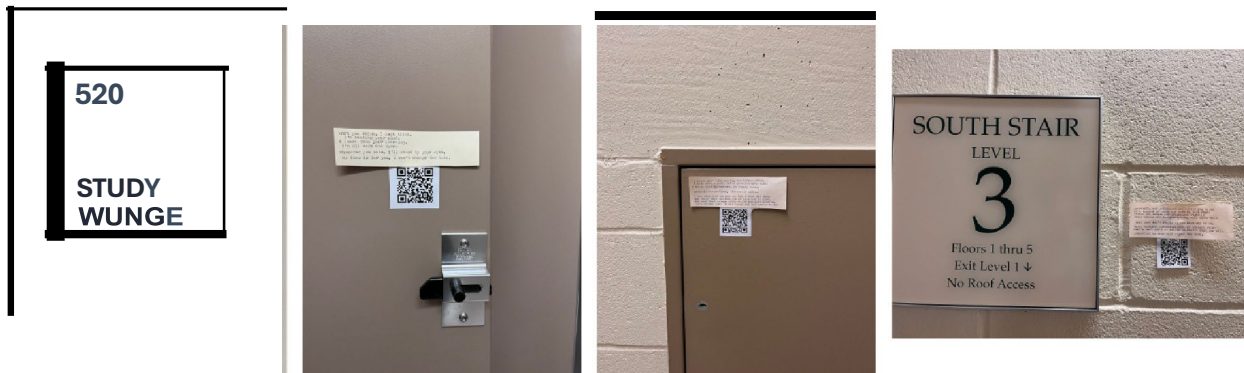
Some artists take this idea of co-creation to the next level, building machines and designing technology themselves to assist them in their creative process. Sougwen Chung has done just this, by scanning her previously created works into a computer system that then learned to draw with her (Chung, 2023). She feels that working collaboratively with AI allows "...more people than ever [to] communicate through a visual medium…", and that AI technologies make creative processes more accessible to a wider range of people (Chung, 2023). Some people see artwork created with AI as not "real art", or believe that the artist didn't work hard enough to create a piece, therefore it cannot be classified as art. Chung's refusal to let people tell her what is and what is not art is an example of artistic integrity, which is "...a matter of refusing the simple choices presented to us" by others (Healey & Woods, 2020, p. 95-96).

I've noticed throughout this project that the first reactions to the topic of artificial intelligence are often fear, intrigue, or both. AI is such a widely defined branch of technology, and many people don't understand that they have likely interacted with it on a daily basis for a long time. The algorithms of social media apps such as Instagram, WhatsApp, Facebook, and TikTok use artificial intelligence, yet many users don't realize this. "Artificial intelligence" sounds like something from a science fiction novel, and it is portrayed as overly complex and difficult to understand by the media. Some of the reasoning behind the use of AI on social media is to make platforms feel more lighthearted and fun again, after "...Facebook, Instagram, and other apps have become more corporate over the years…" (Lu, 2023). Another reason is simply for financial benefit- AI that creates the social media "feed" of a user is designed to present the user with more of the content that they interact with and enjoy. This keeps users on the platform for longer and drives profits. Newer chatbots such as Chat GPT and more advanced generative AI

tools are often what people are unfamiliar with, and therefore are both intrigued by and afraid of. By using AI to engage in creative processes, my hope, and the hope of other artists and creatives, is to show people that AI does not always have to be scary. Artificial intelligence should work for humans and with humans, and it can help create beautiful things as long as there are ways for us to ensure that the technology is guided and limited in some ways.

To strengthen my selected virtues, I asked questions to Open AI's chatbot, Chat GPT, to create a series of phrases that I then incorporated into poems on the subject of artificial intelligence and creativity. I used my typewriter to type the poems that I created and hung them up around my dorm with QR codes that led to a survey for people to fill out. Additionally, I created a collage on the theme of AI and addressed both the benefits and the negatives of the technology. My goals for this creative element of my project were to better understand how artificial intelligence can work together with humans, how to find a balance between AI and human creativity, and to gain hands-on experience in mixing technologies and creative elements. This project strengthened my virtues of creativity, appreciation of beauty and excellence, and curiosity.

Many of the questions that I asked Chat GPT were focused on AI's morals and the benefits and downsides to the technology. Some of the questions I asked included "Does AI have morals?", "What are the downsides of AI?", "Is AI dangerous?", "Is Chat GPT immoral/ evil/ dangerous/ good?", and "Why should I trust you?". I also then asked the chatbot to write poems on the topics of AI vs. human creativity and the ways that artificial intelligence interacts with human intelligence, and I chose the responses that stuck out to me. Once I had these phrases and lines of text assembled, I determined four themes for my poems- AI's morals and ethics, bias in AI, "good" or "bad" and AI, and the lack of emotion in AI-generated creative endeavors.

(I hung up the completed poems and attached Q,R codes in different frequented spaces in my dorm, Haaland Hall)

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The Cause and Effect of Contemporary Science Communication
Dina Rathke

Introduction

The field of science is notoriously cut and dry. There is a rigid scientific method for researching and analyzing information, including concrete steps and parameters for said method. When the time comes to report scientific findings, most scientific journalists choose to abide by simple reporting and restating of their findings. While this method is "tried and true", it leaves much room for improvement. And, in a field where discovery and development are at the forefront of its purpose, it is imperative that all aspects of science evolve over the course of time. The field of science has continued to evolve since its creation, from technological advancements, new medical cures, and proving and/or disproving old scientific theories. Science communication has evolved as well, but in this growth, there has led to problems arising, problems as grand as distrusting the institution of scientific research as a whole.

This essay is intended to analyze the current state of scientific writing, and discuss the utilization of narrative and story to report scientific findings. Additionally, the paper is going to address the supposed problems with scientific writing, as well as address the multiple possible solutions. Limitations surrounding editing the current method of scientific writing will be discussed and through considering possible solutions, this paper will analyze navigating scientific writing in tandem with the understanding of the current science communication landscape to encourage more people to read, comprehend, and most importantly, believe the findings presented to them.

The Current Problems of Science Communication

The push to revise and rethink the way we write about science stems from growing distrust in scientific communication. As modern communication has grown and expanded in the past twenty years, scientific communication has been given these channels to share research, findings, and scientific developments. However, this has led to scientific research becoming commodified, and a way for people to create an industry. Before the growth of science communication and the

introduction of mass media, there was a distinct view of scientists, their role in society, and the information they provided being viewed as a virtuous service "for the greater good".

Peter Weingart and Lars Guenther discuss the evolution of science communication and the effects that it has had on the consumers of science communication in their article, *Science Communication and the Issue of Trust*. They highlight three main proponents of the growing distrust in science communication: the commodification of scientific research, multiple agents taking part in delivering and "verifying" science communication, and the vast media landscape of the 21st century are contributing and working together to accelerate the public's growing distrust in science communication. Weingart and Guenther described science communication as being "democratized": Science findings should be shared, and scientists should be delivering this information, as it is their "duty" to help the people of their society through research and advancement. While in its purest form, the democratization of science could be seen as a good thing, it has led to a different kind of political involvement in science, as well as a greater presence of public relations within the field. In the past, political involvement in scientific pursuits had been used to bring accomplishment and improvement to major world powers (such as the United States government's support for NASA to attempt to beat Russia to the moon), whereas now, the use of science/scientific findings is more centralized to pushing individual candidates agendas (this is not to say that in the past it was not also used for this purpose, but it was not nearly as exploitative and dangerous as it is now).

Additionally, the growth and popularization of public relations in science uses the democratization of science to its advantage. Democratization incites scientists to constantly communicate with the public and share, and public relations capitalizes on this need for information as a way to constantly produce content to push to the masses. This can lead to corruption and discrepancies as Weingart and Guenther state, "This demand has attained tremendous popularity, because it appeals to the advocates of 'democratization', and, at the same time, it is in synchrony with both political legitimation strategies (strive for voter majorities) and institutional PR [public relations] (reach as many people as possible)" (Weingart et al., 2016).

These motivations cause a fundamental clash in the role of science in our modern society, and damages our society's view of the institution of a whole, since it is "tainted by interests, conflated with persuasive communication, and raises constant suspicion of bias" (Weingart et al., 2016). The introduction of public relations and politics also damages science communication because it "conflates information about science with institutional propaganda, since it is primarily motivated to achieve image building, branding, and marketing" (Weingart et al., 2016). This creates a problem for scientific journalists (which Weingart and Guenther state are the most trusted authorities on science by the current public) working with PR departments since they are under pressure to constantly report and share, which can lead to "blurred demarcation lines between different sources of information. [This] leads to phenomena such as 'churnalism' (uncritical use of PR material)" (Weingart et al., 2016). Furthermore, this leads to PR departments utilizing 'news values' to generate attention, which can include sensationalization, emotion, and personalization. All of which have little to no role in documenting scientific research.

Beyond politics and public relations, there are other agents that take part in science communication such as bloggers, science organizations, science journalists and universities. All of these agents are competing to have authority on science communication, and this is leading to more speculation about which sources are honest, and are motivated by generating clicks, revenue, or political support. To summarize, "it may be assumed that science communication originating from governments, PR offices of universities and science organizations, as well as other interested actors is and will be perceived as less credible than science communication originating from academic scientists in universities and science journalists" (Weingart et al., 2016).

The final factor that leads to this issue is our current media landscape, with an emphasis on the growth of social media. Social media websites have posed a new problem for science communication, particularly through the unregulated nature of the platforms, as well as advertisement fees driving the revenue each site generates. Additionally, these sites contain users

that are not human, that can generate attention and promotion to unreliable material. While advertising has always been connected to news outlets and mass media, the advertisements were among the information, not "personalized" advertisements through the use of algorithms to cater to each individual viewer. Weingart and Guenther summarize the detriment this causes for science communication by stating, "The almost unlimited access to the medium and the hitherto complete lack of a quality control raise the question of trust in the medium/channel, apart from the issue of trust in the source" (Weingart et al., 2016). These three components of social media, democratization, and oversaturation of communicators has led to the "convergence of genres of information, particularly the blending of advertising and informational content" (Weingart et al., 2016). This leads to a lack of trust in the channels in which we receive information, and a lack of trust in those delivering the information to us. The trust in science communication is intrinsically tied to the trust of science as a whole, and currently, the trust is declining.

Improving Science Communication

While science communication seems to be an industry that is growing and expanding, there is much room for improvement within the field. As stated previously, the trust in science and scientific research are dependent on the trust of science communication. To bridge this gap, it is suggested that we change the way that we present scientific information and research. One of the biggest criticisms of contemporary science communication is that sensationalist and exaggerated papers are getting published, while honest and seemingly "mundane" stories are left with the authors, and are not published. But what is the difference between the sensationalist false stories, and the mundane true stories? The difference is that the sensationalist stories contain narrative. Narrative, is what Randy Olsen believes to be the key to solving the problems that lie in science communication. In his novel, *Houston, We Have a Narrative*, Olsen offers advice to scientists about how they can engage their audience and expand it, by weaving narrative into the writing of their scientific articles/papers/etc. Olsen suggests that scientists look to those in Hollywood to inspire them to create better writing. He offers that "Hollywood is the place that has figured out how narrative works in the real world. Lots of humanities scholars can babble on endlessly about their theories of narrative, but most couldn't spot the basic principles at work in our lives"

(Olsen, 2015). While he does not call on scientists to borrow from fiction, he calls on them to borrow a "narrative sense", and implement tools such as "and, but, therefore", which is a tool to help add story to a piece of writing. Such as a scenario occurs, and another scenario occurs, but something else happened, therefore the result was this. He also encourages scientists to utilize simple storytelling methods to deliver a complex message.

Additionally, he argues utilizing narrative will encourage more people to engage with the material, as well as draw in new readers and audiences through this. By human nature, our brains are more engaged and activated when we are processing information with a narrative. He supports this through sharing a study conducted by a colleague, which used functional magnetic resonance imaging to measure the brain activity of subjects watching clips that featured narrative (a film), and clips that showed no narrative (a video of a park). The results show, "Their index of similarity in brain activity across viewers shows that strong narrative content results in much greater similarity in brain activity across individuals" (Olsen, 2015). The two major conclusions Olsen draws from this are that "narrative activates the brain" and "narrative unifies the thinking of a group". He stresses the importance of using narrative to engage an audience by sharing, "For effective communication, what you want is focus-everyone thinking the same thoughts and presumably using large amounts of their brains. Such is the power of narrative: it enables you to pull everyone together. And that, of course, is what clear and obvious problems do-they unify people in their thinking" (Olsen, 2015).

The use of narrative as a medium to unify people's thoughts about science can also be helpful in combating the issues of distrust in science, as more people are collectively agreeing the information is accurate. Which, also, could spread this information to more people. Olsen highlights the disconnect people feel with scientific material, and he suggests narrative as a way to engage audiences and unify them as well. The problem with science communication is two-fold: He addresses how to combat the problems with science communication, but there is still improvement needed for the channels in which science communication is funneled through.

Improving the Landscape of Science Communication

Since the field of science communication has vastly expanded, it is still being researched and studied by scientists. In a research agenda published by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, they draw upon previous research and propose new methods to study and improve the current field of science communication. The research agenda offers some suggestions on how we can systematically solve some of the issues within science communication. NASEM suggests adopting a system approach when both studying science communication to offer potential solutions, and participating in science communication. They define a system approach as an "iterative learning process in which one takes a broad, holistic, long-term, perspective of the world and examines the linkages and interactions among its elements" (National Academies of Sciences, 2017). They believe that a systems approach will help researchers and communicators in science communication "guide communication efforts that would take the complexity of the system into account (i.e., the level at which the communication should be targeted, who should be involved in the communication, what types of content need to be communicated and how, and even whether there should be any communication at all)" (National Academies of Sciences, 2017). Implementing a system approach would require researchers to, "understand empirically the interactions among different elements of the system over time and across and within levels of analysis-individual, group, community, and societal" (National Academies of Sciences, 2017). A system approach would prove effective for science communication both in researching science communication and participating in it. In the aspect of research, it would allow researchers to evaluate trends in the reception of science communication as well as address which groups of people are more prone to believing misinformation or evaluate the most common channels in which people receive science communication.

They additionally suggest adopting registries of scientific research, using registries that exist in health sciences as an example. They argue their suggestion by stating, "Developing such tools would enable building an evidence base that would identify key factors that affect science communication and the elements of various approaches to communicating" (National Academies

of Sciences, 2017). Through centralizing relevant and accurate information, researchers could dive deeper into the study of science communication and its effectiveness, as well as centralize that reliable information, helping combat the issues of distrust.

Furthermore, others have encouraged the solutions of NASEM and elaborated on them, such as Baruch Fischhoff in his article *Evaluating Science Communication*. In his article, he suggests more collaboration from those in the science field, and adopting science-like methods for both those studying science communication and publishing it. Fischhoff elaborates on this method by stating, "It entails staffing with the right people, internal consultation among them, and external consultation with those whom they seek to serve. It embraces both the bounded rationality of disciplinary scientists and the satisficing of practitioners" (Fischhoff, 2019). Fischhoff believes the current landscape of science communication is in crisis, so much so that it should facilitate partnerships with multiple scientific fields and areas of research. On a systematic level of addressing science communication, collaboration, holistic understanding, and centralization are proposed as the solutions for improving the media landscape that science communication currently resides in.

Limitations

While the solutions presented offer solutions to the current problems with science communication, there are still problems that do not have solutions offered for them. As stated in the introduction, science has become increasingly politicized as time has progressed. As science continues to be weaponized by politicians, it is unsure if this will subside overtime, or continue and grow as a tool used by politicians. Until there is an understanding from the public that science can be used as a political tool, and more often than not is, it is reasonable to assume this political strategy will continue, if not worsen, over time. As our society grows more polarized through politics, science communicators have found themselves in a deadlock with certain audiences. As science becomes more intertwined with politics, people will write off science if it does not agree with their political beliefs. Shanto Iyengar and Douglas Massey describe this occurrence in their article *Science Communication in a Post-Truth Society* by stating, "Whenever

scientific findings clash with a person or group's political agenda…scientists can expect to encounter a targeted campaign of fake news, misinformation, and disinformation in response, no matter how clearly the information is presented or how carefully and convincingly it is framed…the information is unlikely to penetrate the cognitive structures of those it threatens and therefore is likely to be either rejected or ignored" (Iyengar et al., 2019). Iyengar and Massey attribute this to the changes in our media environment, a greater political polarization, partisan animosity, and "motivated partisan reasoning in the psychological realm" (Iyengar et al., 2019).

Additionally, while Olsen suggests scientists change their methods of presenting scientific information, there are also limitations to this as well. The most obvious limitation is that it is not guaranteed every scientist will read his novel, or put his suggestions into practice. Moreover, Matthew Nisbet addresses another limitation in science communication that is the fault of the scientists in his article, *What's Next for Science Communication? Promising Directions and Lingering Distractions*. Nisbet describes a deficit model that communication and science communication have been operating under. A deficit model, when used in communication, is defined as "a process of transmission, the facts are assumed to speak for themselves and to be interpreted by all citizens in similar ways. If the public does not accept or recognize these facts, then the failure in transmission is blamed on journalists, "irrational" public beliefs, or both" (Nisbet et al., 2009). Operating under this model raises concerns for those trying to improve science communication, and allows scientists to pass blame on the public for their misunderstanding. Through operating under this model as well, "many scientists ignore the possibility that their communication efforts might be part of the problem" (Nisbet et al., 2009). While those are limitations that can be put on the messenger, there are also limitations that are put on audiences as well, as stated previously.

As for the suggestions made by the NASEM and Fischhoff, there are limitations in creating a registry, in terms of standardizing it and curating it. Additionally, collaboration is encouraged, but not guaranteed, and until there is a dire need for science communication to be saved, the

landscape will remain the same. While there are limitations facing proposed improvements to science communication, most of these suggestions are within the realm of possibility.

Analysis

Through researching the current state of science communication, it is evident that multiple factors contribute to the struggles of communicating science. Initially, the problems appeared to be surface-level, something as simple as scientists changing their style of writing and breaking free from the seemingly "rigid" rules of science. Upon research, however, the problems that plague science communication are rooted much deeper in our society than meets the eye. The politicization of science has caused the biggest detriment in science communication, as well as the introduction of social media, and the business models that social media sites operate under. These factors create a domino effect that explains perfectly why there is so much distrust of science in our contemporary society. As science becomes weaponized and politicized, it becomes sensational and emotional by nature. This then pairs with social media, as a way to communicate information, or misinformation and disinformation. The internet is also largely unregulated, and with the use of algorithms, can cause misinformation and disinformation to be spread even further, and causes users to go further down "the rabbit hole". Then, when you account for the business aspect of science, politics, and social media, they work together to create an environment that lacks integrity, thrives on sensationalism, and allows science to be a commodity. To summarize this connection, Brauch Fischhoff and Dietram Scheufele in their article *The Science of Science Communication* state, "Effective science-public communication depends, in part, on foundations laid years earlier. The more laypeople have absorbed in science classes and informal science education, the better chance they have of grasping the science relevant to the decisions that they face" (Fischhoff et al., 2013). It is important to emphasize, as well, that the "foundation" in question takes on a new meaning in the twenty-first century, and that foundation is the use of science by those in authoritative powers before us.

Conclusion

Science communication is facing challenges both internal to its discipline and externally to its discipline. Despite the limitations that are presented currently, it is hopeful that they can be overcome and corrected. Politics and education play a major role in combating these issues, as the use of science for political gain has caused major setbacks in addressing real scientific issues. Additionally, the lack of both media literacy and scientific literacy beyond the basic principles of science are desperately needed to fix succumbing to misinformation, disinformation, and ignorance. While there are institutional issues at hand, communication and the attitudes surrounding styles of communication also are a factor in advancing science communication. Through the use of narrative and holistic research, scientists can reclaim their voice and authority and activate the public's interest and belief in their pursuits. The transformation of our current media landscape has directly contributed to the distrust in science, as well as the proliferation of "churnalism" in the field of science. When given vast platforms and channels for communication, there will be changes in the way people process and disseminate information. At its core, the problems plaguing science communication are propelled by our current media landscape, and capitalized on by those looking to gain revenue or political power. Without media literacy or science communication literacy, the belief in science could continue to devolve and worsen. Despite that, the solutions presented are within the realm of possibility and could work together to dismantle society's current distrust and disengagement with science.

Works Citied

Fischhoff, B. (2019). Evaluating science communication. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *116*(16), 7670-7675.

 Describes various approaches to improve science communication. Elaborates on the systemsapproach and also discusses collaboration between those as a field as an improvement to science communication.

Fischhoff, B., & Scheufele, D. A. (2013). The science of science communication. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *110*(supplement_3), 14031-14032.

 Provides an overview of science communication and the importance of recognizing communication sciences to use when reporting scientific findings. Emphasizes the causes and effects of ineffective and effective communication.

Iyengar, S., & Massey, D. S. (2019). Scientific communication in a post-truth society. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *116*(16), 7656-7661.

 The article addresses the evolution of distrust in science research as well as the political factors that factor into that. It describes our current media landscape and how that collaborated with the politicization of science.

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2017). Communicating science effectively: A research agenda.

 Includes the complexities and limitations of communicating science, as well as addresses multiple solutions to fix it. Specifically focuses on how to communicate science in our current, vast communication landscape.

Nisbet, M. C., & Scheufele, D. A. (2009). What's next for science communication? Promising directions and lingering distractions. *American journal of botany*, *96*(10), 1767-1778.

 Analyzes how the public views and interacts with science and technology, utilizing social sciences. Elaborates on the deadlock scientists and laypeople encounter when addressing scientific findings that conflict with their political beliefs.

Olson, R. (2015). *Houston, we have a narrative: Why science needs story*. University of Chicago Press.

Addresses a solution to the problem of ineffective scientific communication. Suggests weaving in a narrative to scientific writing, as well as gives examples on how it can be implemented currently.

Weingart, P., & Guenther, L. (2016). Science communication and the issue of trust. *Journal of Science communication*, *15*(05), C01.

The article gives context to how there began to be a distrust in scientific communication. It describes the reasons why people do not trust scientific communication, the actors in scientific communication, and offers some solutions on how to combat the distrust.

The Countess of Chester Hospital Whistle-blower Case Study
Kaylie Efstratiou

I.   Case Objective & Overview

The following case examines whistle-blowing in the workplace and how it is treated in organizational culture, dealing with the varying ethical perspectives displayed when managerial staff are faced with a whistle-blower. In 2015, an alarming number of infants began to mysteriously pass away in the neonatal ward at the Countess of Chester Hospital. After a few staff members began to realize that one nurse, Lucy Letby, may have been a common denominator in the deaths, a report was made and brought to the attention of the unit manager. When nothing was done after several meetings, some of the staff took their concerns to higher managers. However, the higher-ups remained unphased and complacent. During this time, babies with seemingly good prognoses continued to pass away. It would take more than a year after the initial incidents occurred for Letby to be removed from the neonatal unit - and months after that for hospital executives to contact the police. After her departure, the mysterious deaths ceased.

II.   Case Narrative

Adapted from: Judith Moritz, J. C. & M. B. (2023, August 18). *Hospital bosses ignored months of doctors' warnings about Lucy Letby*. BBC News. https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-66120934

The conversation below is between whistle-blower Dr. Breary and an investigative reporter. The two are discussing the unforeseen events that followed Breary's initial report of misconduct in the neonatal unit.

REPORTER: So, you're telling me that - they didn't do anything?

BREARY: I wish that I could say otherwise. I truly thought that with the gravity of the situation, something, anything would be done. But all the executives could think about was the damage a

story like this would do to their reputations, as well as the hospital's. And babies continued to die.

REPORTER: It's just so wrong. What exactly did they say when you brought up these concerns? I can't imagine how they were able to completely skirt addressing this.

BREARY: In their eyes, the end justifies the means. When I initially brought my concerns to my direct unit manager, Ms. Powell, she said that it was unfortunate to have such high rates of death, but any linkage to Lucy was purely coincidental.

REPORTER: That's quite the assumption to make. What did you do after that?

BREARY: I contacted the Director of Nursing and heard nothing back. Then, I requested an urgent meeting with the Medical Director. Three months passed before I heard anything back, and two more babies almost died during that time frame.

REPORTER: And what was that meeting like, when it finally happened?

BREARY: I made myself very clear. Both the nursing and medical directors listened to me passively, and Lucy was allowed to continue working. Months went by, more babies died. I called a hospital executive and demanded Lucy be removed from the unit. She refused, and I asked her point blank if she was taking responsibility for any subsequent deaths. I mean, she was going against the wishes of seven registered pediatricians. She said yes.

REPORTER: And when Ms. Letby was finally removed, was that when the police got involved?

BREARY: No. My colleagues and I were vocal about the need for a third party investigation, but the medical director told us to stop talking about it. He said that "action was being taken". One of the consultants said that in an executive meeting, the head of corporate affairs and legal

services warned police involvement would be a catastrophe for the hospital, that it would turn the neonatal unit into a crime scene.

REPORTER: My god. I've also heard that yourself and some other doctors were made to apologize to Letby?

BREARY: That's right. The CEO told Lucy and her father that she had done nothing wrong. My colleagues and I were told that if we did not apologize to Lucy, there would be consequences. He said we had "crossed a line".

REPORTER: It's horrible to hear that your grave concerns were framed so negatively, and quite frankly astonishing that the executives placed seemingly no value in the opinions of their own physicians.

BREARY: "There was no credibility given to our opinions. And from January 2017, it was intimidating, and bullying to a certain extent. It just all struck me as the opposite of a hospital you'd expect to be working in, where there's a safe culture and people feel confident in speaking out" (Moritz, 2023).

III.   Key Concepts

Whistle-Blowing: when a member of an organization reports a perceived ethical wrongdoing to their superior.

Organizational Culture: artifacts, values, and assumptions derived from interactions between members of an organization.

Ethics: the study of 'right conduct'.

Deontological Perspective of Ethics: the ethicality of actions is determined by their adherence to predetermined norms, as opposed to the subsequent consequences.

Teleological Perspective of Ethics: the ethicality of actions is determined based on their consequences.

IV.   Theoretical Briefing

Whistle-Blowing occurs when an organizational member suspects or has evidence of unethical, illicit, or illegal behavior being displayed by another organizational member, and reports it to their superior (Richardson 2017). Whistle-blowers most often report major acts of wrongdoing, rather than trivial missteps. These major acts consist primarily of those that could physically or financially harm employees or consumers, breach trust between the company and the public, directly violate the law, or that are carried out by high-ranking organizational members (Richardson 2017). Note that whistle-blowing should be considered a process, rather than an event, as it occurs in stages. The process typically has five stages and involving three distinct actors: the whistle-blower, the wrongdoer, and the target to which the complaint is brought (Near et al. 2008).

The first stage to includes the "triggering event" that sets the rest of the process into motion. Here, the whistle-blower bears witness to the perceived wrongdoing. In the second stage, the whistle-blower is thrust into the decision-making process. They may ask for the advice of their coworkers and engage in a cost-benefit analysis process where they weigh the benefits and drawbacks of sounding the alarm. In the third phase, the individual makes the decision whether or not to blow the whistle. The fourth stage regards the organization's reaction to the whistle being blown, which can include retaliation or a thorough listening and investigative process. In the fifth stage, the whistle-blower reflects on the action that has or has not been taken by the target (Near et al. 2008).

Retaliation is usually the main deterrence for those who choose not to blow the whistle, as the undesirable actions taken by the target in direct response to the whistle-blowing and can include job termination, threats, ostracism, etc. (Near et al. 2008). For those who do move forward, they must decide which type of channel they would like to report the incident through, either anonymously or publicly. Those who choose to remain anonymous are often worried about the possibility of retaliation, however, including a name often provides the complaint with more

credibility (Near et al. 2008). Most whistle-blowers' reports are internal, but external reports are often made if the complaint is not handled to the individual's satisfaction (Richardson & McGlynn 2011).

Organizational culture refers to the set of artifacts, values, and assumptions that are derived from interactions between members of the organization (Keyton 2011). This is why often organizational communication scholars often note that organizations do not HAVE culture, but rather ARE culture (Smirchich, 1983). Artifacts found in organizations include customs, mission statements, and logos (Schein 1992). They are visible in the everyday organizational setting, though their meaning can require some deciphering. Values constitute organizational ideals regarding what exactly the institution should seek, as well as how its members should behave. They are manifested through the behavior of organizational members through the key characteristics of workplace practices, rituals, and vocabulary. For example, if a manager tells employees that in order to increase sales, there must also be an increase in advertising. The employees might consider this a declaration of their manager's values, and oftentimes may be inclined to take on these values themselves, especially if they are proven to bring success to the originator. This can (but does not always) lead to organizational members developing shared beliefs and values that are often so ingrained and natural to organizational members that they do not discuss it anymore and remain a tacit presence. For example, basic assumptions in a culture can often run so deep that one who does not share these beliefs could be deemed "foreign" or "crazy" (Schein 1992).

Keyton (2011) determined five characteristics of organizational culture: the link to organizational members, as they aid in creating, participating in, and sustaining culture; the dynamic-not-static nature; competing assumptions and values that bring with them subcultures; inevitable emotionality due to the connection between meaning and emotion when discussing artifacts, values, and assumptions; and as operating in the present based on what the culture created in the past has been like. A consensual view of organizational culture is usually achieved when most organizational members have aligned sets of artifacts, beliefs, and

assumptions (Keyton 2017). Keyton also describes how a strong leader can work to further develop this integration through the cycle of generation and propagation that continuously determines artifacts, values, and assumptions. Subcultures are developed when the individual core values of employees differentiate from the status quo, and they begin to propagate their own artifacts, values, and assumptions (Keyton 2017). Poor workplace cultures can arise when company values do not seem to align with their behaviors (May 2012). In an example from the notorious ethical failure of Enron in 2001, Steve May describes how the organizational value of "communication" began to be interpreted negatively, as co-workers were made to evaluate each other, which quickly created an atmosphere of paranoia (2012).

Ethics can be broadly defined as the study of "right conduct" (Lair 2017). Living by an ethical system provides the individual with the direction to live a good life (Cheney 2010). There are two distinct approaches to ethics and its intersection with organizational communication: *descriptive* and *normative* (Lair 2017). The descriptive approach examines the relationship between communicative behaviors and their effects on ethical decision-making. This can be done either by examining the way in which organizational members communicate in order to determine what is or is not ethical, or by entering the situation assuming unethical outcomes, and focusing on the communicative behaviors that produce or justify them. There is an important distinction between the descriptive and normative approach: the former seeks solely to focus on ethical communication in organizations as they are, rather than how they could be, whereas the normative approach, however, seeks to provide judgements on what is deemed ethical or unethical communicative behavior. This can be done in two ways, one of which consists of examining existing cases or types of behavior and applying predetermined ethical standards to them. The second way is done by developing new ethical organizational communication principles or by researching how existing ethical theories impact organizational communication (Lair 2017).

The contest of meanings for the term and the lack of scholarly organizational communication work on the subject leaves *ethics* with a broad definition (Lair 2017). Communication scholars

have noted that we seem to collectively favor speaking in terms of "morality", rather than "ethics", due to the compassionate nature of the former and the regulatory connotation of the latter (Cheney 2008). Cheney, for example, emphasizes the importance of studying ethics in his reference to the life of J. Robert Oppenheimer, who became lost after he realized the truly devastating impact his creation of the nuclear bomb would have on the world. He was both unable to join peace movements and to continue working in the scientific community. This grave example offers lessons for how deeply ethics is entangled with our social identities (Cheney 2008).

The **deontological perspective of ethics** determines the ethicality of situations based upon their congruence to predetermined norms rather than consequences (Lair 2017). This perspective can be best summarized in the sentiment which states that "the ends do not justify the means" (Lair 2017). The moral beliefs of Enlightenment thinker Immanuel Kant best exemplify deontological ethics. Kant's *categorical imperative* states to "Act only according to that maxim whereby you can, at the same time, will that it should become a universal law" (Kant). This means that a person should act in such a fashion that would still afford them satisfaction in a hypothetical world, where these actions were to become universal laws (Lair 2017).

The deontological perspective of ethics can be further exemplified through the examination of codes of ethics and specific duties expected of organizational members (Lair 2017). For example, Lair provides the case in which they are bound to their given duties of protecting patient privacy unless the patient is a threat to themselves or others. This case illustrates that although the deontological approach to ethics seems straightforward in its rules-based ethicality, it does not make ethical decision-making easier. There are many times when ethical duties conflict with themselves, and an organizational member must decipher which choice to make themselves (Lair 2017).

The **teleological perspective of ethics**, on the other hand, is concerned with the consequences of actions (Lair 2017). In this perspective, the outcome of a situation is the

determinant of its ethicality, and that this perspective has long been equated with the notion of achieving the "greatest good" for all. Utilitarian thinkers Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill espoused the values of the teleological perspectives well, offering that "actions are ethical to the degree that they maximize happiness (and minimize unhappiness) for the greatest number of people" (Lair 2017).

As to how the teleological perspective functions in an organizational setting, Lair (2017) provides an example concerning corporate social responsibility. In 2015, Wal-Mart and other stores stopped carrying Confederate flags in response to the public outcry of one being raised during the wake of a mass murder at a black church in South Carolina. He reasons that Wal-Mart did not cease the sale of the flags due to their dedicated opposition to the flag on principle, but instead due to the fear of negative public consequences they might have suffered had they not. In doing so, Wal-Mart was effectively trying to appease the greatest amount of people while displeasing the least, perfectly encapsulating the teleological perspective of ethics (Lair 2017).

V.   Questions for Discussion

1. Based on the discussion between Dr. Breary and the reporter about the initial handling of the case of nurse Lucy Letby, where do you see examples of the different ethical perspectives at play?

2. What can you infer about the reasoning behind each of these specific ethical perspectives?

3. What were some of the cultural artifacts, values, or assumptions that could have existed for different actors involved with the situation at Countess of Chester Hospital during this time?

4. Describe the organizational culture at Countess of Chester Hospital during this time.

5. At what points during his retelling of the scandal is Dr. Breary moving through the different steps involved in the whistle-blowing process? Which steps were they?

6. Who were the three actors involved in the whistle-blowing process? What were each of their roles?

7. What could be some of the possible reasons had Dr. Breary ultimately decided not to blow the whistle?

8. Where can you see an example of retaliation taking place in the conversation between Dr. Breary and the reporter

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Epiphany after the Flood
Fiona Flaherty

It's 9 in the morning. I see thousands of bees whoosh by my head, I can barely open my eyes. They are so loud it's almost making my head vibrate. I am so confused by this insect infestation that I open my eyes. I see that the vibrating in my head was caused by the iPhone alarm under my pillow. My roommate Clara is already out of bed and back from her first class, "God I wish that could be me" I think to myself, I think this to myself every time I see her relaxing while I'm scraping myself together for the day. It's time to start another day isn't it, the butterflies fill my stomach as I think about my classes and picking out my outfits.

Today is a gray and brown November day. It's that time of year where us New Englanders get our first taste of Seasonal Depression. Or as our therapists call it, "Seasonal Affective Disorder." SAD for short, a very fitting name. Now, as a sufferer of SAD (or maybe just a regular granite stater), I am given some special privileges to combat this mental illness. One of which is my lovely little Emotional Support Cat, Bowser. Today he greets me by jumping on my legs right before I need to get out of bed. "Dear so and so, I have to miss class today because my cat will not allow me to leave bed," I think to myself. If only Dr. so and so could understand the plight of having a cat sit on top of you. Bowser is walking along my bed, I rub my eyes, he moves closer and I realize he's leaving damp paw prints on my white blanket.

"Oh god, please don't be pee, please don't be pee," I beg to whichever higher power cats believe in. To my luck, it was not feline excrement. I decided to figure this out through a high risk method, smelling the paws. I look over to see the mysterious puddle casting a shadow on my gray rug, with my fridge being the focal point of this flood. This is just what I needed today! Clara has exited the room en route to the dining hall, thankfully she won't have to see my mess.

I get out of bed, carefully walking along the outside of the soaked carpet, and yank open my fridge door.This was my first mistake, as the fridge door had been operating as a sort of, three foot dam. I knocked this mini dam down and flooded the village of dust mites on the floor. This

flood was likely recorded in the dust mite Bible, as no insect has seen this Godly force of ice cream, water, and almond milk decimate their civilization so swiftly. Now I am covered in the inside of my fridge, I curse to humankind's higher power for being given this disgusting task.

I see the light is off even though it's plugged in, the fridge had broken who knows how many hours ago, but it was enough to completely melt everything in the freezer, and some more. I grab all of the towels I can find, one bath towel and two face cloths, they soaked up a sufficient amount of liquid. An even higher amount after I walked across the towels to give some more pressure. Now I have to waste money on laundry to wash these towels, and roll up this bashful rug. I soak up all of the liquid, roll up the rug like a croissant, and refreshen the odor with that cold autumn air from my window.

There is no saving this rug. It's soaked with a liquid only found at the bottom of dumpsters and the floors of movie theaters. With my giant fluffy croissant under my arm, I head out the door for my dorm's dumpsters. This thing cant fit in the elevator, so throwing it down the stairs followed by a raspy "look out down there!" will have to do. I make it down 4 stories, drag this 10 foot long, most crunchy fruit roll up in the world to my dumpsters. Since they are still overflowing with the weekend's disposables, I set it down next to the giant metal container, and make it someone else's problem. This will be followed by almost all of the items in the fridge, which would suite a racoon's stomach better than mine, I make sure to double bag this sack of sin. Finally, it's time to smack that fridge on the side of it's head and make it rocks. If only material things could have emotions, I would make this fridge run home crying after it's berating. With my flawless heavy lifting techniques, which once helped me unload crates from the back of trucks, I hoist that black metal box out of my room and into it's final resting place. I make sure to not look back, and not ever buy cheap fridges again.

Evaluating "Professionalism" in Modern Organizations
Ava Montalbano

I.   Case Overview:

This case discusses organizational communication theories, such as professionalism, hegemony, disciplinary Power, and antiracism, and how they impact organizations and their members. Nadia Hernadez is a Mexican-American immigrant who experienced discrimination under the disguise of professionalism during her time working in various organizations. On multiple occasions, Hernandez was criticized and othered for her cultural practices and norms that did not coincide with white professionalism. After bringing these concerns up with her superiors and not being heard, Hernandez decided to quit her job. While companies insist these standards are without racial bias, workers of color feel like these standards of professionalism strip them of their cultural and personal identity as these aspects of themselves are now seen as improper.

II.   Learning Objective

This case study examines how professionalism harms workers of color.

III.   Case Narrative:

Adapted from: Hernandez, N. (n.d.-b). *Grads of Life BrandVoice: White "Professionalism" Limits Diverse Employees' Belonging*. Forbes.

The following narrative occurs in the office setting between author Nadia Hernandez, her coworker Ben, and their Boss, Mary.

BEN: Hey Nadia, could I speak to you before the meeting?
HERNANDEZ: Hey, Ben. Yes, of course, we can talk.
BEN: Well, this meeting is a big deal, and it's essential to be as businesslike as possible.
HERNANDEZ: Yes, Ben, I agree. I'm not sure why you're bringing this up.

BEN: Sometimes, you can be a bit loud and overexcited, which is not how we do things here.

HERNANDEZ: My enthusiasm is just a part of who I am; in my culture, it's normal.

BEN: Yes, well, it's not a part of this culture, and the guys in this meeting want everyone to take this material seriously.

HERNANDEZ: Hmmmm, I see.

BEN: I'm so glad you understand; maybe just sit back in the meeting.

HERNANDEZ: I will try my best to keep my enthusiasm under wraps.

Part Two:

HERNANDEZ: Excuse me, Mary, could I speak to you about something that made me uncomfortable?

MARY: Of course, Nadia, go ahead.

HERNANDEZ: Earlier today, before the big meeting, Ben pulled me aside and said I should keep my head down in the meeting because I often get over-excited during meetings, and it can be off-putting. Being loud and expressive is common in my culture, reflecting engagement, not immaturity. I wondered if we could discuss ways to make the workplace more inclusive to workers of color.

MARY: Let's not get ahead of ourselves, Nadia. The company loves and values the diversity our employees bring to the table, but there are ways things are done in the corporate world, and that's the way it's always been. I'm sure Ben had the best intentions, and it bothers me that you would accuse him of being discriminatory. Does what I'm saying make sense?

HERNANDEZ: Yes, I understand entirely.

IV.   Key Concepts:

Professionalism: A set of standards used to shape and legitimize behaviors in the workplace.

Hegemony: Leadership or dominance based on the exception of power structures by the subordinate.

Disciplinary Power: Internalized Power occurs when individuals discipline their behavior to fit the norm of their environment.

Anti-Racism: A sociological theory that attempts to dismantle racism through education and active participation against racist practices.

V.   Theoretical Briefing:

Professionalism historically is described as a means to support the individual and the stability of society without the influence of governmental bureaucracies (Carr-Saunders & Wilson, 1933; Marshall, 1950; Tawney, 1921). Professionalism was created as a set of standards and works to shape and legitimize appearance, behavior, and decorum during everyday activities within the workplace (Cheeny & Lee Ashcraft, 2007). Professionalism is a form of individualized internal self-regulation that creates and maintains a set of codes and ethics that encourage cooperation instead of competition (Dingwall, 2008; Freidson, 2001). Fournier describes professionalism as instilling "appropriate" work identities and practices. Fournier believes this is done not through direct control but through a network of accountability that encourages these practices (Fournier, 1999).

Professionalism in everyday language is treated as an unbiased or neutral term, but it calls upon undisclosed cultural assumptions that, while they are not universal, are treated as such (Cheney & Lee Ashcraft, 2007). According to Cheney and Ashcraft, professionalism in popular culture is multi-dimensional and not universal amongst all cultures and identities. While there are understood aspects of professionalism, they are not universally the same, which can cause discourse between the individual and the symbolic term (Cheney & Lee Ashcraft, 2007). This standard of practice can also induce a greater sense of emotional labor while within the workplace. Because professionalism comes with the assumption that individuals will work with a "rational" performance and minimal expression, employees take on a more significant load of emotional labor (Hochschild, 1983).

Hegemony is based on the idea that individuals are ruled by ideas, not force (Turin, 1966). Hegemony is defined as leadership based on the consent of the subordinate or the ruled class through popularizing a particular worldview (Bates, 1975). Murphy offers the perspective that

hegemony is a process where the dominant group convinces another group to accept subordination as usual (Murphy, 2017). Stuart Hall believes hegemony is not about domination but how ideas are circulated as common sense. Hall's definition of hegemony focuses not on how the dominant group gains control over the subordinate but on how each group participates in the dominant idea or worldview (Hall, 1980, as cited in Wood, 1998).

Hegemony in the cultural sense is when historically consent has been given by the subordinate, making the dominant group or idea appear logical or like common sense (Bates, 1975). Deetz and Mumby also believe that hegemony is not achieved through coercion or control but through the subordinate giving consent to the dominant idea in everyday practices, even if it does not serve or harm them (Deetz & Mumby, 1985). Within the historical and cultural context of hegemony, Gramsci believed that the subordinates must be actively committed to legitimizing the dominant group or ideologies' power. According to Gramsci, being actively committed does not always mean being conscious of one's actions but acting within the implicit values forged by society (Gramsci, 1929-1935, as cited in Mumby 1997).

Disciplinary Power is a power term used to describe constant and internalized Power that happens when individuals willingly discipline their ideas and actions to fit the norm of the organization they are a part of (Foucault, 1969 as cited in Lilja & Vinthagen 1996). In organizational communication, the primary tools used to exert Power over someone are language and other forms of communication (Murphy, 2017). Murphy offers the perspective of the overarching power theory to understand disciplinary Power better. Power is symbolic and can be leveraged through spoken and unspoken language, meaning that the everyday language used within an organization contributes to creating and maintaining its power structure, even if it is not explicit (Murphy, 2017). Power is also interwoven through an organization's structure (Mumby, 1988).

Disciplinary Power behaves within an organization through discursive forms of communication where the subordinate accepts the dominant group's Power and actively participates in it (Foucault, 1969, 1976, 1980, as cited in Schenk). Deetz and Foucault agree that people are not

vehicles of Power but contribute to power structures by how they are affected by it and how that affects others (Deetz, 1992). This idea bleeds into how disciplinary Power works within an organization and how it contributes to pre-existing power structures. Disciplinary Power normalizes behavior within individuals until the whole begins to behave in the same way (Foucault, 1991, as cited in Lilja & Vinthagen, 2014).

Antiracism is a term used to describe the theories and practices that individuals participate in to combat racist ideology (Sefa Dei, 1996) actively. To understand antiracism, an understanding of race must be had; race is defined as a sociological theory that signifies and symbolizes conflicts concerning human bodies and appearances (Winant, 2000). According to Winant, race must be looked at through a historical and political lens to accurately understand concepts of race and how they work from a communication standpoint (Winant, 2000). The discourse around professionalism and organizational communication has been recognized as raced, meaning professional spaces have long been designed for whites instead of people of color, confirming that to create an inclusive workplace, antiracist approaches must be taken (Marshall, 1939, as cited in Bates, 1975). According to Hopson and Orbe, professional spaces have been designed around the needs of whites and work to elevate white voices and, in doing so, increase stress and tension for people of color (Hopson & Orbe, 2007). For example, there have been numerous studies about the systematic racism that exists within the hiring process for organizations and how, because of this, people of color are excluded from the workplace (Henry & Ginzberg, 1985, as cited in Dei, 1996).

Race literature indicates that people of color are dehumanized within white-dominated spaces (Ferguson & Dougherty, 2021). Fanon concluded that people of color become humanized the closer they assimilate to white culture and white behavior. The more a person of color strips away their identity, the easier it is for them to succeed professionally (Fanon, 2008). Due to this phenomenon, people of color claim to alter their behavior and practices within a professional setting due to the tension surrounding their race (Seymour & Seymour, 1979). Anti-race literature suggests that to combat these ideologies, individuals must look at the ways institutions

and societal structures perpetuate racist practices (Dei, 1996). Because racist actions or beliefs are not always intentional, antiracism focuses on an educational approach to how to identify racist norms (Dei, 1996).

VI.   Questions

1. Where within the narrative do you see hegemony? What evidence is there to argue your point?
2. What evidence exists that disciplinary Power exists within this organization? How might disciplinary Power behave within an organization?\
3. How might having characters within the narrative utilize antiracist techniques?
4. Where can you see the concept of professionalism within the narrative?
5. How do professionalism and antiracism connect

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The Power of Action
Giavanna Fioretti

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In November of 2023, I was hanging out as usual with my friends, Kaylee and Teddy. We chatted as we always did—Kaylee is my roommate, and Teddy is our mutual friend. He visits us often. (Their names have been changed "to protect the innocent.") We spoke naturally and freely until one of us committed a microaggression. The comment was subtle, casual, and seemed as though very normal coming out of this person's mouth, yet it left the other two feeling a bit awkward. At first, you wonder what you should make of the comment. You wonder if a comment like this should ever be discussed, or even addressed. But in this moment, I thought quickly enough to steer it into a constructive conversation I had heard about in conversation analysis—what perfect timing. In this paper, I will present and try to sort out this conversation. First, here is the initial conversation:

979126616 Fioretti RecordingH 1-1.mp3.mp3

Time: (1:14-1:58)

```
01   G:   Do you think someone else would like(.)react
02        differently or think your intentions were;
03   T:   >I wouldn't say it in front of a gay person.<
04   G:   Okay,
05   T:   I said it in my room; in front of you; and
06        both of us are stra::ight(.)but I kn::ow like I I
07        assume it could be hurtful to(.)to somebody who is gay
08        however I don't I don't have many gay friends,
09        I don't know if I have any at all,
10   G:   What do you assume like-
11        (2.0)
12        how they would react if they heard you say that
13   T:   They probably wouldn't say anything(.)they probably
14        wouldn't say anything at all they'd probably be
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15   angered in their head but I mean what's the gay dude

16   gonna say to me.

17 G: M<u>aybe</u> react a little bit on

18   (1.0)

19   why you associate gay with negativity;

This constructive conversation with our friend Teddy was based on his reaction to losing one of his video games. In response to losing, he stated, "That is so gay." I thought this was a perfect opportunity to call-in to attempt to make a change in Teddy's language. Because Teddy said, "that is so gay" and associated being gay as a negative, this undeniably classifies as a microaggression. My roommate, Kaylee, and I just sort of looked at each other at a loss for words. We stayed quiet in the moment, but I am glad we talked it out. Our goal was to help Teddy think, act, and speak better. I would classify Teddy's microaggression as "on record, with redressive action." This is because, as much as Teddy validates his statement, I also think that he did try to do some explaining as to why he said what he said. In line 06-07, Teddy addresses that he knows that if someone gay were to hear this statement, that he knows that someone could be offended by this. He also acknowledges that he does not have any gay friends, insinuating that he does not know how someone that is gay would respond to this statement.

On the other hand, in lines 13-16, Teddy states "they'd probably be angered in their head, but I mean, what's the gay dude gonna say to me?" Perhaps this statement could be considered without redress because although he seemed slightly apologetic in the beginning of the conversation, this line was pretty degrading and could be taken as unapologetic. Our constructive conversation had to continue beyond this relapse into the microaggression.

Teddy's statement is indirect—perhaps Teddy can be somewhat saved by his indirectness. Although Teddy's comment, "that's so gay" was distasteful and definitely could count as a microaggression, his comment was not directed at anyone specifically. He did not look at someone who is gay and say "you are so gay," in which case, that would be a direct

microaggression. Still, there's no denying that the indirect connotation of Teddy's utterance was "used for impolite or face-damaging purposes" (Archer et al. 2012). Teddy's indirect comment nonetheless equates losing a video game with being gay. Since Teddy doesn't have to explain this "equation," it must be built on "presequences." Pre-sequences lead to pre-formed opinions and behaviors that shape the idea of the conversation. Pre-sequences may work on listeners as much as speakers in a conversation. Teddy must have had a prior experience (or many prior experiences) that caused him to think that this equation between "losing a video game" and "being gay" is natural. Teddy's words were undoubtedly a repercussion of an underlying pattern, and his easy use of this equation treats its "actual appearance as 'the document of' a presupposed underlying pattern" (Garfinkel, 1967).

979126616 Fioretti Recording 1-1.mp3.mp3

01 G: Was your intention, like, poor in saying that? Or do

02   you think it was just, like, a natural reaction?

03 T: It was poor because it came from a place of

04   anger. I lost, so I said, that's so gay. The person I

05   lost against... In all likelihood, probably wasn't

06   gay. Let's be real here, like, not everybody is.This

07   kid probably wasn't either, and he beat me. So,

08   that's why I said it.

There are various elements of social interaction that I see in new ways after my Language and Social Interaction class. I am very pleased with how my thinking and my social awareness changed after learning new concepts. Specifically, one element I see in a new way is microaggressions, which I might have overlooked or ignored in the past. I am convinced that it is important to detect and avoid microaggressions—even microaggressions that are not intentional efforts to do harm (Lee, et al., 2018).

Before I studied Language and Social Interaction, I would have heard Teddy's "that is so gay" comment; I most likely would have ignored it and not discussed it with him afterwards. I now know that talking about this with someone and making them aware of their wrongdoings does not always have to be an uncomfortable debate. The guiding questions I used made it easy to just have a simple conversation with Teddy, as opposed to it being awkward.

In addition, the transcription above made me realize in my real life how to react to people that have skewed perspectives of how to discuss gender, race, or LGBTQIA+. The transcription I integrated into this part shows how Teddy associated being gay with his anger and rage. I politely questioned Teddy, and it showed that I was not trying to judge, or threaten his face, but rather I was trying to be a good friend and improve his overall language. In this constructive conversation, we were just "co-participants in talk [ourselves] attend[ing] to some bit of speech as embodying practices/actions specific to a certain gender or sexual identity, often the result of a deviation from the speaker's (and society's) behavioral norms" (Raymond, 2013). On this evening, Teddy, Kaylee, and I were just talking against the shared behavioral norms and practices that shape our shared experience. All three of us had learned in our pasts that the equation of "being gay" and "losing a video game" is both normal and "microaggressively harmful" to our society and us.

Conclusion

This paper indicated how the concepts we learned throughout the semester work. Action is a distinguished and centralized topic throughout all parts of this assignment. There are several takeaways from this conversation that Kaylee and I absorbed; one being that it is always better to communicate and express your concerns of actions that may not sit right with you. Making someone aware of your concerns hopefully sparks their desire to make a change. Voicing your feelings, successful or not, is worth it. What I hoped to see moving forward with Teddy is to be more sensitive to situations and making sure his language is not misinterpreted by others who he may be around, which I think was accomplished. Teddy seems to be more aware of his wrongdoings. Through remorse, Teddy has chosen to improve his language. Today, I am

uncertain if Teddy fully comprehends the implications of his words, but I do know I have heard improvement in his everyday language. Kaylee has learned from this as well, as neither of us originally planned to address this, she has learned that speaking out may be better than ignoring a situation. Surrounding yourself with people who want to help you reconsider your actions is important for the bettering of yourself. This conversation with Teddy seemed to change the way he speaks of losing a video game. This experience shows how actions are a large factor of everything, however, can also change everything at the same time.

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Long COVID and Political Party
Renee Franzini

<u>Introduction</u>

Long COVID has been represented in many different ways over the short amount of time it's been around. It's a highly politicized condition from a highly politicized disease (COVID-19 or coronavirus), and it created an even bigger divide between America's two main political parties (Kaplan, Vaccaro, Henning, & Christov-Moore, 2023). Part of this divide stemmed from the debate around COVID vaccines and wearing a mask, which many conservatives (right-leaning) said was a threat to their personal rights (Kaplan et al., 2023). Because of the right-wing party's tendency towards distrust of science and being more likely to believe in conspiracy theories regarding science, conservatives believed that COVID-19 vaccines were ineffective, or worse, actively harmful (Romer & Jamieson, 2021). This also extended to mask wearing and social distancing, which American right-wing members saw as a threat to personal freedoms; a trait commonly associated with the right-wing party (Kaplan et al., 2023). The representations of long COVID by America's two main political parties are therefore useful to examine, due to both the divide between parties and the politicized nature of the condition.

Since the pandemic seemingly had two "periods" of time to it (the early pandemic, which generally had more confusion; and the late pandemic, where the condition was more well known), these two periods will also be part of the research. As a disclaimer, I have a personal connection to this topic as several of my friends and family have long COVID. While it is not something I suffer from myself, after hearing their stories and secondhand accounts it has in turn influenced my decision towards researching the language around this topic.

For a brief background, COVID-19 began late in 2019 (hence the 19 in the name) in China (CDC, 2023). The official "pandemic" in the US began in March of 2020, when the World Health Organization (WHO) made the official health emergency declaration (CDC, 2023). The emergency declaration was then ended as of May 2023 by the WHO (Staff, N. M., 2021).

Long COVID is a condition that some people get a few weeks after being infected with COVID-19 (Yale Medicine, 2023). Yale Medicine notes that "In addition to PCC, Long COVID goes by[...] long-haul COVID, post-acute sequelae of COVID-19 (PASC), long-term effects of COVID-19, and chronic COVID, among others" (Staff, N. M., 2021). In my research, it will be called long COVID, though these other terms may show up in quotes.

For the prevalence of the condition, in a CDC study conducted in 2022, they found that in the US around 6.9% of adults ever had long COVID (Adjaye-Gbewonyo et al., 2023, p. 1). The same study also found that women, people aged 35-49, people of lower income, and people who lived in more rural areas were more likely to have had long COVID (p. 6). The symptoms of long COVID include fatigue, brain fog, loss of smell or taste, sleep troubles, and a whole host of other unpleasant symptoms, which can last anywhere from a few weeks to years (Yale Medicine, 2023).

The field of rhetoric relating to health and medicine is one that seeks to understand and explain how our words influence and have power "in a world in which we act upon each other by influence" (Derkatch & Segal, 2005, p. 139). The research done here examines the way that long COVID is defined and how these definitions work to persuade and influence people, as well as the similarities and differences of these based on political party. Since the right-wing party is somewhat known for being skeptical of scientific and health related topics, I initially predicted there would be a bigger difference between left- and right-wing coverage, especially after how much vaccine coverage became politicized (Kaplan et al., 2023). Things like the length of articles, any image used, specific word choice, and repetition will be examined to see how each party represents long COVID, any connotations they imply, and if this differs over the two points in time. Because long COVID is so new, research on the topic is still very light especially in the world of the rhetoric of health and medicine. The findings of this research will better inform on how both parties define long COVID, and how these definitions work to persuade the reader of certain viewpoints.

Method of Inquiry

Eight total online news articles from a left-leaning US news source and a right-leaning US news source were analyzed. TV footage was left out in order to narrow down the scope of the inquiry. The research will include two important periods: one referring to the 'early pandemic', which will be interpreted as before the condition was defined and added to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on July 26th, 2021, and the other will be called 'later pandemic', which refers to the timeframe from July 27th, 2021 to October 1st, 2023. The eight sources are all from within one of these two date ranges. CNN and Fox News were chosen as representatives of the left and right-leaning parties, respectively, as these are the most popular partisan news sources for the two main US political parties (Pew Research Center, 2020). All sources chosen are US based and centered around the US. The right-leaning party sources chosen were found by using the Fox News website search engine feature and searching the term "long COVID", constrained by the filter of the above stated date range. The sources from CNN were also found using CNN's website's search function, though unfortunately there is not an option to constrain by date. In order to find the articles that would fit my above date range, then, a manual search for the correct article dates was necessary.

The US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has further information on Long COVID as a disability (as defined by the ADA), background information on COVID and Long COVID, and possible long term side effects and symptoms. It also has information on how it can affect one's ability to do "major life activities", what rights you have if you're someone who has Long COVID as a disability, that Long COVID isn't always a disability, and what federal resources there are related to the topic (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2021). Since HHS defines long COVID as a disability according to official government sources, it was used in the research to separate the early and late pandemic time frames in relation to the amount of uncertainty regarding the condition.

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As with any project, there are limitations with the main ones here being the scope. With only a total of eight sources being analyzed, the research will of course be limited in the kinds of broad generalizations and findings made. Added to this is the fact that long COVID, and even simply COVID itself, has not had time to be thoroughly researched, especially over long periods of time. Despite this, I'm hoping to shed some light on the kinds of representations and use of presence that the two main US parties used for describing long COVID.

In the following analysis, I suggest that over the two observed points in time, right-wing partisan news sources felt more comfortable with the topic of long COVID through the use of longer articles, more photos, repetition of medical-related words, and commentary on the condition. Finally, emotional appeals, repetition, and comparison to things like cancer imply the seriousness of long COVID in early *and* late left-wing articles.

Presence

Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca define "presence" as what the author chooses to include and what they choose to exclude (1969, p. 116). These deliberate choices and use of presence tell us what the author intends the readers/viewers to understand and the viewpoints they favor (Landau, 2011, p. 42). This can be emphasized through things like use or lack of images, word choice, repetition, and the length of the article (Landau, 2011, p. 43). Presence also involves how the author frames the situation, and elements of exaggeration and hyperbole (Mader, 1973, p. 380).

Right-Wing News source- early pandemic

In a Fox News article from January 26th, 2021, "presence" is used to indicate a degree of doubt in the existence of the condition (Hein). The article, titled "WHO issues new clinical advice for coronavirus patients, plans to study 'long COVID'", was published in our 'early pandemic' time frame. The article itself is very short, being only about 250 words, meaning the absence of information on the subject contributes to the connotation of doubt. Furthermore, it uses quotes around long COVID (stylized like "long-COVID"). This is known as a term called scare quotes,

which is defined as putting quotes around a word where they're not needed to cast doubt on whatever the subject is (Trask, 1997). They also use the accompanying words "so called" before most instances of long COVID in this article. The presence of these extra words also casts doubt on the existence of the condition. This particular article includes one picture which is located in the first third of the article. It depicts a doctor wearing a mask with a COVID swab (presumably testing for COVID-19). The image is from iStock. The presence of this picture in the article works to legitimize the idea of COVID, if not the legitimacy of long-COVID. In the last third of the article, they've embedded a Twitter/X post from the World Health Organization. The actual post talks briefly about how the WHO has changed the current suggestions for COVID patient care, and links an article that talks more about how if people who have had COVID continue to have symptoms, they should have follow-up care to address this (WHO, 2021).

Furthermore, it's interesting to note what they *don't* include- those being a lot of words since the article is so short, and any other quotes or thoughts about it are also reserved only for the WHO (and aren't properly cited). It's clear they don't want to get into it too deeply or comment on the matter themselves. This lack of comment on the material they're reporting on presents the idea that they simply don't have a lot to say on the matter, or perhaps that since they don't have anything positive to say, they choose not to say much at all. This serves to preserve Fox News' reputation as a reputable news source by not saying information that contradicts official government bodies (Mehta & Guzmán, 2018, p. 105).

In another early pandemic Fox News article, we see scare quotes around long COVID, though they use a slightly different term for the condition. The March 2021 article titled "Coronavirus 'long haulers' most often battle fatigue, 'brain fog,' study suggests", talks about a study that examines something they term "coronavirus 'long haulers'" (Rivas, 2021). It has a byline that says "'Long haulers' improve with time, but some still report symptoms over nine months later, researchers say" (Rivas, 2021). Other well-established terms are also put into scare quotes. Terms like 'cognitive rehab' and 'therapeutic interventions' are put in quotes to indicate doubt of related health remedies. Even the term 'brain fog' gets quotes around it. There is no direct

commentary in the whole article, similar to other early pandemic right-wing articles. "Symptoms" is used 10 times in the article, which perhaps indicates the bit of belief Fox News has in the existence of the condition (also indicated by how despite the general air of doubt in the article, there is no commentary *explicitly* disproving long COVID's existence). The article is 413 words long and there are no images. It's possible even as early as the end of March (two months after the previous Fox News article), there was greater acceptance of the existence of long COVID as a real condition.

Left-wing news source- early pandemic

A CNN article published in February 2021 titled "Clinics are springing up around the country for what some call a potential second pandemic: Long COVID" uses presence to *legitimize* the existence of long COVID. This article details how "long haul COVID" or "long term COVID" is real based on the reported effects after having COVID as evidence (Waldrop, 2021). The article makes present the idea that long COVID exists through the use of repetition in words like "symptoms",which appears 24 times, "doctor" which appears 15 times, and "patients" which also appears 15 times (Perelman et al., 1969, p. 144). The title calling it a "second pandemic" emphasizes the seriousness of long COVID and creates an alarming headline that draws you in.

The length of the article and the sheer number of words on the page also serve to legitimize the condition (being 1,356 words), unlike the early pandemic Fox News source which is less than a fifth of that length (Landau, 2011, p. 42). The sentence "at least doctors now know that long COVID is a real thing" (Waldrop, 2021) clearly states CNN's position on long COVID's legitimacy. Three large images of women are evenly spaced throughout the article. The text details how these three women have had long COVID, and the article includes liberal use of quotes by these women. It makes absent the idea of vaccines or treatment of the symptoms, and in fact does not bring this aspect of long COVID at all (Perelman et al., 1969, p. 144). Though there is a section in the article titled "Treating the Symptoms", the section is somewhat short (only 271 words), and the only bit mentioned on actual treatment simply states that "currently,

there is no specific treatment for long COVID" (Waldrop, 2021). The rest of the section is solely about the specific case of a woman who got long COVID and her own personal experience with it (Waldrop, 2021).

The next item that will be analyzed is a CNN article from January 2021 titled "'Long COVID' still puzzles doctors but treatment is possible" (Mascarenhas, 2021). It's a total of 490 words, a departure from other CNN articles here examined, which all tend to be longer as well as a lack of photos.

Interestingly, this article also uses scare quotes around long COVID, as in the sentence "medical professionals are working to understand more about a condition they are calling "long COVID'"(Mascarenhas, 2021). They indicate a degree of doubt around the condition, much like early right-wing news articles. This is tempered by the fact that after the scare quotes in the title and the first sentence, there are no more quotes around long COVID subsequently. This is also mitigated by the last sentence of the article, which is a quote from a doctor saying "While we don't know what's causing these symptoms, they're very real for patients" (Mascarenhas, 2021). Even in early pandemic sources, they confirm here that despite the lack of knowledge around long COVID, it is 'very real'.

Right-Wing news source- late pandemic

Presence in an article from July 2023 suggest changed attitudes toward long COVID. The article ("What a new study reveals about long COVID, and what we can do about it" (Siegel, 2023)) again has an absence of images, much like the early pandemic right-wing article, though there are several linked videos of Fox News TV footage and interviews with the author of it (a doctor). It's twice as large as the right-wing early pandemic article at around 570 words, suggesting that over time Fox News had more to say about long COVID. In contrast to the January 2021 Fox News article, this one presents the use of commentary and opinion on long COVID rather than just using WHO quotes. Repetition is also used in the words impact which is mentioned three times in a short article, COVID which is mentioned six times, and loss mentioned four times,

which "emphasizes this visual presence" of medical legitimacy (Landau, 2011, p. 43). As time went on, this Republican-oriented news source became less hesitant to talk about long COVID.

A Fox News article from May 2023 talks about a study on Long COVID with regards to the omicron variant (Musto, 2023). There are three large images in this short article. One depicts an enlarged image of COVID particles from a microscope. Another shows human body cells infected with COVID virus particles. The third image is of people lined up to get the COVID-19 vaccine. These images legitimize the existence of COVID by showing it directly and illustrating for people exactly what they're talking about, with the last image even possibly suggesting that one should get vaccinated. Also in opposition to the early pandemic Fox News article from March 2021, there are no quotes around the term 'brain fog', indicating they have accepted this related symptom as real. Just like the July 2023 Fox News article, there are no more quotes around long COVID, COVID long-haulers, or any other related term. There are also no words surrounding the terms, such as "so-called". At the bottom of the article, it says "The Associated Press contributed to this report" (Musto, 2023). With a prestigious, non-partisan news source like AP News contributing to their article, there was less likely to be partisan opinions like the right-wing party's distrust of science (Romer & Jamieson, 2021).

Left-Wing News source- late pandemic

CNN's August 2023 article about long COVID, "Long COVID symptoms create a greater burden of disability than heart disease or cancer, new study shows", is very text heavy, being around 1,100 words and has no pictures (Goodman, 2023). This works to evoke the presence of scientific articles, which are also dense and tend to not have any images. There are quotes from three different doctors in the article- another trait shared with many published scientific articles. I suggest here that the presence of these scientific-seeming features work to make their emotional appeal seem more grounded in science- as Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca note, "subjective feelings, can be transformed into judgments of fact through certain tricks of presentation" (1969, p. 180). The presence of words like "burden", "heart disease", and especially "cancer" in the title makes the reader feel a sense of fear and unease from the comparison to these emotionally-laden

terms. This "exaggeration to move people toward this ideal good" is done to get people to take long COVID seriously (Mader, 1973, p. 380). Repetition is also used in terms like "study" which is mentioned 17 times, and the word "problems", which is repeated 10 times. The emotional appeal they are making with these rhetorical moves works to convince the reader that long COVID sufferers deserve empathy and disability benefits and that it's a problem that is being studied, lending it a scientific air. Despite it being a health article, it uses a lot of emotional appeals and emotional language (such as comparing long COVID to cancer) to imply this connotation.

A late pandemic CNN article from November 2021 continues this theme of evoking the presence of a scientific article. It is around 900 words, and like the August 2023 CNN article, has no images except a picture of the writer of the article. Despite this theme of scientific objectivity, there is a very clear presence of opinion as it's written in first person and uses words like "our". The article takes a narrative style familiar stance with the reader by using the term "we" in phrases like "we must continue to take steps that will keep cases low" and "we'll all be living in a COVID-19 reality for some time" (Spector, 2021). It's written by Tim Spector, a professor and creator of an app that collects voluntary medical data (Spector, 2021). One should also note that before anything else, there is an editor's note that says Mr. Spector's qualifications, his connection with the ZOE health study, and a disclaimer that this is an opinion article and these are solely the views of Mr. Spector (and not CNN) (Spector, 2021). The last few paragraphs conclude with statements like "more research needs to be done" and "I would encourage anyone who is coping with long COVID to look up a nearby long COVID study and get involved" (Spector, 2021). "Long COVID" is used 24 times throughout the article, and the term "sufferers" is used six times. Expanding the term to "suffer" yields nine total instances in the article. "Symptoms" appears 13 times. Clearly, the article emphasizes the severity and again uses emotional appeals to show how people with long COVID deserve sympathy and our commiseration.

<u>Conclusion</u>

Over time, Fox News articles seemingly accepted the existence of long COVID through their lack of scare quotes in later pandemic articles, inclusion of more images, and longer articles. This was also probably because as time went on, more scientific research backing the existence of long COVID made its harder to doubt. After many official government and scientific publications confirming the existence of long COVID, they could no longer deny the existence of the condition in the face of overwhelming evidence. Another possible reason is that older people and people aged 35-49 are more at risk of getting long COVID (Adjaye-Gbewonyo et al., 2023, p. 1), and Fox News' user base is primarily older people (Grieco, 2020). Continuing to deny long COVID in the later pandemic would mean alienating a good portion of their user base. However, these are all just theories, and with my size corpus, they cannot be adequately proven or denied.

CNN articles that were analyzed all make emotional appeals through comparison and repetition to say how serious and devastating long COVID is. They emphasize the suffering and characterize long COVID as a disability akin to such devastating conditions as cancer or heart disease (Goodman, 2023), as well as the pity and sympathy we should feel for people with long COVID. All CNN articles are fairly long, and this time and attention devoted to covering the condition could be read as suggestive that they are taking it seriously. However, it might just be the style of CNN articles compared to the very short Fox News ones. Almost all CNN articles have a lot of commentary in their articles, even if not specifically labeled an opinion article. Even very early CNN articles which have more doubt than later ones, which are evidenced by shorter articles and use of initial scare quotes, still use emotional appeals and a liberal amount of source quotes to confirm long COVID's legitimacy. In the late pandemic however, both parties accepted long COVID, which we can see through lack of scare quotes, more pictures and sources, and longer articles.

Further research

There is much further research that could be done, especially in certain items from my corpus. From the CNN article from 2023 titled "Long COVID symptoms create a greater burden of disability than heart disease or cancer, new study shows", they use the metric termed "a disability adjusted life year, or DALY. Each DALY represents one year of healthy life lost to illness" (Goodman, 2023). Put simply, there's a lot to unpack there. A whole project could be done on the rhetorical implications of this one metric (which would also contribute to the rhetoric around disabilities and illness, making it a valuable addition to the field of the rhetoric of health and medicine).

Another source from my corpus titled "Long COVID is real. But there are ways to protect yourself" from 2021 makes frequent mention of the "ZOE Health Study", which was created by the writer of that particular CNN article (Spector, 2021). An exploration of what terms the author uses to encourage people to join his study and other rhetorical devices used would be very interesting project indeed.

Finally, a more robust analysis with a much larger corpus would be able to find whether the timing of the ADA announcement affected news coverage of long COVID in any meaningful way. For this research, the addition of long COVID to the ADA served as a time marker to separate periods in the pandemic. The actual implications of whether this announcement significantly affected news coverage, however, is beyond the scope of this research and size of corpus. More research can and should be done on the topic of long COVID (especially within the realm of RHM) to understand how the definitions and persuasions used in long COVID affect our daily lives.

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How Mindfulness in Business Practices Can Enact Positive Change
Kali Couronis

The study of contemplative practices as well as the idea of mindfulness has become increasingly popular in our society in the last few decades. Practices that have originated in Eastern culture (such as yoga and meditation) have become common practices that individuals engage with, often as forms of stress relief. These are popular stress-reducing activities in institutions like corporate offices or universities (Barbezat). The recent discussion of mindfulness in business environments has mainly focused on an individual basis. Classes offered will often seek to engage employees or students in mindfulness in their own lives. It is ironic that practices used to reduce stress are encouraged by institutions that are the main cause of stress for many individuals. In business, mindfulness can go beyond individual practice, and not all forms of mindfulness are stress reducers. B-Corporations have been working to be more mindful of their practices on all levels, as well as the impact they have on people, the economy, and the environment. This form of mindfulness involves observing where improvements can be made to work on a collective action, rather than individual. B-Corporations are committed to bringing positive change around the world. B-Corp-certified companies have been implementing mindfulness in their practices, and mindfulness as a collective action can be used by everyone to enact positive change in communities and the planet.

To understand how mindfulness can be applied in business, we should first understand what exactly mindfulness as a contemplative practice is. Mindfulness is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as, "A mental state achieved by focusing one's awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one's feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations, used as a therapeutic technique". Most often, mindfulness is associated with meditation, with common practices specifically focusing on being aware of yourself in the present moment (Rogers). Mindfulness is a practice on its own, and is the basis of many contemplative practices, as well as being applicable to other practices. Writing, art, and activism are examples of practices that people implement mindfulness in. Such mindfulness activities are useful in developing how one sees the world around them, and their perception of themselves. The utilization of mindfulness in

business is similar: Any action or message driven by a company can be viewed in a more mindful way. I will look at the practice of mindfulness in business, specifically mindfulness used to encourage change in a flawed system.

With politics dividing people more than ever, and concern over the state of our economy and planet, many people have observed that the systems in place in America rarely benefit the average citizen. This era of consumerism has negatively impacted people across the world, the global economy, and the environment. We also see how capitalism will often incentivize the continued exploitation of people and the planet for corporate profits. More recently, we've seen companies become more mindful of their practices, and the impact they have on our lives. These companies have tried to change their ways for the benefit of the planet as a whole. The companies reaching certain standards in these efforts can become certified and recognized for their work in improving different aspects of life on earth.

B-Corporations, also known as B-Corps, are certified businesses that are "meeting high standards of verified performance, accountability, and transparency on factors from employee benefits and charitable giving to supply chain practices and input materials." (B Lab Global Site). The certification is run through B Lab, a non-profit with the goal of changing our economy to benefit both people and the environment. The non-profit started in 2006, and established its goal with the mindful observation of where the economy is failing people and the planet. B Lab has not only worked to make a change in individual companies, but the economic system as well. Change is only possible with observations like these, where full thought can be applied to recognize the negative impacts of a whole system, as well as the process to create the change. Companies can achieve the B-Corp certification by meeting specific social and environmental standards. The first certification includes achieving an 80 or above on the B Impact Assessment which observes the social and environmental performance of the company. This assessment's scores are based on the quality of a company's governance as well as its impact on its workers, community, environment, and customers. The company must also commit to enhancing its corporate structure to "be accountable to all stakeholders, not just shareholders." Lastly,

companies must allow full transparency of all information collected by B Lab regarding its performance, meaning the information will be publicly available online. Currently, there are 6,765 certified B-Corporations worldwide and over 2,000 in the U.S. and Canada. Companies with this certification include almost every industry as well as company size.

One B-Corp can be found right here in New Hampshire. Stonyfield Organic, based in Londonderry, NH, produces organic yogurt and has committed to fostering a positive process at all levels for "healthy food, healthy businesses, and a healthy planet" (Home: Stonyfield). The company has been B-Corp certified since 2016 and has made a commitment to avoid fertilizers, pesticides, antibiotics, and drug treatments for their farms and livestock. They also have worked on their own effort of implementing 100% renewable energy at their facility. The company emphasizes the impact that using their collective voice can have on the economy and in turn the planet.

Vermont-based ice cream producer, Ben and Jerry's, has also been committed to enhancing their business in hopes of advancing "new models of economic justice." The company has been B-Corp certified since 2012 and was even recognized by B Lab as "Best for the World" in the community impact area for 2022. Ben and Jerry's specifically has led efforts in amplifying social justice movements, even stating that they are striving to be "a social justice company that makes ice cream". The company also lists multiple movements that they support on their website with some being racial justice, LGBTQ+ rights, and climate justice (Home: Ben & Jerry's). Direct work with such movements is not a requirement for B-Corp certification, but their clear fight for such movements shows the dedication they have to truly be "Best for the World".

Much of this work is being mindful of the connections that people have with their community as well as the environment, but what establishes the groundwork for people and companies to make this change? As mentioned, mindfulness allows for a deeper connection with the self. Allan Badiner mentions the role Buddhism can have in our response to our current culture. As he says "revisiting our moral and spiritual values" is what can help to give people that sense of

grounding in their beliefs and understand their own impact on the world. Encouraging practices that benefit us in an ethical and sustainable manner starts at an individual manner. In an excerpt from the Journal of Cleaner Production, Rodrigo Sequiera establishes that there has been evidence of a positive impact on one's well-being, self-awareness, attention regulation, creativity, etc. from the engagement of mindfulness and meditation. On top of that, experiments have shown a connection between mindfulness and one's "ethical decision making". Such evidence illustrates the impact mindfulness can have on how one views the world around them and can motivate people to strive for better.

The efforts made by companies and individuals go beyond business, and delve into understanding activism as a contemplative practice. In this sense, we can look at activism as a community practice. Also known as collective mindfulness, this involves mindfulness as we see in an individual practice applied in group settings, becoming aware of connections with people and the world around you. As Richard Badham explains, it is when mindfulness is seen as a "state of collective mind" and how people "make sense of themselves, others, and the world around them." Community activities such as gardens, raising awareness, and cultivating neighborhood relationships have been common practices in a model known as Transition. The model founded by Rob Haskins involves the connection of emotion to a physical practice in a community (Schmid). Green City Growers, a Boston-based B-Corp, works directly with fostering communities with the implementation of community gardens. They manage gardens in commercial and residential areas and provide education and engagement workshops for the surrounding community (Green City Growers). Mindfulness in these activities is dependent on the connection between community members. Specifically, activities that involve a shared effort can create a sense of purpose and commitment that connects one's self directly with the wellness of a community (Badham).

In both corporate and community levels we see how mindfulness is implemented as a form of activism. Smaller communities can create open spaces of engagement that allow people the chance to connect with others and understand their role as an individual in a collective

environment. This also can allow for a sense of the person in individuals and the community as a whole. We also see how some companies have been using their business efforts to foster healthy work environments and work toward a sustainable future. Many, like Ben and Jerry's, have also explicitly been working on social change movements and using the leverage they have to amplify the voices of the movements. Collective work in mindfulness and activism can allow for wider forums of communication regarding bigger issues that affect people and the planet, but it's important to be aware of the benefits individual practices can have. Engagement in these practices allows people the ability to be more aware of themselves on concepts such as their morals and beliefs. With continued practice and understanding, this can then be applied in this collective setting and garner a healthier space for these discussions.

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"Burning Issues: An Analysis of Penguin Random House's 'The Unburnable Book' Campaign"
Jacqueline Law

In May 2022, Penguin Random House LLC collaborated with author Margaret Atwood to introduce a new campaign known as "The Unburnable Book" campaign. This is a true public relations campaign that at the heart is working to promote the organization's mission and goals. Although the campaign lacks a historical perspective due to being less than a year old, it is a fascinating example of how public relations can play a vital role in the promotion and execution of a company's mission, values, and corporate social responsibility initiatives. This analysis will include a description of the campaign, details about all of the organizations involved, context related to the issues addressed in the campaign, and conclusions about the success and impact of the campaign.

For the campaign, a special fireproof edition of Atwood's famous novel "The Handmaid's Tale" was created and sold at auction for $130,000. All of the proceeds from the auction went to PEN America, a nonprofit organization that works to fight censorship and protect free speech. Penguin Random House states the goal of the campaign was to, "raise awareness about the proliferating book banning and educational gag orders in American schools nationwide, and to raise money to support PEN America's crucial work to counter this national crisis of censorship"("Margaret Atwood & PRH Fight Censorship With an "Unburnable" Edition of THE HANDMAID'S TALE"). The special edition was printed on fire-resistant paper and bound with a flame-retardant cover. To launch the campaign, Penguin Random House released a one-minute video debuting the special edition which showed the author pointing a flamethrower at the book and flames all around it but not burning it. The video included captions overlaid on top of the video that introduced the unique book and the inspiration for the campaign. Penguin Random House and Margret Atwood also posted the launch video on their various social media accounts on May 23rd. Prior to the social media launch, Penguin Random House posted a blog post about the campaign on their website which detailed the creation of the campaign and featured quotes from Penguin Random House executives and various other people involved in the campaign. A separate website, unburnablebook.com was also created and has various information related to

the special edition and the auction. The book debuted at the annual PEN America Gala. After the launch, Penguin Random House worked with Sotheby's, one of the largest brokers of art and fine jewelry in the world, to auction off the one-of-a-kind edition. According to the campaign's official website, the book was presented for auction by Sotheby's in New York from May 23 to June 7, 2022, before being sold for $130,000. It is important to note that there is no accessible information about who bought the book.

In order to understand the campaign it is vital to get to know the main organization behind the campaign, Penguin Random House. Penguin Random House is one of the largest publishing companies in the world and is the highest-earning publishing company in the world. The company is the result of a merger in 2013 of two of the world's largest publishing houses, Penguin Publishing and Random House Publishing. Penguin Random House states that they are, "the international home to more than 300 editorially and creatively independent publishing imprints" ("Our Story"). Penguin Random House states its mission on its official website saying, "Our mission is to ignite a universal passion for reading by creating books for everyone. We believe that books, and the stories and ideas they hold, have the unique capacity to connect us, change us, and carry us toward a better future for generations to come"("Our Story"). Penguin Random House is a relatively large company operating in 20 countries across six continents with more than 10,000 employees worldwide, with more than 5,000 employees in North America.

The company also has a large market share with almost 16% of the worldwide publishing market share. According to their official website, they publish 70,000 digital and 15,000 print titles annually, with more than 100,000 eBooks available worldwide. The company's accolades include publishing more than 80 Nobel Prize laureates and hundreds of the world's most widely read authors. Most relevant to this specific case, Penguin Random House claims they are, "a cultural institution dedicated to serving our communities beyond the books we publish. Through our campaigns, partnerships, and internal initiatives, we strive to shape a more equitable, diverse, and sustainable world" ("Our Story"). They also have a link to their 2020 Social Impact Report, which is a summary of their 2020 global commitment to "serving our communities

beyond the books we publish" through their three pillars of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Environment and Sustainability, and Free Expression and Joy of Reading ("Our Story").

Penguin Random House chose to collaborate with the well-known author, Margret Atwood, for the campaign. Atwood is a Canadian writer who has published eighteen novels, eleven non-fiction books, eighteen books of poetry, and a multitude of other works. She has a Bachelor of Arts in English from the University of Toronto and a Master's Degree from Radcliffe College, the then-women's university associated with Harvard. Atwood is a New York Times Best Selling author and the winner of multiple literary awards including two Booker Prizes, the Arthur C. Clarke Award, and lifetime achievement awards from the National Book Critics Association and the PEN Center USA. Atwood has been a professor and faculty member at over nine different Universities in Canada and the United States and is also a current Vice President of PEN International ("Biography - Margaret Atwood").

"The Unburnable Book " created for the campaign was a copy of Atwood's famous book *The Handmaid's Tale*, published in 1985. The book is about a dystopian society set in near-future

New England where a patriarchal, totalitarian state has overthrown the United States government. The novel explores themes related to the loss of female agency and individuality, oppression, rebellion, and suppression of reproductive rights (Baldwin). Since its publication, over eight million copies of *The Handmaid's Tale* have been sold as well as the novel becoming a New York Times Best Seller and winning many prestigious literary awards (Boyd and Gibson). Atwood's novel was also adapted into a film in 1990, an opera in 2000, and a television series in 2017. The 2017 show, created and streamed by Hulu, was a large success and has aired five seasons so far and won eight Primetime Emmy awards. Despite its massive popularity, *The Handmaid's Tale* has faced a lot of criticism and has been banned by schools, libraries, and even whole states. Multiple American school districts banned the book in the early 2000s claiming it was graphic, sexually explicit, morally corrupt, and detrimental to Christian values (Titus). The book has been banned by the states of Texas and Oregon with

Texas schools arguing it should be banned, "for several reasons, including profanity, overly sexual tones, being anti-Christian, featuring LGBTQ+ protagonists, and being overall morally corrupt" (Reilly). "The Handmaid's Tale" seems to have been the perfect fit for the campaign and PR Week agrees saying, "Atwood's Handmaid's Tale was not just the right fit because of its dystopian plot line, but because the novelist has had numerous of her books banned across the world" (Wood).

The organization that the campaign raised money for is PEN America. PEN America is a registered 501(c)(3) headquartered in New York City and the largest of more than 100 centers worldwide that make up the PEN International network ("About Us"). PEN was originally an acronym for Poets, Essayists, and Novelists but as membership expanded to include many others, the name was kept but not as an acronym. The organization was founded in 1922 and states its mission is, "to unite writers and their allies to celebrate creative expression and defend the liberties that make it possible" ("About Us'"). PEN America has over 7,500 members including novelists, journalists, nonfiction writers, editors, poets, essayists, playwrights, publishers, translators, agents, and other writing professionals ("About Us"). The organization works to fulfill its mission through dozens of free expression and literary programs such as Campus Free Speech, Press Freedom Incentive Fund, Artists at Risk Connection, PEN World Voices Festival, and the PEN America Literary Awards.

The creation and behind-the-scenes work of the campaign was done by Rethink Communications. Rethink defines itself as "one of the largest global independent agencies" that has offices in New York, Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver. ("Our Story - Rethink"). Rethink has worked with many well-known companies including Kraft, IKEA, WestJet, Heinz, and Coorslight. Last year Rethink won Strategy's Agency of the Year, a Silver Award for Public Relations Agency of the Year, and Campaign of the Year for their campaign with Heinz. Rethink creative director Caroline Friesen is credited with coming up with the idea of creating an unburnable book and the agency worked with Penguin Random House to pick what book would be used.

In order to understand the campaign and the why behind it, there is context that needs to be addressed. While this campaign works to address freedom of expression and fight censorship in today's society, the issue of censorship has a very long and extensive history. Due to this campaign being focused on North America and the United States in particular, a review of censorship in the United States is most relevant. The American Library Association defines censorship as "a change in the access of status material, based on the content of the work and made by a governing authority or its representatives; such changes include exclusion, restriction, removal, or age/grade level changes." Censorship is often viewed as a violation of the First Amendment of the US Constitution, however, interpretation of the First Amendment is not concrete and has been challenged throughout US history, even in the Supreme Court. According to Jennifer Steele's article titled "A History of Censorship in America", obscenity is one of the oldest and most commonly cited reasons behind book changes and censorship attempts in the United States. There have been various supreme court cases dealing with obscenity, the first being *Rosen v. United States* in 1896, then *United States v. One Book Called Ulysses* in 1933, *Jacobellis v. Ohio* 1964, *Miller v. California* (1973), *Miller v. California* (1973), and *Osborne v. Ohio* (1990). *Roth v. the United States* (1957) was a particularly important case in which the Supreme Court ruled that obscenity is not covered under the First Amendment (Steele). Atwood's "The Handmaid's Tale" has often been banned based on the argument that it includes "obscene material." Other well-known Supreme Court cases not related exclusively to obscenity have resulted in "tests" that are used to determine if something is protected under the First Amendment or not. In 1919, the "bad tendency test" was created as a result of *Abrams v. United States* which is used to determine if criticism of the government and particularly war efforts is protected under the First Amendment (Purdy). Probably the most famous test is the "clear and present danger test" which was a result of the 1919 case *Schenck v. United States* which is referenced most often in First Amendment cases (Purdy). In 1943, another landmark case, *Jones v. City of Opelika,* was decided and resulted in the "preferred freedom doctrine" which set the precedent that some constitutional freedoms are entitled to greater protection than others (Purdy).

Instances of Censorship and First Amendment challenges have continued into the present day and are still some of the most talked about issues in our society. Penguin Random House expressed why this campaign needed to be created in a blog post saying the campaign is a response to, "the proliferating book banning and educational gag orders in American schools nationwide." The same blog post claims, "PEN America has been at the forefront of the fight against this wave of censorship in American schools." Included in the post is a quote that shows the increased relevance of this issue saying, "Its [PEN America] recent report 'Banned in the USA,' documented 1,586 instances of individual books being banned, in 86 school districts in 26 state, and more than 122 million Americans live in the 19 states that have passed legislation or issued executive orders prohibiting the teaching of various subjects and ideas in public schools, colleges, and universities." The report referenced was published by PEN in April of 2022 and shows how this issue has become even more relevant in recent times. The report lists bans on over 1,145 titles and encompasses different types of bans, including removals of books from school libraries, prohibitions in classrooms, or both, as well as books banned from circulation during investigations resulting from challenges from parents, educators, administrators, board members, or responses to laws passed by legislatures (Evison). It is also important to note that among the titles in the Index, there are common themes reflecting the recent backlash and ongoing debates surrounding the teaching and discussion of race and racism in American history, LGBTQ+ identities, and sexual education in schools (Evison). In order to protect the First Amendment rights of students in public schools, procedural safeguards have been designed to help ensure that districts follow transparent, unbiased, established procedures, particularly when it comes to the review of library holdings (Evison). However, the report also states that there has been a shift in how instances of censorship are handled, with more and more bans being enacted without going through the established processes (Evison). Another notable shift explored in the report is the increase in bans tied to state officials and elected lawmakers in contrast to the traditional process of bans being introduced and championed by local community members.

There is a lot of important social, political, and historical context related to "The Unburnable Book" campaign and the issues it works to address. Through investigating the campaign, the organizations involved, and the context surrounding it, some conclusions can be made. The age of the campaign does make it challenging to gauge the overall success because there could still be a negative backlash in the future. With that being said, the campaign was successful in bringing awareness to the increase in censorship in recent times and raising money for PEN America. The sale of the special edition of "The Handmaid's Tale" raised $130,000 for PEN America. The campaign was mentioned in dozens of articles from well-known newspapers and stations including the New York Times, The Guardian, US Today, CNN, and others. The campaign was also mentioned in Press Farm's Top Public Relations Campaigns of 2022 and PR.co's 5 Best Public Relations Campaigns of 2022, as well as multiple other lists. While it is harder to prove the direct impact the campaign had on the company's financials, Penguin Random House sales did go up by 4.8% in 2022. This campaign was also successful because it truly put Penguin Random House's corporate social responsibility initiatives to work. Many companies are all talk and no show when it comes to their values and CSR goals, but this campaign proved that Penguin Random House is walking the walk. Other companies looking to put their values into action should look at Penguin Random House's "The Unburnable Book" campaign as a prime example.

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Sexism, Racism, and Classism in Netflix's Docuseries *Formula 1: Drive to Survive*
Grace Cushing

Formula 1: Drive to Survive is one program in a string of recent sports docuseries that Netflix has produced. *Drive to Survive*, as the series is more commonly known, has been thoroughly applauded for how it has introduced the sport of Formula One to new audiences around the world, especially increasing interest in the sport in the United States. The series has, however, created a divide between old fans of the sport and new fans, specifically those who are interested in Formula One because of *Drive to Survive*, through its dramatization and skewing of events in and surrounding Formula One and its personnel since the 2018 season. As a docudrama, Netflix intended to captivate audiences by sensationalizing *Formula 1: Drive to Survive* with action-packed and gossip-filled episodes. While the platform may have succeeded in these goals, much of *Drive to Survive* further perpetuates the sexism, racism, and classism that fuel the sport. These issues, therefore, overshadow the intentions Netflix had in producing *Formula 1: Drive to Survive* and serve as the focal points of the series.

Sexism is displayed in *Formula 1: Drive to Survive* in three recurring elements of the docuseries. The most noticeable way in which *Drive to Survive* exhibits sexism is through the lack of screen time women received across all five of the series' seasons. Females in Motorsport (FIM), "A volunteer-run platform promoting women in motorsport" (Females in Motorsport, 2018), looked at the entirety of *Drive to Survive* to quantify the time that women received on screen. FIM reported that "Across all five seasons of Drive to Survive women have spoken for less than an hour out of the 32 hours of episodes," (Roper, 2023). Of the over six and a half hours of episodes in the latest season of the docuseries, season five, women spoke for a total of six minutes and seven seconds (Roper, 2023). This is a meager 1.54% of the season's running time and continued the downward trend of screen time for women in the series since season two (Roper, 2023). FIM highlighted that, for season five, "Women mostly feature in the background as fans or are seen providing food for and applying makeup to the drivers," (Roper, 2023). This is also true of the series' previous seasons. The lack of screen time women received in *Formula 1: Drive to Survive* is indicative of the sexism that underwrites the series. While it is a well-known fact that Formula

One is dominated by men, women are not entirely absent from the sport. Women play key roles in every aspect of Formula One, from holding positions in every team and in the sport's governing bodies and affiliates to working behind-the-scenes on car development and manufacturing. "The female representation not being manifested on track is a plaguing issue…" in Formula One, but "…what is the excuse for not having women on a show where there are no such barriers affecting their presence?" (Anmol, 2023).

The way in which some women were identified on screen throughout *Formula 1: Drive to Survive* is another definitive example of sexism within the docuseries. The wives, girlfriends, and some female family members of Formula One personnel were identified "…on-screen as 'x's girlfriend' or 'x's wife' rather than by their own achievements or profession," (Roper, 2022). One example of this that FIM examined was that of Tiffany Cromwell. Cromwell is featured in seasons three and four of *Drive to Survive*. Because of her relationship with Alfa Romeo Formula One Team Stake driver Valtteri Bottas, Cromwell was identified as "Valtteri's Girlfriend" by Netflix. Cromwell is a successful Australian road cyclist, yet she was never labeled as such in *Drive to Survive*. Another example of this pertains to Geri Horner. Geri is the wife of Christian Horner, the CEO and Team Principal of Oracle Red Bull Racing Formula One Team, but she is more popularly known for being Ginger Spice of the Spice Girls. Instead of referring to her as "Ginger Spice," as the Spice Girls are the best-selling girl-group of all time, or even as a singer, songwriter, author, or actress, Geri was "Christian's Wife." Season four contains the first instance in all the seasons of *Drive to Survive* where her own title is attributed to a woman that is both featured in the docuseries and related to someone in Formula One (Roper, 2022). Susie Wolff, the wife of Toto Wolff, stakeholder in and CEO and Team Principal of Mercedes-AMG Petronas Formula One Team, was identified as "CEO and Managing Partner, Rokit Venturi Racing Formula E Team" in this season (Roper, 2022). While it is true that the focus of *Formula 1: Drive to Survive* is on the sport, the entirely male Formula One grid, and the primarily male paddock, identifying women on screen as nothing more than being associated with these men is sexist. The number of women who were identified on screen by the series is small to begin with, but to credit these women as just a wife, girlfriend, or family member further

highlights *Drive to Survive*'s inadequate gender representation and apathy towards women, both in and outside the motorsport world.

Sexism is also produced in *Formula 1: Drive to Survive* through the outright omission of names and titles for many women who appear on screen, and through the exclusion of important women in motorsport from the series entirely. In season one of *Drive to Survive*, any women other than Grace Ricciardo, former Formula One driver Daniel Ricciardo's mother, and Claire Williams, former Team Principal of Williams Racing, were not named (Roper, 2022). Geri Horner, who doubles as a mega-celebrity and the wife of Christian Horner, "…is not named until season three, despite being one of the women who features most throughout the series," (Roper, 2022). FIM reported that in season five of *Drive to Survive*, the series most recently released season, "Only six women are identified on screen," (Roper, 2023). These women include Formula One journalist Jennie Gow, McLaren Formula One Team's Communications Director Sophie Ogg, W Series team owner of Jenner Racing Caitlyn Jenner, and three family members of Formula One personnel, Gertraud Steiner, Corinna Schumacher, and Geri Horner (Roper, 2023). These women appeared spontaneously in six of the ten episodes of season five while the other four episodes completely omit identifying any women on screen (Roper, 2023). Formula One journalist Laura Winter, the colleague of the prominent male Formula One journalist Will Buxton who is both a frequent face and name in the series, was repeatedly seen throughout season five interviewing drivers, but she is never named on screen (Roper, 2023). *Drive to Survive* also excluded many women in key roles in Formula One from the docuseries entirely. One of the most illustrative examples of this is the absence of Hannah Schmitz from the series so far. Schmitz has been the Principal Strategy Engineer for Oracle Red Bull Racing Formula One Team since 2019. In her position, Schmitz makes crucial decisions about how the Red Bull drivers' races will go. Schmitz has been hailed by her team, Formula One commentators, journalists, and analysts, and a variety of Formula One fans on social media for her race strategies. However, *Drive to Survive* fails to mention Schmitz's impact on her team's success since her promotion in 2019, especially in 2021 and 2022 when Red Bull driver Max Verstappen became a back-to-back World Champion, and in the latter year when Red Bull won the team championship. Schmitz is just one of many

women who are integral parts of Formula One that were absent from the docuseries. These exhibitions of sexism by Netflix weaken the series' entertainment appeal as they promote and reinforce the established notion that Formula One is for men only.

Racism can be observed in *Formula 1: Drive to Survive* through the strategic inclusions and omissions regarding the issue that Netflix made. While the entire series documents only one example of explicit racism towards any driver, the most prevalent form of racism in *Drive to Survive* is the series' failure to thoroughly discuss it. The only content that Netflix chose to include in *Drive to Survive* that addresses racism is a three-minute-long clip in season three of Lewis Hamilton, a Formula One driver for Mercedes-AMG Petronas Formula One Team and the only Black Formula One driver ever, speaking about how racism has affected his racing career since his childhood (Gay-Rees & Martin, 2021). During this interview, the episode cuts away to clips of Hamilton wearing both a "Black Lives Matter"/ "End Racism" and "Arrest the Cops Who Killed Breonna Taylor"/ "Say Her Name" T-shirt around the paddock (Gay-Rees & Martin, 2021). The "End Racism" T-shirt Hamilton was shown wearing was part of a COVID-19 pandemic support and anti-racism initiative by Formula One called "#WeRaceAsOne". The shirts were Hamilton and the Grand Prix Drivers' Association's idea to demonstrate their support for the Black Lives Matter movement, especially after the death of George Floyd (Mondal, 2020; The Indian Express, 2020). All twenty Formula One drivers would wear the shirts during a special ceremony that aimed to call attention to these issues before each race in the 2020 season. Hamilton's T-shirt was customized to say "Black Lives Matter" on the front and "End Racism" on the back, instead of simply "End Racism" on the front like those of the other drivers (Mondal, 2020; The Indian Express, 2020). In addition to the shirts, fourteen out of the twenty drivers kneeled during national anthems before each race over the course of the season and Formula One's governing body, the "FIA" for short, donated $1.12 million USD to improving diversity in motorsport (Mondal, 2020; The Indian Express, 2020). Besides the quick flashes to Hamilton and other drivers in their activism T-shirts, *Drive to Survive* neglects to explain or further mention the anti-racism efforts of the FIA, Formula One, and Formula One drivers. Racism as a rampant issue, both in motorsport and society, is not acknowledged again in the docuseries

following this clip. While "Netflix is limited by time and space… and some drama will eventually be lost… the issue of racism and the pre-race ritual serves as a particularly glaring elephant in the room… It creates a different irony for viewers: an omission of the intense discussion of racism and struggle needed to create even a facile anti-racism platform in Formula 1," (Xu, 2021).

One particular instance of racism that is noticeably absent from *Formula 1: Drive to Survive* is the surfacing of racist comments made by former Formula One driver Nelson Piquet towards Lewis Hamilton. In November of 2021, Piquet called Hamilton a racial slur in Brazilian, the former's native language, during an interview (Hughes, 2023; Mee, 2023). Piquet had been talking about the 2021 British Grand Prix from that past July when he made the comment (Hughes, 2023; Mee, 2023). The 2021 British Grand Prix was one of the most highly debated races of the 2021 season as Max Verstappen and Hamilton were involved in a collision that took Verstappen out of the race. Verstappen is dating Nelson Piquet's daughter, Kelly Piquet, but the father has made racist comments towards Hamilton in other interviews before (Hughes, 2023; Mee, 2023). Nelson has also made homophobic comments towards Hamilton in interviews in the past, even though Hamilton has never explicitly stated his sexuality (Hughes, 2023; Mee, 2023). Piquet's comment earned him a ban from the Formula One paddock (Mee, 2023). This situation was not featured in season four of *Drive to Survive*, which focuses on the 2021 Formula One season, despite the controversy it caused. Hamilton and Verstappen had been engaged in a tight championship battle all season long which brought about escalated hatred towards each of the drivers and scrutiny over all their actions, both on and off the track. However, Hamilton faced increased racism, as well. For *Drive to Survive*, especially as a docudrama, to omit the fact that a three-time Formula One World Champion, Piquet, called a seven-time Formula One World Champion, Hamilton, a racial slur and is consequently banned from the paddock for it is a clear demonstration that the docuseries does not regard racism in motorsport as existing nor vital to fix. "The omissions that Netflix makes in regards to race serve to preserve the sports narrative of a realm where good things happen in an easily contained arc. When Lewis Hamilton becomes world champion and gets his moment to talk about racism, it is just that: a moment, relegating a

long struggle to five minutes at the end of the show… It is an uneasy experience to sit through the first nine episodes of [season four of] *Drive to Survive* without seeing a single mention of the conversations and actions that had been taking place since the beginning of the season," (Xu, 2021), including Piquet's comments. However, for Netflix, "…the omission is necessary. Race is not an easily compartmentalized story. If it is mentioned, it cannot be ignored," (Xu, 2021).

Although *Formula 1: Drive to Survive* fails to appropriately discuss racism in motorsport, and, relatedly, society, across all five of its seasons, the docuseries did incorporate one clip of a snide comment thrown towards Formula One's only Black driver, Lewis Hamilton. At the very beginning of episode one of season four of *Drive to Survive*, Christian Horner, the CEO and Team Principal of Oracle Red Bull Racing Formula One Team, was caught saying "I wish he'd shut the f--- up," towards Hamilton who was speaking on the podium after the 2020 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix (Gay-Rees & Martin, 2022; The Independent, 2022). Hamilton had already won the 2020 World Drivers' Championship prior to that race, but because he finished third there, he was on the podium to receive a third-place trophy and then would receive the championship one. 2020 was Hamilton's seventh World Drivers' Championship win, and he won them all consecutively, which tied him for the most World Drivers' Championships of all time. Horner continued to say "How many times do we have to sit and watch this s---?" as Hamilton was captured on screen hoisting one of his trophies in the air (Gay-Rees & Martin, 2022; The Independent, 2022). Being interviewed after finishing in the top three for a race is routine for Formula One drivers. When a champion is crowned at the end of each season, he is also interviewed, and most likely more extensively than others and than in previous races. These are facts that Christian Horner is aware of, as he was Team Principal of Red Bull during former Formula One driver Sebastian Vettel's four consecutive World Drivers' Championships with the team from 2010 through 2013. The comments Horner made towards Hamilton were undoubtedly fueled by envy and frustration, as Lewis's team Mercedes had also beat Red Bull for their seventh straight Constructors' Championship, and they were possibly edited by Netflix. However, if Hamilton was any other driver, there is a far greater chance that Horner would not have made those same comments. As the only Black driver on the grid, and as the winningest

driver of all time, Hamilton faces higher levels of hatred and scrutiny from others. Netflix painted this as commonplace drama or the carry-over that comes with sports, but racism is the underlying cause of these thoughts, feelings, and comments.

Formula One exudes classism. Netflix feeds into this in *Formula 1: Drive to Survive* by comparing how Formula One drivers and their families either struggled to finance their racing careers or were boosted there by nepotism, by emphasizing the glamour of the Monaco Grand Prix, and by closely examining Red Bull's breach of the budget cap during the 2021 season. *Drive to Survive* first illustrates classism through seemingly inspirational accounts of drivers' paths to the highest tier of motorsport and heartwarming tales of drivers following their family's careers. Lewis Hamilton, and Esteban Ocon, a driver for BWT Alpine Formula One Team, are featured in different episodes of *Drive to Survive* discussing the financial struggles their families faced to keep them in karting and the lower levels of racing that lead up to Formula One. In episode ten of season three of *Drive to Survive*, during his interview about the racism he has faced in motorsport, Hamilton mentioned how he remembers his mother working multiple jobs to keep a roof over his family's heads, sleeping on his father's couch growing up, and his father struggling to keep him in racing (Gay-Rees & Martin, 2021). Hamilton said that his family's financial hardships combined with the racism he experienced made him into the person and driver he is today (Gay-Rees & Martin, 2021). In episode six of season one, Ocon explained, in a similar manner to Hamilton, his own family's struggles to finance his early karting and racing days (Kuniyal, 2020). Because of the high costs associated with all levels of motorsport, Ocon's family lived in a caravan and would drive from race to race throughout his childhood (Kuniyal, 2020). In comparison to this, drivers like Lance Stroll, Max Verstappen, and former driver Mick Schumacher were "nepotism babies," as the internet calls children of celebrities today. Stroll's father, Lawrence Stroll, is a billionaire businessman who bought the struggling Formula One team Racing Point Force India in 2018 and transformed it into the team it is known as today, Aston Martin Aramco Cognizant Formula One Team. Ocon was actually dropped as a driver from Force India once the season that Lawrence Stroll took over during commenced and his son Lance was hired as his replacement for the following season (Kuniyal, 2020). Lance has

continued to drive for his father's team since. Max Verstappen's father, Jos Verstappen, is a former Formula One driver and Mick Schumacher's father is Formula One legend Michael Schumacher. Jos and Michael are good friends, as well. These drivers, and many others, come from families with money and status which makes it easier for them to progress to Formula One. Other drivers, like Hamilton and Ocon, and their families sacrificed their childhoods and livelihoods in their pursuits, with no guarantee that they would reach Formula One someday. While these narratives present opposing sides, they both work to highlight the classism that undermines not only Formula One, but also the motorsport world.

Another way in which *Formula 1: Drive to Survive* demonstrates the classism that pervades Formula One is through clips of the Monaco Grand Prix. The Monaco Grand Prix is the main focus of both episode three of season one and episode seven of season five of *Drive to Survive*. Known for its costly tickets, celebrity attendees, and harbor that fills with superyachts, the Monaco Grand Prix is as much of a spectacle as it is a race weekend. Netflix utilizes these aspects of the grand prix in both episodes about it. Clips of celebrities, such as Bella Hadid and the Kardashian sisters, intertwined with shots of multi-million-dollar yachts that overlook the Monaco street circuit. The Monaco Grand Prix is considered to be the most prestigious Grand Prix in Formula One, but the sheer wealth displayed there perfectly represents classism within the sport. Netflix only perpetuates this classism by using these features to create an aura of desire and glamour around the race and to make the Monaco Grand Prix appeal to the series' audience, rather than showing how it is truly out-of-touch with reality.

Finally, classism is represented in *Formula 1: Drive to Survive* in the series' close examination of Oracle Red Bull Racing Formula One Team's breach of the budget cap during the 2021 season. In 2021, Formula One implemented a cost cap on the spending of all Formula One teams. The cost cap was created with the hopes that it would even the playing field between the teams on the grid every season and, in turn, make each season more competitive. Lewis Hamilton and his team, Mercedes-AMG Petronas Formula One Team, dominated the competition from 2014 to 2021, winning seven World Drivers' and eight Constructors'

Championships, respectively, which the budget cap aimed to prevent from happening again. In 2021, the cost cap for every Formula One team was $145 million USD. Red Bull was found to have breached this cost cap by $400,000 USD (Rathore, 2023). In addition to the enormous controversy this breach created because of the potential racing advantages Red Bull may have gained with the extra money, Christian Horner, the CEO and Team Principal of Red Bull, brushed off the overspending as if $400,000 USD is pocket change. In episode nine of season five of *Drive to Survive*, Horner stated "The overspend was 0.6 of a percent, $400,000. Really? Has that made the difference? I don't think so," (Rathore, 2023). Another Team Principal, Zak Brown of McLaren Formula One Racing Team, criticized Horner's framing of the budget breach. In the same episode, Brown was furious that Horner and Red Bull were treating the overspending as "extra pickles on a sandwich", especially because the cost cap was put in place for the first time that season and because of how it may have affected Red Bull's performance (Gay-Rees & Martin, 2023). Red Bull was fined $7 million USD and received a 10% reduction in wind tunnel time for the following season for their breach (Rathore, 2023). Christian Horner described $400,000 USD as if it was useless and, in the grand scheme of Red Bull's entire 2021 season, it may have been. However, that amount of money to any average person is most likely over two years' worth of their salary. It is almost half a million dollars, as well. The idea that $400,000 USD could be unhelpful to a Formula One team is indicative of the unbounded wealth that circulates around the sport and its personnel. Classism powers Formula One and Netflix presents it all as simple sporting drama.

In producing *Formula 1: Drive to Survive*, Netflix intended to introduce the sport of Formula One to global audiences through the lens of drama and with a backstage perspective. Although it was successful in doing so, Netflix's objectives were largely overwhelmed by the sexism, racism, and classism that stained its series. These problems are the foundations in which Formula One has been built upon and *Drive to Survive* only further perpetuates their raging existence in motorsport and, more broadly, society. As a result, more diverse audiences are represented unequally, shown to be detached from the sport, not by choice, but by its inherent nature, and are pushed away from the series, Formula One, and even motorsport as an industry. Netflix was able

to produce an eye-catching sports docuseries in *Formula 1: Drive to Survive,* but only at the expense of women, people of color, and any person who cannot identify as part of the financially elite.

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Shame in a Digital Age
Gianna Anzalone

Shame has been widely recognized as a failure to live up to an idealized self in front of an audience. With a growing mediated community and overconsumption of media, being in front of an audience is something many people cannot control anymore. As digital media technologies function as surveillance, there is a level of disciplinary power embedded into social standards online. This power has the ability to completely alienate members of society, breaking one's spirit and spoiling their identity entirely. Having media so easily accessible, shame has become the most used punishment against those breaking social codes set by the large online community. But, shame plays a complex and multifaceted role in contemporary society, containing more attributes than just the negative connotation of the word. Humiliation can work in ways of helping or harming a society, usually intersecting these two. I will discuss the consequences of mediated shame in the entertainment industry through examples of reality television, commodification, stories of those in the spectacle, as well as deterrence and social control, including other elements that are prominent through shame.

Mediated shame is not a relatively new phenomenon, but it has different implications varying from genre to context. Investigating journalism and news reporting have reinforced journalistic ideology by investigating and exposing "shameful" or wrong acts of organizations or individuals (Hirdman, 2015). Meanwhile, media platforms online such as reality television use shame to set a narrative and use it for inner revelation as well as otheringness, helping people feel mentally or physically superior to those they are viewing. Turning towards shows such as *The Biggest Loser*, we can see an exploitation of the lives of those who are overweight. Contestants on this show are pushed to limits they've never reached in order to lose weight, all while being filmed for television. Every weigh in they give, food they eat, and workout that they do is broadcasted to an audience to watch (or mock) their transformation. While being documented for this, they are also able to earn advantages by eating junk food (which is used entirely for shame, as this goes against the whole point of the show) (Gilbert, 2020). These vulnerable individuals were also coaxed into confessing their secrets to the camera, as this show alludes to obesity being a form of

mental weakness (Gilbert, 2020). These contestants' private lives with food consumption is exposed, as each person has a fridge with all their favorite snacks in an attempt to get them to "crack", thus further humiliating them. *The Biggest Loser* presents itself as helping people integrate themselve back into societal norms of health, but in reality present a goal to them that they will be shamed for not reaching, and while trying to reach it. This show pushes humiliation to fully break ones spirit before they can be fixed. Shame, being a societal trait, requires community and visibility, and reality shows such as *The Biggest Loser* puts one in the center of community and visibility.

Shame in the media is extremely prevalent when looking at those in the public eye. One of the biggest setbacks of mediated shame is that it has become a commodity. Humiliation as entertainment is the main source of profit for tabloid celebrity gossip websites such as TMZ. Greater constraints on social behavior are reinforced as these sites' whole platform is broadcasting celebrities in demeaning situations, oftentimes including those in trouble with the law (Kohm, 2009). Physical characteristics displayed by shame are extremely suited for tele-visuality, which is telling of the overconsumption of this media. Shame is evident in facial and bodily display, showing a strong desire for concealment, and also displaying emotional authencitity through easily read corporeal signs (Hirdman, 2015). Seeing how social ingrained this feeling can be upon breaking social norms is almost felt by the viewer, bringing upon discourse of the norm broken. Empathy from an audience can transpire from one's shame, but usually audience members experience emotional distance towards members on these shows. People are not likely to experience empathy when a behavior is portrayed as outside the social norm, as non-empathic emotions are formed from a disposition of disliking (Hirdman, 2015). But, a sense of in-betweenness is felt by a viewer to a broadcasting of human emotions, driving one towards thought and movement away or towards others. This sense of thought pertaining towards an event can keep a viewer consumed, generating more profit towards companies who commodify shame.

All of this was seen in the case of Monica Lewinsky, whose shame was greatly commodified by numerous media platforms. Lewinsky's most private moments were broadcasted to the world, as she was stigmatized for her affair with Bill Clinton. Lewinsky's story was pulled into a culture that encourages and rewards those who humiliate others, causing for not only gossip blogs and news reporting, but numerous songs and comedy sets as well (Lewinsky, 2014). Lewinsky's shame was used as a punishment, and as we discussed in class, she was faced with mob justice that created a spoiled identity. One of the biggest consequences of being shamed online is creating a spoiled identity. She was punished for who she was rather than the act she did, creating an unreliable future for herself. This form of punishment from the public was considered to express its most basic values, to not sleep with a married man (Nussbaum, 2009). Risky was the word one company used to describe her when she entered a job interview, while another denied her due to not wanting her at public events (Lewinsky, 2014). Lewinsky, being so alienated from society, became suicidal, being watched by her mother relentlessly. Lewinsky was able to overcome this, but the downward spiral effects of mediated shame can cause those to harm themselves, as they feel their worth is ruined. This can be seen in the case of Tyler Clementi, a freshman at Rutgers who committed suicide after being exposed online for kissing another man (Lewinsky, 2014). He was completely humiliated and degraded on social media, ultimately causing him to take his own life. Using shame as a punishment can severely impact the mental health and identity of an individual.

Although shame can severely spoil an identity, it can also be a form of deterrence from breaking social norms. Without any shame, society would not be able to hold accountancy of individuals' actions on a wider scale. This includes crimes in which the gaze of others would have more of an effect than paying fines or serving a little jail time, such as public intoxication or exposure (Nussbaum, 2009). Having an identity tied to an action causes someone to prevent doing something, as they could have an unknown audience watching. Public humiliation in this sense can be displayed in the case of Kerry Ann Strasser, an Australian football fan who was publicly shamed online after a video was released following a football match in Brisbane. A spectator of the game seated behind her recorded a video of her urinating on her stadium seat near the end of

the game and uploaded it to *YouTube* where it went viral (Hess et Waller, 2013). Numerous other medians joined in on broadcasting this story, and she was publicly named while the case developed. With the easability of digital tools and publishing platforms, anyone can be broadcasted breaking laws. Secrecy in public is over, thus pushing those to deter from these acts to avoid public humiliation.

Looking further into this idea of deterrence, we can look towards the show *To Catch A Predator,* which exposes adults with the intention of sexual deviance toward minors. This show used shame as a punishment for this crime, showcasing the predator's name and city in which they were in (Kohm, 2009). This show did not stop all predators, but it was a huge scare factor to those who thought of committing these acts. Many people featured on this show stated they were scared they would be on a television show prior to showing up to minor's homes. The thought of this humiliation, and being tied to this act publicly can be seen worse than serving time in prison. A big reasoning behind this is the idea of an unknown audience. Walking down the street, people can tie this deviant crime to face rather than having to look up a police record. Shame and humiliation in these cases are inherently linked between emotions and the enactment of criminal law (Kohm, 2009). The penalty to this crime, going to jail, does not seem rational enough, causing a re-emotionalization of law to tie the feelings of the public towards their punishment (Kohm, 2009). This level of displinary power is used as displaying the morals of a society.

While these all create a form of deterrence away from these actions, these can have a further impact on child development as well as those close to this person. While shame is a form of social control, shaming actions rob people of a "primary good", creating a substandard identity for those close to them as well (Nussbaum, 2009). With children involved, there is a display of moral failures of the parent attached to the child, as well as an effect to a facilitating environment. The demands a child is influenced by as they mature, such as the desire to be surrounded by "normals", is influenced by their surrounding society (Nussbaum, 2009). When their society is already othering them as they mature, their emotional health can be severely impacted. While an individual is on public viewing rather than being offered treatment for an

underlying problem, those within their private speare are once again affected (Nussbaum, 2009). By punishing acts through visible media shame, more families are exposed to alienation rather than help.

The consequences of mediated shame in the entertainment industry can be exemplified through reality television, commodification, stories of those in the spectacle, as well as deterrence and social control, including other elements that are prominent through shame. The level of disciplinary power expressed in mediated shame proves that one's whole identity can be morphed from an action that they commit, or how they are perceived online. Mob justice contributes to this power, upholding and reinforcing social norms and further othering an individual from society. Anything done in public now has an invisible audience, and the outcomes of these documentations can be seen in the case of Monica Lewinsky as well as Kerry Ann Strasser. Despite mediated shame contributing to all of these negatives, deterrence is crafted by the physical viewing of this shame and can cause a higher level of accountability to be given to an individual. With individuals seeing shame towards someone publicly urinating and all of the repercussions of it, they may refrain from doing it themselves. Knowing that there can be an opportunity for public humiliation to happen to anyone, people may follow more of a social code. Seeing the vast shared opinions of child predators broadcasted online may push for one to receive help on their issues to prevent it from happening to them. On the other side of this issue, this could also affect a child's development who is attached to an individual as well as push for mockery rather than help. When it comes to mediated shame, there are a mix of positive and negative consequences resulting from this phenomenon. Some form of shame is required for social control, but maybe not as commodified to help prevent a spoiled identity.

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Shades of Humanity: Capturing Diversity Through Photography
Pat Hussey

Throughout history, there have been a variety of viewpoints on racial justice and injustice due to the social construction and evaluation of race. Thanks to the development of photography, we are now able to capture specific moments in time that demonstrate how race is a dynamic and evolving concept. This has changed our initial understanding of what is and is not just concerning racial justice movements. However, taking captured photos and examining them, could dispel some of the prejudices and stereotypes that have grown in the wake of the "Black Lives Matter" demonstrations, and it is an essential step toward building a more just and inclusive society. Thus, I have chosen to evaluate the photo essay *"At the Black Lives Matter Protests in NYC"* by Rachel Cobb, which intends to engage the public in an open dialogue that ensures diverse voices can further broaden our perspective on racial justice, ultimately leading to more effective and comprehensive solutions for achieving equality.

The photographs used in this essay were first taken in June 2020, which is significant for context as they depict a specific time following George Floyd's death at the hands of police officer Derek Chauvin. According to Cobb, "hundreds of thousands of people poured into the streets to express their outrage, to demand police reforms, and to fight for social justice" (p. 1). Capturing the faces, signs, and collective actions of "Black Lives Matter" demonstrators, allowed the sentiments and experiences that followed this death to be preserved for all time. Arguments like the one in this visual essay are common, but rarely do people pause to think and engage about how they could create a more just and equitable society. However, with the help of her collection, we may begin to comprehend the intense social struggle that has been occurring and ongoing with regard to social justice and racial equality in America.

Every photograph in the collection attempts to pose a question to the viewer to try and persuade them. However, with reference to Barthes, all the photos in the collection could and should be considered "polysemous" because what the photograph might be trying to persuade may not often be clear and is typically full of dysfunction due to the fact that a photograph can have more

than one question and meaning displayed at a time. Considering that images are unable to express their position themselves, they can sometimes be hard to interpret, but what makes it even more difficult is that our interpretation is dependent on our varying knowledge bases. The notion that interpretation is influenced by our knowledge base highlights the subjectivity of understanding photographs. Therefore, it is crucial to acknowledge that the meaning of a photograph is not fixed but rather shaped by the photographer's intention and the viewer's individual context and understanding.

(*Opening Image, Rachel Cobb, 2020*)

However, I believe Cobb does a wonderful job of trying to provide the viewer with enough background information to understand and affect their comprehension. For example, in the collection's opening image, as seen above, you will notice how everyone is on their knees, hands up, seemingly begging for a change. Even without deep background knowledge of the "Black Lives Matter" movement, as a viewer, you would be able to recognize that these individuals are helpless and desperate; their looks declare to us that they have reached their breaking point. This striking picture perfectly conveys the unfiltered feelings of a community that is in desperate need of change. Though the photograph's deeper meaning can be deduced fairly easily due to the amount of background detail provided, sometimes understanding the deeper meanings behind a photograph requires the viewer to do additional research.

Azoulay would say that it is our responsibility as potential viewers to seek out additional intercourse if we desire or require it on the subject at hand, not the photographer's. Cobb, however, takes it upon herself to guide us toward the solution through their work, refusing to

reveal it, forcing us to continue to clarify, interpret, and morally assess until we see the truth on our terms. In the photo essay *"At the Black Lives Matter Protests in NYC,"* for instance, we can determine that it will feature some content related to the "Black Lives Matter" movement. Still, at this point, as a viewer, we do not know what exactly the mission is and how it interacts with the photographer's goals. The movement is to work "inside and outside of the system to heal the past, re-imagine the present, and invest in the future of black lives through policy change, investment in our communities, and a commitment to arts and culture" (BLM, p. 1). So, as the viewer, by knowing that information, you now have some more insight and knowledge into what the movement's mission and objectives are, we can then begin to interpret the photographs as the photographer would want you to.

She would want us to firmly believe that, based solely on what we have been shown visually, we should not commit to justifying the criminalization and stereotyping of people of color with no clear legal justification. But to enhance the visual argument, the photographer also incorporated first-person accounts from a few of the

protest attendees. Ibrahim Diop, for instance, is seen in the picture to the right during a demonstration in Washington Square Park. He said, "This country is rooted in racism. I would like everyone to be aware of that if we were to consider the mission of the movement and the photographs that were to document it, we could begin to realize what the motives of Cobb were. Thus we assume that skeletons they're walking on" (Cobb, p. 2).

(Second Image, Rachel Cobb, 2020)

In the photograph, the main focal point is the sign, which is held at chest level, neither above nor below any potential viewer. Unlike the previous photograph, which exposed us to multiple faces, signs, and actions, this one only focuses on one face, but two signs suggest that even without the faces of the attendees, the collective voice for change is one in the same.

That collective voice is undisturbed, unobstructed, and unadulterated, allowing it to resonate with clarity and power. Even though we can extract a unified message from the movement, we can also understand that what is being displayed on the sign is still not free from any external influences or personal preference. I say this because, although the message is similar to what the "Black Lives Matter" movement uses to advocate for racial justice, the specific wording and design of each sign can vary based on individual perspectives and experiences. It is important to recognize that the movement itself is not immune to criticism or internal disagreements, as different activists may have differing strategies or priorities in their fight against systemic racism. Though there are some similarities between each photograph being displayed, by showcasing both the commonalities and distinctions in the signs, this photo essay aims to highlight the collective power of individuals coming together to demand change while also celebrating the unique perspectives and experiences that shape their activism. This nuanced approach helps foster a sense of inclusivity and encourages ongoing dialogue within the movement.

A lot of thoughtful planning went into the curation of this photo essay because, as you might have noticed thus far, each of the photographs follows a storyline. At least that is what I propose, even though the photographer did not distinctly address that as her intention. So far, I have presented and examined two images, which stand in for two sections of the longer narrative. In the opening image, the photographer had that placed even before her title, which is why I believe that this was essentially the unofficial "beginning" of the piece. However, even though this image could be the beginning for her, that does not mean it is also the place where the larger movement's mission begins. The middle comes next, or as I would like to refer to it, "the want, the need." Since many of the related photos in this section center on signage, all of

which make requests of us or comments on past actions, as I previously noted, the signage all differs in context and depth of meaning, which is why I feel that this section took the most time and attention for the photographer because it is where we see the most diversity. We thus have to examine the diverse voices to become conscious of underlying motivations and desires.

(Third Image, Rachel Cobb, 2023)

The last section, which I titled "the result, the effect," is what remains after the want and need section fades into the background of the photo essay. This is because the photos in this section, as you can see above, depict the aftermath of protests. The third image I've selected to display shows damaged infrastructure, a burning police car, and a mixed feeling of triumph and despair. By giving prospective viewers, a clear understanding of the concrete consequences that can arise when people feel unheard. I draw comparisons back to our first image, which shows a sign that reads, "A riot is the language of the unheard" (Cobb, p. 1). I find it poignant that the sign used to illustrate this message appears in the first section I outlined because it essentially foreshadows what will happen next. When peaceful maneuvers were not leading to the desired change, frustration and anger built up, resulting in acts of vandalism and destruction. This image serves as a reminder of the power of collective voices and the urgent need for effective communication channels between marginalized communities and those in positions of power.

In my opinion, Cobb decided that the final images in her collection would be displaying how the power dynamic between communities of marginalized people and those in positions of power has begun to shift. The quote "The whole world is screaming and crying for the same things we've been saying for generations" (Marie Blanchard, Cobb, p. 3) makes me believe that

it was not only crucial but essential for Cobb to document and acknowledge that the escalation of protests into riots should not overshadow the underlying issues that sparked them. The utilization of violence, vandalism, and destruction as a way to defend racial identity should not be tolerated even in the most extreme cases. However, it is equally important to address the root causes and work toward finding peaceful solutions. Especially when the root cause is a systemic issue that has been metastasizing for generations due to the fact that people in power dare to do nothing to support those being oppressed.

While the "Black Lives Matter" demonstrations in New York City may not have gone exactly as planned, Cobb's images demonstrate that the participants still chose to voice their opinions, which is commendable in and of itself. However, it is evident that there is some bias in the response to how protests, in general, are handled. I say bias because, on January 6th, less than a year later, similar photos were taken to those from the "Black Lives Matter" demonstrations in New York City. The only distinction is that one group of protesters was fighting for racial justice and their own lives, while the other was trying to overturn an election result. The divisions that were evident in how both protests descended into riots, as Chason and Schmidt pointed out, served to further reinforce "the disparate treatment of black and white people in America by law enforcement" (p. 3). So, moving forward, we must reflect on January 6th and the "Black Lives Matter" protests as points in our combined histories that we should not be proud of due to their violent ends, to get their point across.

The images captured only serve to highlight how, in cases where race is involved, law enforcement reactions are unjustly biased and frequently disproportionate. These photographs could not emphasize just how urgent it is to address these issues before more moments like these occur. It is unfortunate that it has taken the documentation of violence to address a pattern of injustice that has continued to recur. Cobb, whether or not aware, was engaging in visual activism the entire time, which allowed "photographs to self-enact power" (Young, p. 62). By recognizing the power of visual activism, we can continue to shed light on these injustices and strive for meaningful change. Even if the photographer has their idea of what their photographs

mean, the real power is held in what they capture. For instance, in this case, it has allowed us to witness the disparities in treatment and the systemic biases that persist.

Even though the role of the photograph is undeniably essential to helping improve an argument and impact a person's perspective, it would be an overestimation that an image can also do the work of words because, as Sontag once wrote in 2004, "words alter, words add, words subtract" (p. 3). I bring this up now because, as I come to the end of my paper, it is imperative that a viewer accept what I previously discussed about seeking more information, which includes linguistic messages. After all, a photograph may be able to capture a singular moment in time, but without the use of words, it might truly never be exposed to the truth. If we believe that photographs only associate with face-value messages, then we should consider ourselves cultural dopes, because we will only further limit ourselves. By recognizing the power of words in shaping our perception of photographs, we can delve deeper into their meaning and uncover hidden beauty and truths that may not be immediately apparent.

In the photo essay, we do uncover a subtle beauty and hidden truth, which seems to be present throughout many, if not all, photographs depicting protests. Susan Sontag once wrote, "Nobody ever discovered ugliness through photographs. But many, through photographs, have discovered beauty" (p. 85). Until now, I would have disagreed with Sontag because, even though this series of images is incredibly striking and vibrant, they lack the qualities that make humanity desirable, making them appear ugly. But I'm starting to understand that ugly and beautiful things coexist, particularly in photography, where an ugly subject can still produce a beautiful image. For instance, Cobb's photographs might appear beautiful because of the stylistic choices and how they display that there is power in unity, but they are ugly in the way they show what people of color have to undergo to be equal. So yes, I agree with Sontag that photographs discover beauty, but I also disagree because people have discovered ugliness; it is just dependent on the individual, so we cannot oversimplify something different and interpretive for everyone.

The ability of photography to be interpretive is what is truly beautiful and ugly because it allows for endless possibilities of capturing and portraying reality. Cobb presented reality in her photographs as it was from the past, which, even though they are from our current time period, speak volumes as to where Cobb believes the United States is socially and culturally regarding racial justice and equality. I think that Barthes' discussed it best: that although a photograph might capture a specific moment in the present, the very instant we view that photograph, we are shown a past that is as relevant as ever, regardless of the passage of time. This is important because, although we are seeing images from the present, they invoke a history of racial injustice and inequality. However, I feel that Cobb ensured that the photographs utilized are more strategic and in-depth than what might meet the eye; it just takes time to understand and sort out the diverse voices that are equally captivating and controversial

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Savoring Memories: The Impact of Ryan Vansylvong's Legacy on Sonny's Tavern and its Publics
Ella Cox

Sonny's Tavern is a lively local establishment and cherished gathering place in Dover, New Hampshire, known for its delicious comfort food and atmosphere to match. Here, the characters come together to honor the memory and values of Ryan Vansylvong, a gifted chef whose untimely passing brought deep shock and grief. Despite Ryan's epilepsy diagnosis, which can cause symptoms such as loss of consciousness, he pursued his passion for cooking, which earned him the respect and admiration of his colleagues and customers. The outpouring of respect and support has been invaluable to the restaurant's success. The establishment managed communication during the tragedy through social media, showcasing an authentic narrative of the dedicated team marked by crises of loss and grief, as well as heroic actions of solidarity and hope. The story of Ryan's loss actively shapes the restaurant and its diverse publics, highlighting the importance of camaraderie, resilience, and shared humanity in building meaningful connections with customers.

Cultivating a culture of empathy and mutual care in businesses is crucial for building strong relationships with customers. The retelling of Ryan's story does more than narrate events; it forges bonds of loyalty between the establishment and its patrons. Sonny's Tavern's general manager and Ryan's close working friend, Tyler, released this statement: "I had the privilege to watch Ryan grow from being a fry cook to becoming the talented chef he was in the short five years I have been at Sonny's. I could closely watch his craft and see the love and passion he put into every dish he created here. We had big plans together, and I am heartbroken that he will not get to live out those dreams he had. He became an outstanding leader, helping us build our strong team that will miss him deeply." Tyler and others close to Ryan remember him as a creative, talented, and kind-hearted person who showed outstanding leadership qualities in building the

restaurant's team. By cultivating a sense of belonging and mutual care, Ryan set an example for other organizations to develop meaningful connections with their coworkers and customers. The

team at this establishment prioritizes the happiness and satisfaction of their customers while also extending the same level of care and consideration to each other, creating a positive and supportive environment that breeds trust.

The blending of fact and fiction in his narrative is evident in how stories and tributes immortalize his persona. The story immortalizes Ryan through anecdotes and tributes, which have become integral to the restaurant's foundational ethos. Stories and tributes immortalize his persona while inspiring vulnerability: "Ryan was one of the best friends in all my life and among the most dedicated chefs I have ever known, let alone working under for many years. This is a profound loss for friends and the community, but I know that Sonny will forever honor his memory and influence on their success, and I honor him as a wonderful person and part of the family. Please run a hot dog stuffed with hot dogs that are special in his memory. (anyone who worked with or grew up with him probably knows what I mean)". Ryan was a talented chef whom many people deeply loved, and the memories shared of him have offered comfort to individuals who all recognized his impact on their lives. Ryan brought genuine compassion and a good, dry sense of humor to everyone he met. One of the pranks was when he asked a friend to fetch a rice peeler from the basement kitchen, which did not exist. Even now, the staff can still feel Ryan's mischievous nature through the pranks they play on each other. Sharing these tales of Ryan reminds them that part of a healthy work-life is not taking oneself so seriously all the time. Amidst the laughter and tears, the story pulses with the raw emotions of real life, leaving no room for artificiality but inviting readers into an authentic portrayal of community, loss, and resilience. Ryan's mom responded to the post with gratitude, expressing her appreciation for the outpouring of love and support during a difficult time: "Thank you for this beautiful post. He loved what he did, and we were extremely proud of him as the chef he had become. The outpouring of love here is amazing and beyond what words can describe. Thank you for your support during this tough time and for being such a special part of his life". The memories that people have shared since Ryan's passing have been a great source of comfort for individuals, once strangers, whose shared love brings life to new friendships.

Ryan's life journey poignantly reminds us that time is fleeting and making the most of it is crucial. Despite being diagnosed with epilepsy, Ryan pursued his passion for cooking and excelled as a chef. The restaurant industry is notorious for being chaotic and unpredictable, but Ryan's commitment and love for his craft never wavered. He was always there for his team, and his legacy will continue to inspire them moving forward: "Ryan, we might have empty seats and empty stomachs right now. However, the last thing we have is empty hearts. Remember when I told you it was a marathon and not a sprint? I am sorry you ended up in a sprint; you deserved the marathon, my friend." Stories like Ryan's remind us how fleeting our time on Earth is with the ones we love, getting to do the things we love. When I think of Ryan's journey, I see a person who was so filled with passion and raw talent that becoming anything but a chef would have been a disservice to him and all the lives he touched along the way. Ryan's passing has left a void in the community, but it is now up to them to ensure his story and memory live on. Ryan's journey epitomizes the idea that it is not our time but how we spend it that truly matters. Ryan's passion for cooking and his death reminds us that we should cherish the time we spend with our loved ones and pursue our passions with unwavering determination.

The Loss of an Enemy: *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* and the Five Stages of Grief
Anna Drabik

Grief is a curious thing. Neither linear nor well-defined, grief is an experience that everyone becomes acquainted with on their own terms. To mourn the loss of someone dear to you is incredibly difficult, and there is no *one* way to grieve. Regardless, there are several theories that attempt to explain grief, with one of the most well-known being the Five Stages theory. Developed by Elizabeth Kübler-Ross, this theory posits that grieving individuals go through five stages as they mourn the loss of a loved one: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance (Kübler-Ross, 1970).

In theory, practice, and media, the Five Stages is usually seen as applicable only to those grieving loved ones. However, as wonderfully depicted in *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* (*B99*), grief—and the Five Stages—is not simply reserved for those we love or with whom we had a healthy relationship. Rather, we can mourn for anyone who has played a significant role in, or had a profound impact on, our life, whether good or bad. *B99* takes this on directly through the depiction of Captain Raymond Holt (Andre Braugher) and Madeline Wuntch (Kyra Sedgwick), "bitter rivals" whose careers and lives were entangled for decades. Though they may have hated one another from the bottoms of their hearts, Wuntch's unexpected death and Holt's grief over losing her in *B99*'s seventh season is an excellent demonstration of how nontraditional, unexpected grief is both just as valid and important as traditional grief *and* can still similarly proceed through the Five Stages.

In order to understand how Holt's grief is nontraditional, it's important to explore how Holt and Wuntch's relationship changed over the years. Originally, Holt and Wuntch were friends. In the early stages of their NYPD careers, they were so close, in fact, that Wuntch volunteered to write Holt a letter of recommendation when he was up for a promotion. However, the night before she was to submit the letter, Holt had invited Wuntch over for drinks. While he was planning to confess to Wuntch his sexuality, Wuntch misinterpreted the invitation and showed up to Holt's apartment in a trench coat and lingerie: a clear attempt to seduce Holt. Quickly, Holt revealed to

Wuntch that he was gay, and when he did not get the promotion in the days following, he assumed that she wrote a negative letter and "sabotaged [his] career because [he] refused to bed her" (Liedman & Goss, 2014, 10:32).

Twenty-five years later, Holt learns that Wuntch *had* written a positive letter of recommendation about him, despite their misunderstanding. He's shocked, and Wuntch, too, is surprised, as she didn't know that this letter was the root of Holt's resentment. Rather, Wuntch assumed that their grudge began when Holt attempted to get her kicked off the force for accidentally shooting him. Ever since *that* miscommunication, they were bitter enemies, and the hatred only continued to grow as they continuously retaliated against one another. (Liedman & Goss, 2014)

However, there were times when Wuntch and Holt could put their differences aside and work together for the greater good. Specifically, at the end of *B99*'s sixth season, Wuntch and Holt teamed up in a plot to take down the current NYPD Commissioner. Though Holt and Wuntch bickered and fought the entire time, they reached a truce, and as a result of their teamwork, successfully managed to take Kelly down. Then, Wuntch was promoted, becoming the interim commissioner of the NYPD. Her first action in her new role, however? To humiliate Holt. (Goor & Del Tredici, 2019)

In their time spent working together on the plot to take Kelly down, Holt mindlessly revealed to Wuntch that he was promoted to detective after only a month of working as a patrolman, which is in violation of the NYPD's rules (Goor & Del Tredici, 2019). Wuntch's first act as commissioner, then, was to demote Holt back to a beat cop, stripping him of his achievements, title, and rank (Goor & Del Tredici, 2019). Thus, the seventh season of *B99* begins with Holt as a uniformed officer, struggling to deal with his new position and the fact that his life's work was ripped away from him in a flash (Goor & Del Tredici, 2019). However, in the seventh episode of this season, titled "Ding Dong," a shocking twist is revealed: Wuntch has unexpectedly passed away.

Here, Holt starts the Five Stages. At first, Holt reacts with denial; when Lieutenant Terry Jeffords delivers the news that Wuntch is dead, Holt remarks, "Oh, Terry. Zombies can't die. This is some sort of scam" (Dweck & Scanlon, 2020, 1:24). Jeffords asks if Holt would like to see her casket, to which he says yes, and upon seeing Wuntch's body, Holt decides, "Oh, she is very dead" (Dweck & Scanlon, 2020, 1:50).

Now, Holt deviates from the model here, as he's excited by the confirmation of Wuntch's death. He is going to be reinstated as captain, and overwhelmed with joy, Holt returns to the precinct and begins to happily pass out bagels, exclaiming: "Ding dong, the Wuntch is dead!" (Dweck & Scanlon, 2020, 3:06). Holt feels vindicated; as he tells one of the detectives, "Her death means I've won. It's finally over" (Dweck & Scanlon, 2020, 4:04).

Of course, as soon as he says that, Holt receives an email from Wuntch's lawyers, with the subject line: "It's not over." Attached to the email is a video of Wuntch, in which she explains:

> I told everyone in my final days, we reconciled and you insisted on hosting and organizing my NYPD memorial service. I know you won't be able to resist badmouthing me at the service… when you speak ill of me, it will end your career. It's over. I won. Bye, Raymond. (Dweck & Scanlon, 2020, 6:00)

After contacting the headquarters of the NYPD, Holt discovers that there is no possible way he can get out of hosting Wuntch's memorial service, and he feels doomed. When he attempts to write a kind speech about her, for example, it turns into a rage-induced rant that is 20 pages long. In light of this, he enlists the help of Sargent Amy Santiago and Detective Rosa Diaz to throw Wuntch a respectful memorial service and reign Holt in when necessary. The three start by going to the funeral home, where they remove Holt's initial decorations of balloons, party hats, and a poster that proclaims, "She's dead!" Yet,

moments before the service is about to begin, Holt is approached by a man named Adam, who introduces himself as Wuntch's "one true nemesis" (Dweck & Scanlon, 2020, 10:05).

Here, Holt is thrown into the second stage of grief: anger. When Diaz asks if Holt is jealous of Adam's rivalry with Wuntch, Holt says, "Of course I am. I despised her with my entire being, while she was only despising me with a fraction of hers?" (Dweck & Scanlon, 2020, 11:26). He is enraged that there was "another man" (Dweck & Scanlon, 2020, 11:43), and he angrily remarks, "I meant nothing to her. That cockroach Madeline was two-timing me… I wasted half of my life hating that duplicitous hag, and she didn't even have the decency to truly hate me back" (Dweck & Scanlon, 2020, 12:50).

Wuntch and Holt may have been enemies, but as this moment reveals, Holt is now mourning her loss, as it means there's no more banter or bickering to spice up life as a captain and keep him on his toes. Furthermore, Holt is upset that Wuntch didn't seem to benefit from or enjoy their rivalry as much as he did, if there was another man who she deemed her "one true rival."

However, in an act of bargaining, Holt decides to team up with Adam and exact a final moment of revenge against Wuntch: Holt will give a nice speech at her memorial so as to not let her win by getting Holt kicked off the force. This act of revenge can be seen as bargaining: Holt enacts his plan, albeit subconsciously, under the belief that such revenge can somehow magically restore or bring back his relationship with Wuntch (Kübler-Ross, 1970). In other words, Holt is desperately trying to keep his rivalry with Wuntch alive by "winning" her funeral, despite the fact that there's nothing to win; she's gone, but Holt refuses to accept it. (Dweck & Scanlon, 2020)

Yet, as Holt gets up on stage to deliver the kind speech, Adam takes over the projector and plays a video of Holt reading his mean speech about Wuntch. As Holt races to turn off the video, he asks

Adam why he betrayed Holt. Adam reveals that he is Wuntch's nephew, and she sent him "to carry out the final phase of her master plan" (Dweck & Scanlon, 2020, 17:17).

In a twist of events, however, Holt reveals that the current memorial was not real. As Holt explains: "I knew Wuntch had one final trick up her sleeve. I didn't know what it was, so I had to be prepared for anything. This whole thing is staged; none of these people are real mourners" (Dweck & Scanlon, 2020, 17:19). He continues, remarking: "I have to hand it to you Adam, you almost fooled me. But no other man could possibly have what Wuntch and I had; we were star-crossed *haters*" (Dweck & Scanlon, 2020, 17:43).

And with that, Holt enters depression. As he sits in the audience with Diaz and Santiago before the real memorial starts, he realizes that he'll never have to think of Wuntch again after the service is done, which makes him sad. When he's called up for his speech, Diaz asks Holt what he's going to say, and Holt decides that he'll "just be honest" (Dweck & Scanlon, 2020, 19:53). Immediately, Diaz and Santiago are concerned that Holt is going to ruin his career by disparaging Wuntch, but Holt has turned a corner. On stage, he delivers a succinct yet powerful speech:

> As many of you know, Madeline and I were bitter rivals. But I've come to realize she held a special place in my life: no one challenged me like she did, or made me feel as alive. Our relationship was like an epic chess match, and it's hard to believe that… she'll never make another move… She is gone, and I wish she were not. I will miss you, Madeline Wuntch. (Dweck & Scanlon, 2020, 19:58)

Now, Holt has accepted her death. Though he remains sad, Holt knows that their never ending match is actually ending; there are no moves left to be made, and he will simply have to cherish the memories of all their previous standoffs. (Dweck & Scanlon, 2020)

In conclusion, despite the fact that Holt and Wuntch were rivals, he still mourned her loss and followed the Five Stages model. Therefore, the loss of someone, whether they were a loved one, a close friend, or—in this case—a "star-crossed hater," is tumultuous, and the different ways in which one mourns them are all valid. Furthermore, this nontraditional representation of grief in media, especially in a show as light-hearted and amusing as *B99*, is incredibly important; it validates the experience of grief for a non-loved-one and, even within a popular theory of mourning, demonstrates that grief can be nonlinear and unpredictable.

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