

RESISTANCE, POWER, AND STRUGGLE

“As social conditions change, so must
the knowledge and practices designed to
resist them.”

(Patricia Hill Collins, Black Feminist Thought)

CHARTER

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader,

Thank you for taking the time to read this collection of literature during a year of uncertainty, change, and discomfort. We recognize the toll that COVID-19 has played on our lives and are grateful that you are here to sit in this collective work.

I decided on the theme of resistance, power, and struggle hoping to merge both students' academic work while using our platform to highlight the injustices that have gained attention throughout the year. In a communication course I took in the Fall semester of 2020, I played with the idea of creating a space that would allow for collective conversation that deals with identity, racial injustice, and resisting power structures. I hoped to encourage people to submit work that sought to deconstruct hegemonic norms.

For my readers, our selected submission "Fundamentals for Freedom" I struggled with the idea of including such historically destructive language. I spoke with advisors and Dr. Raven Maragh-Lloyd to take the most effective steps towards making sure the word was not included in a non-essential way. With deliberation we concluded that taking out the word would both remove the intention of the author's point and diminish the experience of Fredrick Douglas.

As someone who believes in the power and importance of voice, it is my privilege to share with you the student work that plays with the topic of resistance, power, and struggle. I hope this journal serves as a reminder that no matter what role or position you play, your voice matters and speaking out against injustice is

your greatest weapon.

Our team discussed the idea of separating the pieces into various categories, but ultimately decided that this would be counteractive in our desire to create a collective journal that encompassed resistance, power, and struggle. This journal includes pieces that play with the idea of academic literature through representations of personal narrative and artistic imagery.

I hope this book leaves you feeling inspired to be an active transformation in the spaces you occupy. We hope you enjoy this experience as much as my staff and myself enjoyed making it happen.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Marisa Montesi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "M".

Marisa Montesi

RESISTANCE, POWER, AND STRUGGLE

The Life Changing Potential of Intersectional Advocacy as Exhibited by Mujeres in Action Spokane

Virginia Monroe

Intersectionality is more than a way to describe identity: it also acts as a rich analytical tool to understand the complexity of the world, of people, and of experiences (Hill Collins 2). Mujeres in Action (MiA) is a nonprofit in Spokane that was created because Hannel Sanchez, MiA's founder, decided to start a bilingual advocacy center for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault (DV/SA, respectively) in the Latinx community to prevent Spanish-speaking survivors from falling through the cracks. As a volunteer for the organization, I have noted a strong commitment to intersectionality in their approach to client advocacy. The present analysis will focus on the intersections of gender, class, race, and nation. MiA's clients experience DV/SA at the intersection of these identities—often as poor and undocumented Latina women. Many survivors feel as though they have no power to leave their abusers due to fear of deportation, or a lack of financial security. As an organization, MiA uses intersectional inquiry and praxis to ensure Latinx survivors of DV/SA are not left out of systems that were not created for them, enacting a counter-hegemonic approach to client advocacy by centering non-dominant identities and experiences. Hill Collins and Bilge emphasize the importance of having synergy between critical inquiry and critical praxis, as this synergy opens the door to new ways of knowing and/

or practices (39). This type of analysis, therefore, can be used to illuminate institutional power, diagnose social problems, and to enhance activism (Hill Collins 5). According to the MiA website, founder Hannel Sanchez “realized there was a gap in culturally responsive services for Spanish-speaking survivors of domestic and/or sexual violence” (Mujeres in Action). As a result, MiA has used critical inquiry and praxis to bridge the gap in services Sanchez noticed, effectively linking theory and practice to empower communities and individuals (Hill Collins 42).

The structural domain of power refers to the power relations present in MiA’s organizational makeup. The mission statement of MiA, as stated on their website, is to “help and advocate for survivors of domestic violence and/or sexual assault, increase access to culturally relevant services for survivors, and educate the community about sexual and domestic violence from a Latinx perspective” (Mujeres in Action). On that account, an intersectional analysis of MiA’s organizational structure will illuminate how MiA wields institutional power to provide identity-centered advocacy. As a bilingual organization dedicated to providing services to clients in their native languages, MiA is creating accessible spaces for survivors to gain their power back. MiA’s three staff members are all Latina women occupying a variety of identities: immigrant, mother, woman, DACA recipient, Mexican-American, Puerto Rican, Venezuelan, and many more. The identities held by MiA’s employees are representative of the body of clientele they serve, a parallel Moraga would label an example of “theory in the flesh” (xxiv). While undocumented survivors of DV/SA whose first language is not English are made invisible, MiA writes those experiences into existence, declaring that the experiences of poor, undocumented Latinx survivors matter (xxiv).

Moreover, MiA’s choice of language reflects their dedication to being a culturally responsive agency. First, their use of the word survivor instead of victim is working to actively return power to those who have experienced abuse

(“Key Terms”). Normative narratives about domestic violence tend to portray women as victims lacking the agency to remove themselves from the situation. From an intersectional lens, MiA’s clients are experiencing abuse at the intersection of numerous identities associated with a lack of social power. By addressing their clients as survivors, MiA is asserting their clients worth outside of their abusers. Whereas the word victim maintains a rhetoric of powerlessness, survivor is a word that empowers. Furthermore, MiA prioritizes usage of gender-neutral Spanish words, for example, referring to survivors as “l@s sobrevivientes.” This strategic employment of language works to debunk narratives about who experiences abuse in relationships—abuse is not segregated to women alone, therefore it is important for MiA to use articles and pronouns that reflect the expansiveness of domestic violence. Additionally, the use of gender-neutral pronouns and articles works to dismantle the heteronormativity present in the Spanish language.

Inclusive language does two things for MiA: first, it prevents erasure of folks experiencing abuse in non-hegemonic ways, and it embraces complexity in a way that is humanizing for clients. In Meyer’s article “*Black Panther*, queer erasure, and intersectional representation in popular culture,” she argues that the failure to articulate intersectional representations of Blackness in *Black Panther* ultimately functions to “reify both heteronormative and patriarchal cultural logics, thereby remaining allegiant to whiteness” (241). Essentially, by erasing queer, Black experiences, *Black Panther* continues to reinforce sexist and heterosexist oppression. The Spanish language is gendered, meaning that almost everything is masculine or feminine, not creating space for identity to exist outside of that binary, while also reinforcing the same heterosexist systems of oppression Meyers argues renders *Black Panther* allegiant to whiteness. Ivan Garcia, a 26-year-old nonbinary person who grew up at the U.S.-Mexico border describes it like this to NBC News: “To me, Spanish and Mexican, Chicano, Xicano, Mexican-American culture has always consisted of being a

matter of ‘one or the other, otherwise not acknowledged’... There is so much unsaid, but still judged, because it simply doesn’t fit” (Venkatraman). Garcia opts for the “e” sound at the end of traditionally gendered words, which they say allows more space to test what language helps them feel most like themselves. While MiA’s use of @ is not as inclusive as use of “e” or “x” at the end of gendered Spanish words, because it reinforces the o/a binary, it still is actively working in debunking hegemonic narratives about who is impacted by DV/SA (Merodeadora). In this sense, they are resisting gender-based power structures present within the Spanish language, creating space to embrace complexity through recognizing that over-simplifying identity is not a sufficient approach to advocacy. At the structural level, MiA is employing theory in the flesh to provide culturally responsive advocacy to their clients.

MiA also operates in tandem with the disciplinary domain of power. This domain of power “refers to how rules and regulations are fairly or unfairly applied based on race, sexuality, class, gender, age, ability, and nation, and similar categories” (Hill Collins 12). One such disciplinary tactic occurs within narratives about what it means to be undocumented in the United States. As survivors of DV/SA, immigration status adds an additional obstacle in seeking help, namely, lack of awareness about what rights an undocumented person experiencing abuse has. This lack of knowledge is further compounded by class—immigration lawyers are often costly—and language barriers. MiA works to combat this directly through providing an “immigrants’ rights” page on their website, in English and Spanish, where they list the rights of immigrants and undocumented persons experiencing abuse. In a culture that renders immigrants’ rights invisible, where “those who feel powerless over their own lives know what it is like not to make a difference on anyone or anything...[their] psychological mindset has already told [them] time and again that [they] were born into a ready-made world into which [they] must fit [themselves], and that many of [them] do it very

well,” MiA’s direct contradiction of this invisibility is an act of resistance (Yamada 33-34). By having services and a webpage dedicated to undocumented survivors, MiA is counteracting the invisibility many undocumented survivors face in their day-to-day lives as cultural discourses claim that undocumented persons have no state-sanctioned rights. MiA does, however, encourage clients to consult with immigration attorneys for information relevant to their particular case.

Within the interpersonal domain of power, MiA shows recognition of the complex ways in which multiple domains of power intersect to create unique experiences for abuse survivors. MiA’s response to COVID-19 highlights how they operate within the interpersonal domain, showcasing their dedication to providing identity-centered advocacy. Their homepage contains information about the increase in domestic violence and sexual assault during COVID-19, with an emphasis on how loss of income can result in higher probabilities of violence. They share three recommendations with their readers that may help with their circumstances. The three recommendations are to create a safety plan, practice self-care, and to seek help (Mujeres in Action). They also provide additional resources for more information about COVID-19 in Spanish. As an agency, MiA’s COVID response demonstrates their knowledge of their clients’ intersectional identities, recognizing that class and the pandemic can greatly affect one’s experiences of violence. As a result, they include the practice of self-care in their recommendations for those experiencing abuse during this time by offering a calendar with practical self-care tasks. Self-care can be understood as a radical way of disrupting and rejecting systems of oppression (brown). brown writes that “we are in a time of fertile ground for learning how we align our pleasures with our values, decolonizing our bodies and longings, and getting into a practice of saying an orgasmic yes together, deriving our collective power from our felt sense of pleasure” (12). Pleasure activism understands the pursuit of pleasure— i.e., self-care— as actively resisting one’s oppressors’ actions as well

as using self-care as a survival tactic. MiA's self-care calendar promotes a sort of pleasure activism, understanding that self-care is crucial to survival in the midst of a pandemic that has created conditions where instances of violence are increasing. Countering the interpersonal domain of power through pleasure activism points to Moraga's argument about feminism allowing 'heart' to matter (xxi). MiA's website states, "We believe that all people can embrace their identity, define their future and change the world." Their work acknowledges oppression beyond the theoretical and material realms, and into personal realms, 'heart,' that desire survivors to flourish.

MiA enacts a counter-hegemonic approach to client advocacy through centering non-dominant identities and experiences. They are dedicated to upholding a complex and nuanced understanding of human life and behavior throughout their organization. Through this analysis of MiA, as well as in my own volunteer experiences, I am reminded of Moraga's question: "What ideas never surface because we imagine we already have all the answers?" (Moraga xix). As a white woman, I am afforded the privilege of public services being structured around my own identity. It is essential for me to constantly interrogate the ways in which I move through the world and allow space for new ideas to not only surface, but to be heard. Additionally, I have a responsibility to use intersectional analysis to think through other organizations that I am a part of and to work so people are not falling through the cracks. MiA is an excellent example of the combined effort between intersectional inquiry and praxis Hill Collins and Bilge write about that is so crucial to prevent people from falling through the cracks. They showcase not only the functionality of intersectionality, but its life-changing and saving potential when put to use.



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Establishing a Culture of Constructive Resilience

Fisher Ng

Humanity Enters the Age of Maturity

For the past two hundred years socially at an unprecedented rate, t that were once unimaginable now pervade society. Likewise, a collective consciousness of the oneness of humanity—the belief that humanity must learn to live together in harmony by embracing the diversity of its peoples—is awakening and beginning to uproot long-held, institutionalized injustices toward minorities. The formation of the United Nations, an institution that gathers all countries to consult on global issues, marked a leap forward in the realization of world unity. The Bahá’í Faith is a world religion that shares the vision of world unity and works to realize that vision by building community at the grassroots and engaging in social discourse at the international stage. World unity requires a reconsideration of the relationships between individuals, institutions, and communities. The rapid technological and social progress of humanity marks, as Shoghi Effendi—The Guardian of the Bahá’í Faith—describes, “the adolescent stage in a slow and painful evolution of humanity” as it attains “the state of maturity” (Effendi). Just as people require new capacities, duties, and behaviors when they mature from adolescence to adulthood, so too must society develop new capacities, structures, and behaviors through a tumultuous and painful process to prepare it for a brighter future.

As evidenced by the increasing political and social disunity in society, the concept of resistance as one movement opposing a more dominant narrative cannot provide unifying

methods for social advancement and conflict resolution. Too often, social movements antagonize wider society for its ignorance and lack of responsiveness toward injustice. Those advocating for social justice issues often label people who remain ignorant toward the issue as antagonists. What is lacking is patience and a willingness to walk with the ignorant toward understanding on the part of those passionate about social justice issues. Antagonizing other people for their lack of understanding and apathy only serves to cause intolerance.

The lack of a universal recognition of the need for the oneness and equality of humanity, accompanied by the transmutation of truth into a myriad of opinions, has hindered a collective vision of social progress from emerging. Forces pulling in all directions cause a body to remain almost stationary, while a unified force in one direction propels a movement forward. The tendency for people to agree to disagree provides no forward momentum; whereas it is when people discuss a problem with the intention to learn and change their thinking that society can move forward. Now more than ever, society requires a new framework for promoting social change beyond protests and advocacy that is best expressed through a process of constructive resilience.

Understanding the Nature of Truth

Much like how uncertainty and inquisitiveness enable adolescents to attain adulthood, conflicting beliefs and pressing questions are propelling society to its age of maturity. However, underway is a process where truth is becoming increasingly relative and exclusive. On one hand, people claim truth is personal and not absolute, but, on the other, they are quick to criticize the hypocrisy of other people's truths. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, the son of the Founder of the Bahá'í Faith and an exemplar of the oneness of humanity, stated, "If all condemn one another, where shall we search for truth? All contradicting one another, all cannot be true. If each believe his particular religion to be the only true one, he blinds his eyes to

the truth in the others” (‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Talk 41). Because all people are liable to errors in their thinking, no individual can rightfully claim to know the truth. Rather, only when people discuss the truth with open hearts and an intention to learn can they change their minds to understand the errors in their thinking. Yet, the issue is not that truth has become relative but that in relativizing truth all truths are assigned equal value.

The relativization of truth has produced two forms of ignorance. Fundamentalism, which often entails exclusivism (denying that truth can be found in other religions or philosophies), deprives people of the power of independently investigating reality. At the other extreme, the belief that people are at liberty to pick their own truths, although it encourages individuals to reflect deeply, causes truth to become so relative that agreeing on moral values proves difficult increasing disunity and confusion within society. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá likens truth to the sun, explaining that, like the sun, “in the same way does truth scatter the shadows of our imagination.” He further explains that although the sun rises from different points in horizon throughout the year it is still the sun, and that “In like manner truth is one, although its manifestations may be very different” (‘Abdu’l-Bahá, Talk 40). ‘Abdu’l-Bahá explains that people of insight will see the sun from wherever it dawns because they recognize its light, while people who only know the sun by the one place they saw it rise above the horizon will not know where to look for the sun when it changes locations.

There is one truth, but the human *understanding* of truth is relative. People must strive to cast aside their prejudices, eschew the belief that they are always right, divorce themselves from selfish motivations, and empty themselves of all preconceptions in order to seek after truth. Only when people are prepared to empathize, listen, and reflect can they be ready to embark on a journey of meaningful personal change in the context of societal change.

Understanding the Nature of Resistance

Given that truth as understood by humans is relative, to suggest a resistance movement can do without the dominant culture or vice versa is to imply that one faction of people is more human than another. While some individuals and movements may adhere to misguided notions, their ignorance does not dismiss their humanity. When others respond to criticism toward their beliefs, they may not actually reject others' beliefs and affirming their own to be the sole truth, but may instead be expressing their distress and frustration at having been seen as unworthy of others' respect.

Bahá'u'lláh, the Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, wrote, “an enlightened man of wisdom should primarily speak with words as mild as milk, that the children of men may be nurtured and edified thereby and may attain the ultimate goal of human existence which is the station of true understanding and nobility” (Bahá'u'lláh, *Lawh-i-Maqsúd*). People desire truth and will change their beliefs, but only if they are heard and treated with dignity. Dominant groups resist social movements because they feel that they may lose power or a part of their identity.

Often resistance as a physical phenomenon arises in opposition to the direction of motion. Friction is seen as a force that detracts from the intended movement. Yet, friction is also the force that enables wheels to rotate without slipping, allowing for controlled motion; friction is the force that anchors objects to the ground. So, resistance and movement are not dichotomous; they are two sides of one coin. In truth, growth is impossible without hardship. Bahá'u'lláh states, “My calamity is My providence, outwardly it is fire and vengeance, but inwardly it is light and mercy” (Bahá'u'lláh, *The Hidden Words*, Arabic #51). Nothing in the world is inherently evil; evil is merely the absence of good or a conflictual relationship between two things, such as a scorpion and a human: by themselves, scorpions and humans are not evil, but a scorpion is evil to the human when it is threatened. People are not evil,

but the conflict which arises in how we choose to treat others and their beliefs can produce evil.

The Power of Constructive Resilience

Constructive resilience rests in the conviction that effective social change relies on exemplifying a better society through action rather than through words and beliefs alone. Such resilience is also a collective endeavor. Institutional accountability is insufficient to generate lasting change; the individual and the community are also protagonists of social change. Although everyone may agree the world can improve, unless practical acts bringing about the intended social change clearly illustrate the possibility of a better world, people may remain skeptical and lack the motivation to commit to a long-term social movement. What is needed is a systematic framework for facilitating racial healing, building the capacity for collective action, and addressing the material and spiritual needs of humanity.

True resistance is resilience: viewing hardship not as an obstacle but as a driving force of growth. Dr. Michael Karlberg, a professor of communications at Western Washington University, lists “the principle of meeting hatred and persecution with love and kindness; the principle that we can gain strength through adversity and hardship, and that we can attain higher spiritual values and goals by sacrificing lower material comforts and needs; the principle of [...] relying on the power of personal example in order to attract and reform the hearts of others; and the principle of active service to humanity to improve the conditions of all people” (Karlberg, 236) as characteristics of constructive resilience.

Dr. Karlberg elaborates that the principle prescribing unto each individual the duty of independently investigating reality implies that “Bahá’ís reject all forms of force, coercion, compulsion, pressure, or proselytization as a means of social change. Their strategy is one of construction and attraction: construct a viable alternative and, to the extent that it proves

itself and stands in contrast with the unjust and unsustainable systems of the old social order, it will gradually attract more and more people” (Karlberg, 234). As individuals, it is our duty to develop the requisite qualities of humility, sincerity, kindness, and resilience to meet resistance with joy and confidence, knowing we can overcome every hardship.

The Bahá’í community created an “institute process,” which essentially intends to systematically raise the capacity of participants in the process to understand their purpose in life and engage in acts of service of increasing complexity. The Ruhi Institute is one such institute process that helps participants learn to walk a path of service. Participants begin by developing the capacity to pray individually and collectively to learn to build unity between souls. Then, they learn to have meaningful conversations about the state of society and how a better society would look. Other capabilities participants learn include providing moral education for children and leading junior youth aged eleven to fourteen in service projects, among others.

In places in the world where the process has taken root and affects entire communities, examples of resilience in times of hardships are emerging. Immediately after the Beirut explosion in August 2020, ten youth engaged in the institute process and enlisted the support of seventy more people to distribute 300 meals daily, donate clothing, and clean up damaged properties for over a month (“Youth in Beirut”). In Tanna, Vanuatu, food scarcity became an issue due to reduced food imports during the COVID-19 pandemic. Further, Vanuatu was already devastated by a cyclone and volcanic eruptions. Yet, participants in the institute process, owing to the vibrant local community based in mutual reciprocity and collective learning, were able to expand their personal food gardens they created through the institute process into larger operations capable of providing food for their fellow citizens (“Providing Food”).

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, which has been plagued by tribal conflicts for years, Bahá’ís created a

“conversation between some sixty village and tribal chiefs, many of whom were on opposing sides of armed conflict” where they discussed “the true purpose of religion, the unity of the human family, the promotion of material and spiritual progress, and the critical role of women in building a peaceful society” (“Chiefs”). One administrator described how “during the period of tribal conflict that Kakenge and its surroundings experienced, I would see Baha’is from the two opposing tribes working together and coming to consult with me about what was to be done to restore peace” (“Chiefs”). In resisting the dominant culture of conflict and daring to persist in their efforts to build unity, the Bahá’ís of the DRC started a conversation that opens the possibility of peaceful conflict resolution between the tribes. That is the power of resilience.

The Inevitable Process of Growth

Just as the maturation of a human is irreversible, humanity’s eventual maturation is likewise inevitable. If the principle of the oneness of a humanity is a truth inherent to reality, then, like the physical laws governing the universe, the principle will be realized by the eventual unification of humanity via the elimination of all forms of prejudice, injustice, and factionalism.

An example that may serve to illuminate the inevitability of the emergence of humanity’s collective consciousness is that of a child learning not to touch a hot stove. A parent may instruct their child not to touch a hot stove. If the child is obedient, knowing that their parent commands only that which is beneficial for them, they will learn not to touch hot objects. If, however, the child refuses to heed their parent’s advice and touches the hot object, the pain will instruct them. While the child has the liberty of choice, obedience brings the least amount of pain. Likewise, the absolute truth is ordered such that, although we have the liberty to decide what to believe or how to act, inevitably we will arrive at the truth. The existence of an absolute truth, rather than the

accommodation of unnumbered relative truths, appears to deny humanity personal liberty, but it denies us unhelpful behaviors that only serve to divide us and cause us pain.

The hardships which lie before humanity are numerous, but humanity must arise with great endeavor to seek after the truth to promote the collective prosperity of humanity. The path each individual walks may be different. Some people grow up immersed in racism, materialism, and nationalism, and they struggle their entire lives to detach themselves from these ideologies; whereas, others may struggle their entire lives fighting for justice and serving humanity. All are victims of an unjust society, and none can fathom the beauty of a united society. What matters is not what one person has accomplished compared to another, but with what spirit of hope they have as they strive to change for the better. The oneness of humanity implies that all people are born noble and no person can be rejected for holding misconceived beliefs. The harrowing ordeals through which humanity now endures are the catalysts that awaken us to the heights of servitude to which we must rise in order to establish a just, peaceful, and united world. Service to humanity is the source of joy and personal growth. Through serving others and bettering the world, we change and grow ourselves. So, it is our duty and privilege to walk a path of service together and become protagonists of change. Resilience is not about dreaming of a better world it is the persistent and ever-hopeful struggle of making the world better.



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Rightful Reparations for a Hurting Nation

Paulina Thurman

Historically, reparations have been contentious among members of all backgrounds, classes, and social circumstances. Given the highly politicized nature of recent public discourse around the 2020 election, it can be tempting to adopt the rhetoric of key party figures and allow them to speak for Americans, slipping away from the careful thought required of a legitimately grounded and thoroughly researched argument. This paper calls for a complete and total reformation of avoidant behaviors. Using Catholic doctrine and the Nozickian approach to justice, I argue that white Americans must come to terms with their country's history, and to make appropriate amends as a unified body. The U.S. must therefore not only adopt a program of formal reparations for African-American slave descendants, but also work to achieve racial justice through mandatory programming for all American people to learn, process, understand, lament, and then act on a racist, oppressive past that simply can no longer be ignored.

The most salient argument for reparations is historical; white enslavers prospered unduly at the expense of enslaved African-Americans who were denied property and basic human rights. Justice theorist and philosopher Robert Nozick would attest that this constitutes a case of 'unjust acquisition.' According to his entitlement theory, "No one is entitled to a holding" unless they justly acquire it or receive it after a process of transfer by which the original holder also acquired it justly (Sandel 61). In addition, those with holdings which were given as rectification of past wrongs are justified, "by the principle of rectification of injustice" (Sandel 62). In essence,

if the acquisition and transfer of goods are just, then Nozick believes the holders of those goods are entitled to keep them. Yet, white enslavers did *not* justly acquire the goods (such as land, property rights, secure housing, access to education) they have now passed down among generations. They hoarded goods among themselves while disenfranchising African American slaves by separating families, abusing/raping Black people, profiting from negligible working conditions, and discriminating/publicly defaming Black individuals (Coates). Nozick may judge these accounts by claiming that justice “depends upon what has actually happened,” and if what happened in history is unjust, then the holding *must* be rectified (Sandel 61). This echoes the sentiment of the Bible in Luke 19:8b: “If I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold” (ESV). The Catechism of the Catholic Church holds similar views: “Every offense committed against justice and truth entails the duty of reparation, even if its author has been forgiven...This reparation, moral and sometimes material, must be evaluated in terms of the extent of the damage inflicted” (“Catechism... Church”). Unjust holdings necessitate restorative, reparative efforts, and the greater the crime, the greater our responsibility (fourfold or more). In evaluating generations of chattel slavery, abuse, persecution, and bloody murder of African-Americans, I would argue that our reparations ought, indeed, to entail a lofty repayment.

Such repayments are to take place institutionally and personally, hinging on logistical contingencies. First, reparations as a form of racial justice would involve only the directly impacted parties, as well as those who face institutionally racist barriers due to the historic privilege of descendants of white enslavers. Nozick describes the “obligations” that “performers of injustice have toward those whose position is worse than it would have been had the injustice not been done” (Sandel 61). Here he narrows the scope of reparations to include only enslavers and the enslaved. However, my formerly-stated contingency ought to read ‘reparations must involve only the parties directly

impacted, *whenever possible*.’ The end clause asterisks white enslavers’ obligation since some have inevitably passed on, so the descendants of slaves these forefathers once owned would be left empty-handed. In such cases the responsibility ought to fall on slaveowner descendants, and if no descendants can be found then the burden is to be distributed among the wider white American assembly. This radical social responsibility parallels that of my faith in the Catholic Church: “Every person has...duties and responsibilities—to one another, to our families, and to the larger society” (“Seven Themes... Teaching”). Where one is unable to give, those around become *socially* responsible to perform the duty of owed *social* justice. This is what it means to be in true, relational community with one another.

The second reparations contingency is that, as Nozick would support, they are enforced and structured by the state (one of Nozick’s own self-contradictions). The state reserves authority to compel responsible parties to make necessary reparations and facilitate the communal distribution of moneys owed by the unaccounted- for slaveholders. Communal contribution would come in the form of a proportional wealth tax wherein the wealthy give more than the lower tax brackets. The town of Evanston gives a comparable example; it has vowed to begin instating a program of reparations through taxing marijuana sales and using the profits as funding for repaying reparations (McCall). While details are still being discussed, Evanston’s conversation is ongoing and important—perhaps one of the “most intense” of the 21st century (McCall). By invoking state assistance as Evanston has, counties ensure that restitution is not only made, but made in a timely manner to honor the urgency and moral necessity of reparations.

Finally, the much-anticipated contingency: what do reparations *actually* entail? This question is not just one of material justice, but of recognizing slavery’s deeper impacts. While economic programs are a good and necessary start, what is really needed is a continuous effort to address the psychological and collective traumas and

long-lasting effects endured by slaves, descendants, and their families. While trauma itself cannot be undone, a more comprehensive approach than mere economics would better uplift Black communities (Coates). The Catholic Catechism affirms: “If someone who has suffered harm cannot be directly compensated, he must be given moral satisfaction” (“Catechism... Church”). Perhaps we can take the example of Georgetown University; it hosted a healing mass for Jesuits to apologize on behalf of brethren who once traded 272 slaves for institution benefit (Clarke and Donnellan). In discussing with classmates and members of the University Multicultural Education Center (UMEC), students also find it potentially useful for the state to also institute programs wherein descendants of slaveowners and slaves meet, tell stories, and perhaps make amends. The state must begin prioritizing African-American perspectives in history textbooks and school curriculum or enact more affirmative action policies to ensure Black students are given an educational opportunities. It may erect memorials or monuments to unsung civil rights heroes for whom this was their life’s work. These actions would foster the solidarity our Church desires: “We are one human family whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences” (“Seven Themes... Teaching”). We must make a conscious effort—in *both* concrete-monetary and relational-psychological terms—to rectify the past.

The most problematic counter-argument my case may induce is the claim that slavery has passed, and therefore people today ought not to be bothered by its implications. Aristotle, for example, writes that slavery is effectively permissible since some are “by nature” distinguished as rulers, and others ruled (Sandel 268). To him, these power distinctions are “not only necessary, but also beneficial... [because] they jointly produce” a product (Sandel 267-268). Aristotelians may thus refute my propositions, arguing that there is nothing to apologize nor make amends for. Plainly, this refutation is invalid because it has since been proven time and again that no biological nor other inborn differences set some humans apart

from others. Thus ‘nature’ cannot be invoked as justification for slavery. Aristotle’s point attempts to avoid the implications of a regrettable past, but if we continue to diminish and ignore historical cases of injustice, there will be no progress from a colonialist, power-hungry, master-slave mindset which prompted slavery to serve as an economic function. As the papal Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* urges, “Let us stop feeling sorry for ourselves and acknowledge our crimes, our apathy, our lies. Reparation and reconciliation will...set us all free” (“Fratelli Tutti”). White Americans’ past can simply no longer be pushed aside. It is time to accept, acknowledge, and act on a past we *know* was unjust.

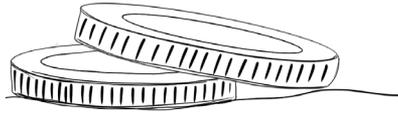
The second criticism may come from—somewhat amusingly—Nozick himself, who had a few fatal oversights which led to contradictions in his own theory. First, Nozick cannot say how rectification of historical injustices ought to be achieved without sacrificing his commitment to the minimal state and inalienable individual freedom (Sandel 66). Nozick may also claim that the general assembly of Americans should not be held responsible for the suffering of others unrelated to them, since justice is to take place only between directly involved parties. Finally, stemming from his freedom argument, Nozick may say individuals of all social classes have freedom to work hard enough to ‘pull themselves up by the bootstraps’ and find success.

In response to these three points, I again point to Catholic doctrine. First, on the state. Not only must individuals oblige to the state legally, but also morally in non-economic reparations. As the famed, Bible-derived, golden rule from my childhood chimes, we are to ‘love our neighbors as ourselves.’ State enforcement is thus only proper to ensure that individuals engage in mutual care and fair play. On Nozick’s point about wider America, reparations *should* extend outward because this necessarily reminds all people of our implicit interconnection. As Pope Francis wrote, the entire world is “intimately and inseparably connected” and therefore we are implicated in each other’s suffering (“Laudato Si”). If justice is due, it should be

given (no matter from whom) to end another's pain. Lastly, criticisms on equal opportunity would be valid *if* all were born on a level social plane to begin with. But the American socioeconomic reality is that poverty and oppression are intergenerational for Black Americans, while white Americans prosper from inherited wealth, opulence, and privilege. White Americans are privileged; their history rests on power and control from repeated, systematic, and institutional domination (Clarke and Donnellan, Coates, McCall). Meanwhile, "African Americans 'have hungered and thirsted for the promise of America, the equality of man, the pursuit of happiness' but have only been offered 'meager scraps'"; their history is in white subjugation and subordination (Clarke and Donnellan). One group was elevated, the other squashed. Yet there ought to be "no central distribution...no person or group entitled to control all the resources" (Sandel 60). Therefore, redistribution must even out current wealth inequalities, resource-hogging, and disparate opportunity while *simultaneously* rectifying the past. Those who ignore the fact of unequal socioeconomic beginnings fall prey to the myth of the self-made man.

Reparations are necessary and indeed justified under both a Catholic and (mostly) Nozickian approach in order to achieve true racial justice in our country. My defenses share a common thread: they echo an underlying spirit of social responsibility, moral duty to one another, and worldwide solidarity to which the Catholic Church repeatedly calls upon our nation. Entitlement theory supports institutional reparations, but my personal experiences, studies, and ongoing conversations have encouraged me to support an extension of reparations to include economic *and* social forms. This point is critical: monetary 'sorry notes' are not enough to address our past. We need opportunities for direct engagement and deep healing between descendants of the enslaved and enslavers. This encourages a holistic process of storytelling, understanding, and growth together. Ultimately, I uphold the Catholic Church's teaching: the wellbeing of one is directly linked to the wellbeing of the whole. Those who flourish in

excess and abundance are socially responsible to aid those experiencing a period of suffering, no matter how long that period is: generations long, or only moments. It is time for our nation to own up to “the whole story” (Sandel 62). It is time to uphold justice and liberty for *all*, in word and in deed.



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Naming You

Haley Wilson

Fatigued from the funeral she wearily walked in the door and handed her squirming daughter to her husband. Wordlessly he walked away—some kind of knowing had just occurred between them two—and she trudged across the hardwood floors into the study. She sat in between two generations. Through one wall she could barely make out the audible gurgles of her one-year-old being soothed by her husband, and, if she listened hard enough, she could hear the emptiness of her mother’s room now shrouded with that unmistakable smell of death and the haunting sound of nothing moving at all.

The woman leaned back against her chair and stretched her legs out as if settling in for a long journey. Moments later she instinctually moved her hands up to her silky black hair, a habit she had picked up from her mother in childhood. She combed her hair with her fingers until thin strands began to pool into a clump, falling noiselessly on top of her lap. She finally stopped when her husband walked in, whom she gave a half-hearted smile. Coyly, like he knew he wasn’t what she needed, he kissed her on her forehead and left the room, leaving in his wake the smell of ginseng tea and remorse. She picked up her pen and wearily began to write, sighing into the paper as if willing her breath itself to write the story that she wasn’t sure she could.

To My Daughter

Your Grandmother loved to tell stories, especially in the months leading up to her death. She was a wizard with words; when she was young, she could concoct images of fantasy and

fear at a moment's notice to please my eager ears. But when she grew old, her words would come out too fast sometimes, like she knew they were fading the minute they left her mouth—the fantasies began to dissolve, the magic faded, and she was left, a woman stuck in-between fantasy and fact. The joy and laughter that used to permanently reside on her face were replaced with seriousness, and the stories she began to tell were ripe with reality. These were her truths I think, the ones she either really needed to get out, or wanted to hide for herself but no longer could. It was only in her death, that I knew her life.

She couldn't tell me everything though, not before she died. I could tell there was one story, one story she could never figure out how to tell me, even at the end. It wasn't until I asked Fay-Eng at the funeral, that I finally came to understand my mother, your Grandmother. I am not my mother and I am no storyteller, but I'm writing this to you, my dear daughter because there are some things that should never go unsaid and I can't help but see her in everything you do. The way you tilt your head at me with unbridled curiosity, your sly grin, I just know you are exactly like my mother. Brash in ways I could never uncover for myself, honest in ways that'll get you in trouble later, and determined. Determined to conquer the world in your own way.

This is what Fay-Eng told me in my own words and some of hers, that I'll never be able to forget.

She was just ten when it all happened, probably seems old to you but she was so young. In fact, Grandma was only six when she moved away from the bustle of New York City. To a six-year-old even the familiar is foreign. The world seems to grow sporadically in every direction around you, and discovery is unavoidable. It's like colors and emotions and animals can grow from nothing at all but your own eyes and ears, born and bred from you as a gift to the world. It's difficult for kids to realize that the world isn't changing; they are just growing up.

Grandma thought Oklahoma would be a dream. For months before they left, she often fantasized about the majesty

of it. It would be quiet like she never knew could exist, a city with no people! Just her mother, her father, and herself. Her parents often called her a little Willow, old and wise beyond her years but at the same time large and expansive, growing and stretching beyond belief, growing out of their little New York brownstone. Maybe in Oklahoma, she thought, there would even be real animals, not the kind strung up dead in windows but real, living, breathing animals. Not only that but Oklahoma would be every shade of green and brown! Not black and blue like the bustling streets of New York that bruised over each night, just when they seemed like they were healing. And who knows, maybe Oklahoma would even have real wind! Wind that didn't whistle through buildings and run alongside taxi cabs, but wind undistributed, free, nothing but nothingness in front of it.

"Now to understand Eliza you need to understand her mind too." Fay-Eng told me smiling. "It was something else, her energy, it could never be stanchied. Like a premonition it permeated rooms even before she entered them; something about the air changed and everyone could tell a storm was coming. She was almost insatiable in how she sought out knowledge. Spunky only began to cover her character; she was curious beyond belief, to a fault almost."

Questions like, "Why do we look different than everyone else? Why does everyone only speak one language?", and "Why are trees so tall?", were just a few thoughts that plagued the mind of that curious little Willow.

I think she forgot after a while what that dream world was like, my sweet girl. Because Oklahoma was all kinds of green and brown and blue and red and yellow but mainly, it was white. Her first step in the state and all she ever seemed to see was white, white crops in endlessly long fields, white lazy clouds splashed against a dusty blue sky, and white people. Here, the only ABC they knew was the alphabet they learned in kindergarten, and the concept of an American-Born-Chinese was just about as foreign as Eliza's parents and her. When a child only ever sees white and is not white, she learns to forget

there is beauty in her custard-like skin. It's difficult when you know what rotten milk looks and smells like. Those children begin to even hate, their jet-black and straight hair; it muddies the sea of brown and blonde curls. The white can even teach children the value of shapes, the hierarchy they hold; roundness was to perfection and clarity as almond-shaped was to amusing and inefficient. Eliza learned quickly that her hair was a little too black and straight, eyes a little too small, stature too short: that she ate too little, spoke too little, that her and her family were a little people from a big city, trying to exist in an even bigger town.

“Before she knew it, she was white too.” Fay-Eng’s smile faded. “She practiced being white, willed being white, channeled all her energy until she was white.”

Eliza learned how to turn sneers and wrinkled up noses at lunch into smiling friends and kind conversations. Her endless energy changed away from questions about trees and birds and laughter to rules. When to stop bringing spicy black bean paste to school, how to hide the jade pendent that swung formidably around her neck, until after a while, she had learned the skill of camouflage. But maybe it wasn't even camouflage, the value of normalcy perhaps she learned, the pride of passing. Because, dear daughter, ethnicity was not in fashion like it is now, curved eyes, yellow skin, and thinness were odd, peculiar, wrong. But white was right and play pretend defined grade school. Once she passed the test of passing, in return they taught her how to like it: the magic of hide and seek in endless crop fields, where to stand at recess, the immensity of a sky with stars, the comfiest new shoes to buy, and the glory of summer rain and the dread of its heat. It's incredible how fast children can learn to both love and hate. It wasn't until she saw her, a girl with fiery eyes and a familiar face, that she remembered what having an identity was like.

There was something Eliza hated about the new girl Sarah. She did not pass, everything about her was wrong, like she saw all the rules as challenges that needed to break. Her almond eyes themselves seemed to defy every rightness in

the room and turned it wrong; Eliza could barely meet them when they caught hold of her, and she couldn't stand how they burned through her disguise. No one else seemed to notice though, that Sarah fought their sneers with calm rejection, that she saw their hatred of her nonconformance and didn't care. And of course, there was the blaringly obvious problem for Eliza, she looked *like her*: soft milky skin, needle straight black hair, a short thin build. But just as soon as Eliza grew to be weary of her, she forgot, and Sarah's quiet determination faded into the blurry background of her vision.

It wasn't until a month or so after she arrived that Sarah finally spoke. She'd said things before of course, answered questions when necessary, responded to people's prodding. But Sarah spoke for the first time a month after she arrived. It was just a regular Monday math class. "You never really know when your whole world will change do you?" Fay-Eng said to me with her eyes sparkling. Eliza had almost finished her worksheet when she heard Sarah speak.

"Call me by my real name," this small, tiny, soft, and incredibly loud girl fumed to Mrs. Anderson. Eliza watched her, confused and shocked at Sarah's unfaltering composure that challenged the flushed authority of Mrs. Anderson.

"Sarah, for the last time." She spoke quietly, well aware of the growing audience. "You must write your name on the paper. Your real name, dear." Eliza waited to hear Sarah's response, but she never spoke. Instead, she laughed, a look of exasperation years beyond her age contorted her face. Confused Eliza turned in her seat to get a better look, just as Mrs. Anderson spoke again. "This is unacceptable. Your name is Sarah. Why don't you understand?" She was getting angry now that this little girl couldn't understand something as simple as her own identity. Sarah looked at her for a long time, her expression still and focused, smug you could even say; she understood something Mrs. Anderson had never known.

Finally, Sarah spoke, her face turning a bright shade of red with indignation, "My name is Fay-Eng, Mrs. Anderson. I know it may be hard to say, but try. I want to be called by my

real name.” And she set her assignment atop of the turn-in-pile and turned to walk back to her desk, well aware of the eyes glued to her custard skin.

“Your mother and I never really talked about it in the later years of our friendship, but that moment hung around us like something of a shroud, something we could never shake from ourselves.” Fay-Eng smiled. I never knew the story of their friendship, my dear daughter. They always had this odd air to themselves, like they understood something about life and light and happiness and darkness, something the rest of us couldn’t see and maybe never would.

Suddenly the bell rang for recess, and the sound of twenty-five kids and a flustered Mrs. Anderson standing up and jostling into one another filled the air, and Eliza was left alone. She continued to sit, until the last swing of the door finally occurred, and silence filled the empty room. Thinking she was alone she made to move, setting her pencil down and swinging her legs out from under her and onto the tiled ground. But before she could stand, she heard a sound. Confused she turned and saw that Sarah hadn’t left, she was sitting just a few feet away, across the room. As Sarah stared out the window at the kids running around the bright green play structure, Eliza heard it again, sniffing and the small sound “plop!” Thick wet tears were pooling beneath Sarah onto her empty desk, and Eliza could see reflected back at her, the fiery red eyes of a powerful, indignant, and lonely girl.

“I’ll never forgot the look of silence Eliza and I shared between that pane of glass.” A small frown sat atop Fay-Eng’s face. “I’ve never seen someone more curious in my life, and I don’t think I’ve ever seen anyone that sad.”

That night Eliza went home with a heaviness she was starting to learn the world could impart onto people. “I remember she described the kitchen table to me, how it looked that night,” Fay-Eng recalled. “The kitchen table was bright and full. All of Eliza’s friends ate with white plates and paper napkins, but her table was decorated with red bowls rimmed with white, the insides painted with golden characters. She

had asked for chicken strips, so naturally her mother trying to comply had prepared some kind of oddly shaped food that appeared to be chicken and sat in a plain gray bowl to her left. I always found it funny, the affinity your mother had for American snack food,” she said laughing. “Of course, the rest of the table was loaded with mapo tofu, BBQ pork, sautéed string bean with spicy bean paste, and pea shoots, all the classics.”

“Thirty or so minutes into their mundane dinner, Eliza asked the question that had been burning in her mind ever since the afternoon. ‘What’s my real name?’ she asked casually. I always imagine her pouting out her lower lip as if it were no big deal and bouncing slightly in her chair to cover up her nervous stirring. She must have been thinking that everyone has a real name. “Without even looking up from his plate her father said ‘Lian,’ and Eliza’s mother smiled upon hearing the name again.”

“‘It’s such a lovely name Eliza,’ her mother had cooed over the tofu. ‘We always loved calling you Willow when you were little, you were such a calm baby, like you knew we’d named you Eliza just for that.’ They looked up at each other, her father and mother, and smiled. Some secret joke was shared between them two, an illustrious memory triggered and suddenly, for Eliza too. Suddenly she remembered how they had always called her that, how as a little girl running through Chinatown in New York the shop owners would yell at the Willow girl to slow down, to remember her name as she bumped into the buckets of crabs or the bins full of dried shrimp. To sit still and stand tall like a willow would while listening to her Grandmother tell her stories. To be rooted in herself, as they embarked on their own journey west.” Fay-Eng stopped, a lonely resolve overtook her face, and she grabbed hold of my hand. “Don’t be upset that she didn’t tell you love, some things you need to discover on your own,” and she let go of my hand. The touch of her weathered skin has lingered long on mine, even after she left the funeral.

You see memory and identity are like that, intertwined

in ugly ways, my little daughter. And you see people are also like that—fallible, forgetful. Your Grandmother learned her name ten years after she was born. She had known it and forgotten it and finally learned it, but only after ten years. It's incredible how people can steal something from someone without either of them knowing it. Memory is the real culprit; it's malleable, fading in and out as it desires. It doesn't wait for you when you ask it to slow down and it doesn't speed up when you're searching for an answer. Be wary of your memory, my little plum. You never know when it'll trick you, run away from you, or forget you all together. I don't want it to take you ten years to learn your name, and I don't want it to take me a lifetime to tell you mine. The effect of that, I saw it in her, your Grandmother just before she died. Lian, Eliza, never felt like she owned anything but her own mind and she carried herself with a distrust and weariness that permeated every facet of her life. She was fearful even, of revealing her whole self to me, to those she loved most. She discovered too early, I think, the consequences of forgetting yourself.

...

The woman sat staring at the piece of paper for a long time, too long maybe, or not long enough, it's hard to tell with moments like those. Storytelling to save something? Or storytelling to understand something? She wasn't sure. She stared until the paper itself seemed to disappear, and she could almost hear her mother's voice. The shrill cry of her baby broke her reverie, like shattering a mirror she was immediately taken away from that world of sickness and death to the land of the living again.

"Mei! Was she too loud?" her husband exclaimed as he walked through the door. Mei looked up from where she sat bent on her knees next to the trashcan. Smiling she said in between tearing her letter into long strips of thin paper. "No. Not in the slightest." And as she tossed the final flimsy strip into the waste bin, "I hope she grows to be so much louder."



Never Refuse to Reuse

Rebecca Simmons

Starbucks alone produces 4 billion cups annually. That means 10,958,904 cups are thrown away daily from Starbucks alone! Single use cups (paper or plastic) are not decomposable or even recyclable, making them end up in landfills, the ocean, or in the bellies of animals killing them. While Starbucks has made statements saying they will have bio-degradable cups by 2022 no efforts have been published as to how they will accomplish this. You might think the fate of the planet is in the hands of mass-producing companies, which most of it is. You might find it hard for yourself, one tiny individual, to make a difference; but you can! My art instillation was designed to inspire you to change a negative daily habit into a positive one. I made 145 cups of coffee from clay, thrown over a human downing, as a metaphor. A persons trash pile would look like if they drank 2.5 cups per week. So, next time you go out to buy a drink from Starbucks or any of your favorite coffee spots, bring your own re-usable cups. “The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it.” - Robert Swan

Fundamentals for Freedom

Sydney Weathers

**This piece contains language that may be triggering for certain audiences.*

Frederick Douglass's autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*, details the most important facets of freedom that allowed for his escape from enslavement. The real turn for Douglass came when his original master sent him to serve in Baltimore, where he was accidentally introduced to the importance of education. Once Douglass possessed this foundational knowledge, he worked to use it to his advantage so that he could escape slavery. Along his own path towards freedom, he taught other slaves how to read and write, which even led to one of them gaining their freedom as well. Many slaveholders knew the importance of ignorance in maintaining control of their slaves, so they prevented traditional forms of education. Douglass even provides an example of how an uneducated individual, unlike him, prevented the escape of some in the enslaved community. After the Civil War and the legal abolishment of slavery, white Southerners found new ways to use literacy against formerly enslaved individuals who had not yet acquired it. By discussing how his direct relationships with others helped teach him how to read and write, Douglass asserts that the path to freedom begins with the acquisition of this fundamental knowledge; without it, people are left to follow the will of others.

Douglass's path to freedom started when Sophia Auld, the wife of one of his first owners, taught him the alphabet. Upon arrival at his new master's house in Baltimore, he first encountered Mrs. Auld, who had never enslaved Black individuals before. He mentions, "I scarcely knew how to behave towards her. She was entirely unlike any other white

woman I had ever seen” (Douglass 41). This shows the unique relationship he had with her since the institution of slavery had not yet poisoned her. Unfortunately, Mrs. Auld’s demeanor towards him quickly changed for the worst. Without a relationship with her, though, Douglass never would have learned the alphabet and would not have uncovered an absolute truth from her husband.

Here, at this new house with the Aulds, Douglass stumbled upon information from Mr. Auld on how white people possessed the power to enslave Black people: education. When discussing ways to ruin a slave with his wife Mr. Auld stated that “Learning would *spoil* the best nigger in the world” (Douglass 42). He felt it important to have this conversation with his wife because he thought that she did not understand the gravity of teaching Douglass the alphabet. In turn, if Douglass had not been forced to move to this particular house, with these particular people, he might never have heard about the importance of learning. Since this information came from a master like Mr. Auld, it had credibility in the eyes of Douglass. His relationship with Mrs. Auld gave him the simplest yet hardest information to acquire, which was then emphasized when he heard Mr. Auld discuss the universal truth of the importance of knowledge, especially when it comes to freedom.

Douglass was inventive in utilizing street boys as teachers so that he could advance his skills. Since he continually describes his relationships with people through the lens of reading and writing, it is clear that he attributes his freedom and life to this fundamental knowledge. With the alphabet under his belt, Douglass knew that he had a long way to go to not only acquire the skills to read but also to transition those into writing. Just as learning the A, B, C’s required assistance, so too did developing this information into something more. “The plan which I adopted, and the one by which I was most successful, was that of making friends of all the little white boys whom I met on the street. As many of these as I could, I converted into teachers” (Douglass 46).

This method of learning required much from both Douglass and the boys and Douglass remained grateful for their efforts in teaching him how to read. These personal relationships allowed Douglass to eventually acquire the freedom he desperately sought. Although still enslaved at this point, he managed to learn how to read and write over several years via several different teachers.

With his newly learned skills Douglass then encountered a text that changed his life. He acquired a copy of *The Columbian Orator*, a common school reader of the era. The book contained a dialogue between a master and a slave that paralleled his own predicament. This book, however, had some disheartening effects on the morale of Douglass. “In moments of agony, I envied my fellow slaves for their stupidity” (Douglass 48). At this time, most slaves did not know the power of reading and writing, forcing them to live in a state of ignorance at the hands of their enslavers. Even learning the truth about such a corrupt and evil institution but having no one to understand it with would be troubling. This echoes what Mr. Auld said when he argued for the importance of keeping slaves in the dark. “As to himself, it could do him no good, but a great deal of harm” (Douglass 42). Douglass experienced this “harm” firsthand after reading *The Columbian Orator*. Nonetheless it seems to have had greater benefits for Douglass in the long run because of the freedom he eventually acquired.

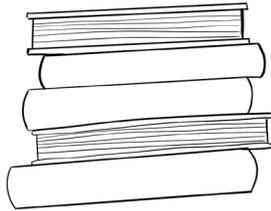
In his narrative Douglass highlights how reading and writing could bring freedom to others as well. After he was forced to go and live with a new master, Mr. William Freeland, he crossed paths with other intelligent slaves who desired to learn how to read and write. He set up a Sabbath school at the house of a free colored man. “And I have happiness to know, that several of those who came to Sabbath school learned how to read; and that one, at least, is now free through my agency” (Douglass 80). Thus, Douglass managed to pay it forward by educating other members of his community and show that the benefits of his education were not exclusive to him.

Douglass's narrative, which follows his life from birth, makes it clear that he had slowly but surely been advancing towards freedom over his lifetime. Yet he also wanted to incorporate a contrasting narrative, one of someone not seeking out education. He does this through the story of Sandy, another enslaved individual who chooses to remain in a state of ignorance about the institution of slavery.

Douglass constructed a plan to escape with some of his fellow slaves, but "Sandy, one of our numbers, gave up the notion, but still encouraged us" (Douglass 83). Douglass is vague with the details he reveals about Sandy, but the reader understands that Sandy most likely feared the outcomes of escaping. Whether it stemmed from fearing the repercussions that would ensue if they failed or fearing a life outside of bondage, he decided against going with them. While such a decision should only have affected Sandy and those like him who decided not to partake, it ultimately affected the whole group because of Sandy's actions. Douglass believed that he had been betrayed, and after mentioning this to Sandy and hearing his response, he states, "I was never more certain of anything" (Douglass 84). This implies that Douglass believed Sandy betrayed the whole group to their masters, something Sandy's lack of education makes credible. Without the knowledge Douglass had to free himself Sandy was trapped by the institution of slavery. This is precisely the effect slaveholders wanted. Ignorance kept enslaved people in line to do their bidding; education contained the power to resist.

Douglass's narrative describes the relationships that he had with the people in his life and how they helped him realize that freedom was contingent on possessing the capability to read and write. He reveals the power in keeping enslaved people ignorant through figures like Mr. and Mrs. Auld, who inadvertently aided him on his path to freedom. Douglass then recounts his encounters with white children (who were common teachers for slaves at the time) and how they helped him learn to read and write. Eventually, he seized the opportunity to pay it forward by teaching others how to read and write. Douglass,

a formerly enslaved person, managed to walk on American soil as a free man before he died, which he attributes to the fact that he learned how to read and write, something he characterizes as the first and foremost step to achieving freedom. Despite constant barriers to literacy created by those complicit in the institution of slavery, enslaved people recognized the critical importance of acquiring these skills. If people were more conscious of the immense efforts that enslaved people like Douglass put forth to acquire an education, they might seek out the truth more often rather than staying ignorant or relying on information (or lack thereof) derived from others. Moreover, that type of effort and education might be the difference between potential “enslavement” and freedom in this modern world.



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Along the Gendered Lines of Color

Lindsey Anderson

Throughout the nineteenth century, people in America existed along seemingly strict lines of gender and race. In the study of women's experiences in early America, it is easy to draw the conclusion that gender stereotypes projected women to be dainty, fragile, and pious. In comparison, men were to be strong, intelligent, and highly respected. Yet, when we look further into the ways that race divided the gender stereotypes, we can see how women of color, particularly Black women, were not treated with the same delicate reserve and expectations that their white counterparts received. Furthermore, Black men were also not privy to the same standards white men were held to--often being disregarded, disrespected, and in many cases, stripped of their humanity completely. These inaccurate stereotypes were crucial in the efforts of white Americans to rewrite history and to push Black Americans into a box.

While the narrative portrayed in literature and film of white southern women in the nineteenth century depicts them as gentle and gregarious, true accounts tend to reveal a more sinister story. Historian Stephanie Jones-Rogers gives an account of the acts of violence that young southern women were taught to inflict upon enslaved people in their homes, "... white females practiced techniques of slave discipline and management, and decided what kind of slave owners they wanted to become" (Jones-Rogers). In southern society, the ownership of other human beings became a rite of passage to young girls, numbing them to the violence, abuse, and inhumanity of the practice. Not dissimilar to the common

tradition today of gifting a child with a car on their sixteenth birthday, “slave owning parents gave enslaved men, women, and children to their young daughters as gifts on special occasions like birthdays and Christmas” (Jones-Rogers). This practice was effective, not only in teaching young white mistresses the privileges and roles of their race, but also in educating young enslaved people on the limitations to their existence.

The practice of teaching white young girls to become disciplinarians went against the narrative of the ideal southern belle. Historian Thavolia Glymph sheds light on the story not as often told about white southern women, “white women’s violence contradicted prevailing conceptions of white womanhood- and still does” (Glymph). In her essay, *Women In Slavery: The Gender of Violence*, Glymph shares stories of the horrific violence white women enacted when lashing out against enslaved women and children. Time and time again, interviewees told tales of pain and suffering inflicted by their female enslavers, noting that many of them “took voyeuristic pleasure in observing their pain” (Glymph). While the narrative of the cruel master is widely known and accepted in history classes, we often hear very little about the cruelty imposed by white women, yet, “even in these...accounts, mistresses are named more brutal and sadistic” (Glymph). White women needed to be seen as fragile, timid, and delicate the antithesis of white men. The fragile balance society relied on the narratives of white patriarchy, that the man is the sole provider for the rather incapable woman. To admit that white southern women were just as, if not more, brutal and sadistic than their male counterparts, complicate this delicate system. The idea that white women were gentle and passive in the role of enslavement is the narrative those in power have memorialized.

Southern womanhood existed in complexities. While the main, yet false, narrative surrounding southern women was of their gentle nature and neediness, this only applied to white women. Black southern women were not placed on a pedestal and regarded for their poise and beauty. The contradiction

of femininity along lines of color is explored in Sojourner Truth's iconic speech, "Ain't I A Woman?" wherein she says, "That man over there says that women need to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches... Nobody helps me into carriages, over mud-puddles, And ain't I a woman?" (Truth). Truth points out the dichotomies that existed in the ideals of southern womanhood. Black women, both enslaved and free, were not treated with the same grace and respect as white women, and yet they were still seen as inferior to men of any race. The idea that Black women were not regarded with the privilege of the petticoat plays into the deeper reasoning behind their treatment. Society refused to treat Black women equal to how white women were treated in an attempt to dehumanize them. White women were given humanity in their dainty and delicate appearance. Westernized standards of beauty catered to physical qualities of white women which could not be obtained in the same ways by women of color. To be a woman in southern society was, as Truth described, to be helped and doted on. By refusing to apply this same kind of respect to Black women, southern society was refusing to acknowledge their womanhood and in a way, then stripping them of their personhood.

This refusal to see Black people as members of society was not reserved for Black women only. Black men were also stripped of their masculinity. Henry Turner, a representative of Georgia's statewide Black convention faced discrimination when his white colleagues voted to expel all Black members in 1868. In an address to the legislature, Turner famously asked, "The great question, sir, is this: Am I a man? If I am such, I claim the rights of a man. Am I not a man because I happen to be of darker hue than the honorable gentleman around me?"(Turner). Turner points out that his unfair treatment, due to the color of his skin, aided in his dehumanization. The rights he should be able to claim as a man are limited due to his race. In the same way Sojourner Truth spoke of society refusing to treat her like a woman, Henry Turner was dehumanized when his society refused to respect him as a man. By placing

Black men and women in separate boxes than their white counterparts, society effectively was able to uphold oppressive systems of race and gender. Instead of Black women being able to join the fight of early feminists, who wanted to be seen as equal to men, Black women had to fight to even be seen as women in society. Instead of Black men being able to fight for equal legislation, they had to fight to be recognized for their humanity.

The stereotypes that were created in antebellum and post-Civil War society have prevailed to this day as harmful tropes for white and Black women, and Black men. White women are often still remembered and treated as innocent or complicit in historical narratives of slavery because our history books fail to hold them accountable for the atrocities they were guilty of. Culture still sees white women as needy, and incapable of vicious acts of cruelty. For centuries white women have gotten away with false accusations towards men of color, and their acts of hatred and discrimination often go overlooked or unnoticed. White female aggression remains a pressing issue to this day exemplified by instances such as Amy Cooper, the white woman who called the police on an innocent Black man in the summer of 2020 in an attempt to showcase her racial superiority. On the other hand, Black women were forced into a separate box. Stereotypes placed on Black women do not label them as dainty, needy, or beautiful. Black women are portrayed as angry or mannish. This has been very harmful to Black women, as it forces them to either become complacent about the unfair ways in which they are being treated, or if they do dare to speak out or fight back, they are quickly labeled angry, irrational, or hysterical, feeding into the cruel stereotypes. Furthermore, in placing Black women and white women on opposite sides of a gendered expectation, it has led to increased struggles in the feminist movement. White women have historically advocated for rights and freedoms that exclude the needs of women of color. When white women fought for the freedom to work, they overlooked their sisters of color who had to work out of necessity and received cruel treatment and

unfair wages. When white women fought for reproductive rights to abortion and sterilization, women of color were fighting against forced sterilizations. The plight of women has historically been divided by race. White women always have had the privilege of appearing dainty, even when it was not true in reality. Black women had to fight to be seen as women: as human. In the same way, Black men have had to work hard to be treated by society as masculine and to be respected. Their humanity has been and remains disregarded by a society that privileges white men and women. It is important to know the full stories when it comes to enslavement and holding all those responsible for the brutality accountable, including the white women who were capable of just as many atrocities as the plantation owners.



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Black Lives Matter: Women and Youth Take the Lead

Mae Cramer

On February 12th, 2012, seventeen-year-old Trayvon Martin an African American boy was murdered in Sanford, Florida. Thousands of Black men, women, trans, and non-binary folk have been mercilessly killed in the United States by police brutality. Systemic policing of Black bodies began with the triangle slave trade in 1619. They saw, and their descendants still see Black folks as “less than human.” Modern-day law enforcement and policing aid in upholding racist and oppressive systems of power.

After the murder of Trayvon Martin, the Black Lives Matter (BLM) Movement was created by three Black women, Patrisse Cullors, Opal Tometi, and Alicia Garza (Black Lives Matter). Their work brought public attention to the embedded racism prevalent in policing practices. They sought to recognize and highlight the need to center intersectional leadership and voices of Black women, queer, and trans people in the fight for equality. Black women remain the most oppressed in American society and their work is often underpaid, unrecognized, or dismissed. In the BLM movement, Black women are taking back their power from the white oppressors by using their voices. The ignition of BLM has given the Black community, women, and youth the space to speak out against daily injustice. Since the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis on May 25th, 2020, Civil Rights protests, majority lead by youth, erupted not only where Floyd was murdered, but all around the U.S. and worldwide. With another horrific murder of a Black man by a white officer, overlooking

injustice was difficult to do. Black folks and Black youth were unwilling to stay quiet and submissive to yet another system of oppression. Massive movements that call for equal justice and dismantling systemic oppression have been led with the help of Black women and youth.

In 1619 when Black folks were removed from their land and forced into slavery, they were seen as nothing but profit. If they tried to escape their enslavers, they were met with brutal violence from white slave patrols. The first slave patrols were in the early 1700s while John Adams was president (Hassett-Walker Assistant Professor of Justice Studies and Sociology). Not only did the patrols go after escaped enslaved people, but they could forcefully enter anyone's home and raid their belongings. The slave patrols didn't need a warrant to enter someone's home, all they needed was suspicion of an enslaved person in the house (Hassett-Walker Assistant Professor of Justice Studies and Sociology). The 1700s slave patrol bears a shocking resemblance to the Louisiana Metro police who entered Breonna Taylor's apartment on a no-knock warrant on March 13th and fired more than fifteen shots, five of which struck and killed her. It wasn't until massive uprisings and her death that the no-knock warrant was banned (Oppel, et al). While there have been small victories for the Black community in terms of policy change, systemic institutions such as policing must be reformed.

Modern day police forces evolved from slave patrols which then moved to Civil War Policing which remained predominantly white and male. Focused on responding to civil "disorder" rather than crime, white male officers in power were able to adjust and uphold racist policy that directly targeted communities of color. It was common knowledge that the officers were expected to control a "dangerous underclass" which they equated to African Americans, immigrants, and poor folks. This foundational corrupt ideology continued well into the 1900s, where white officers focused on controlling African Americans with lack of adequate police training and little to no officers of color (Hassett-Walker Assistant

Professor of Justice Studies and Sociology). White officers who forcefully entered communities where they had no connection led to increased disruption, higher crime rates, and violence.

Today the BLM movement protests for the generations of injustice that have been brought upon their families and against current day systems and institution of power that continue to oppress them. In a scholarly journal written by Breea Willingham in the *Canadian Review of American Studies*, she writes “Today’s white cops who beat, kill, and rape Black women are no different from yesterday’s slave owners who beat and raped their enslaved Black women,” (Willingham). During times of enslavement, the slave owners and slave patrol treated Black people the same way police are treating Black people today; however, today it is labeled as police brutality and mass incarceration--a modern-day form of slavery. While policies and laws claim to protect Black people from discrimination and harm based on their race, policing and white supremacy actively uphold these racist institutions.

During the Jim Crow Laws period that lasted eighty years, the police were utilized to enforce discriminatory laws. They would punish Black Americans for violating any Jim Crow Laws and those punishments ranged anywhere from being beaten, arrested, or killed (Hassett-Walker Assistant Professor of Justice Studies and Sociology). This kind of treatment and punishment from law enforcement are equivalent to lynching. The Slave Patrol, the Jim Crow Era and Black Codes set grounds for the *Plessy v. Ferguson* precedent in 1896, that segregation was legal based on the idea of ‘separate but equal.’ Based on this decision, segregation was constitutional, and didn’t violate the 14th Amendment if both races had equal facilities and resources. However, equality has not been the case even within the *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision. The facilities and resources available to Black Americans were far worse in quality, in every aspect. Their bathrooms, restaurants, places on the bus, water fountains, and education were not near to the quality of those resources that white people had (Hassett-Walker Assistant Professor of Justice

Studies and Sociology). This unequal access to resources was another tool that white society used to their advantage to reinforce the stereotype of having less and being uncivilized.

In the protests erupting in May after the merciless murder of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor people took to the streets demanding justice and accountability for the police: demanding that society finally acknowledge that Black Lives do Matter. Some of these protests did turn violent, in terms of destruction of property and fires being set. These more violent protests typically occurred in major cities with police departments with a horrible discriminatory reputation. As Black folks have continually been excluded and oppressed by systems of power, this destruction of property became an important symbol for the lack of action taken against police brutality.

In Seattle and many other cities law enforcement responded with forceful violence, beating protestors with batons, tear gassing crowds and shooting rubber bullets. On May 30th, one of the earlier BLM protests, a Seattle Police Officer sprayed an eight-year-old boy in the face with pepper spray. The family of the young boy filed a lawsuit against the officer who sprayed the chemical irritant at his face. The officer was arrested and booked into King County Jail for forty-three hours and then released on misdemeanor charges (Takayama). The only reason the officer was arrested was due to media coverage which invoked pressure from community. If the family hadn't had the resources to reach the media, the officer would have gone unpunished, and likely would have harmed more Black people. The same day in Seattle, Nikita Tarver was struck in the eye with a rubber bullet after peacefully protesting on the steps of City Hall. She told the *Seattle Times* that she and a friend had driven down from Bellevue to participate in their first protest, energized to be a part of history, and as she knelt to pick up her sign she accidentally dropped, her vision went dark and her whole face stung. She had to have three separate surgeries to repair her eye, in which the doctors at Harborview said that she may not ever fully see

out of her left eye again. No officers were held accountable. The Seattle City Council did vote to ban police crowd control weapons such as “kinetic impact projectiles, chemical irritants, acoustic weapons, directed energy weapons, water cannons, disorientation devices, ultrasonic cannons...” (Takahama). However, this unanimous vote didn’t last, and even when Seattle Mayor, Jenny Durkan announced the ban, there was a heightened use of chemical irritants and smoke bombs at the next protest.

At other protests around the country, such as in Jacksonville, Birmingham, Philadelphia, and Richmond, protesters graffitied and took down several racist and offensive statues from the Civil War that were still standing (Somvichian-Clausen). The statues were representations of Confederate generals, slave owners, and other racist historical figures who stood for inequality and the oppression of Black and Brown bodies. Following the destruction of these statues and monuments, government officials, such as the Mayor of Jacksonville, Florida, came forward in agreement to remove the rest of the state’s Confederate statues (Somvichian-Clausen). The protests have carried out momentous change through the organizing of those in the fight for dismantling racist power structures. In multiple suburbs and smaller cities in Washington just north of Seattle, various young adults have been the ones leading change and demanding that society do better. One of these youth groups is the students in the Shoreline Black Lives Matter chapter. The group is made up of several Black students from Shorecrest Highschool and varying middle schools, one of which being Kellogg Middle school. This group of students has had much success in their fight for justice giving many people, including myself, hope for the future. The youth chapter of the Shoreline Black Lives Matter has organized events, spoken out against inequality, and won many of their campaigns.

Led by student DarNeasha Weary of Shoreline, she stated that the main reason these students felt so compelled to organize was because of the racism that they had faced. They

were “tired of everything happening in their classrooms,” and wanted to amplify their voices as young students of color fighting against the injustices that they experienced first-hand. The group focused their mission on accountability and action calling “[to] Amplify black community voice in Shoreline area, to raise and create allies and accomplices- start a conversation with accomplices and allies.” On June 6th, 2020, the Shoreline youth organized a successful protest for Black Lives at Cromwell Park. Over 1,000 people showed up in support of Black Lives Matter. The event started with multiple students giving speeches and remarks about why they were fighting for BLM using personal stories of the racism they had experienced firsthand. Multiple families alike with very young kids, and families with grandparents, people of all races and ethnicities, all ages, all genders were in attendance listening to these young folks.

While the group has had many successes, they have faced many setbacks in their fight for justice. DarNeasha explained that one of their biggest challenges in their fight for justice are, “Adults who are set in their mind in the way things need to be done, fighting against the system, and encouraging people to take part in the process of unlearning.” She continued to discuss how “students and kids see and experience a lot more than what we as adults give them credit for, they truly have world views.” Despite the counter narrative being pushed by adults in the community, one of the Shoreline activist leaders, Kailyn Jordan, a 13-year-old middle school student has experienced the harmful rhetoric pushed by adults stuck in a racist mindset. Kailyn has been the target of many racially motivated hate crimes within her neighborhood. While Kailyn has worked to have constructive conversations with her neighbors about the harm dismissing Black Lives Matter causes her. Remarkably, one of her neighbors took down their Blue thin line flag in respect of Kailyn. However, this interaction enraged another one of Kailyn’s white neighbors. The neighbors rage was fueled by a fear that Kailyn, a young Black woman, was having such a positive impact on her

community through productive conversation. Kailyn's neighbor had threatened to lynch Kailyn attempted to run her over and pulled a gun on her. Despite the microaggressions and racially motivated hate crimes didn't derail Kailyn's fight for justice, nor have they compelled the Shoreline BLM Chapter to back down. They have already made waves. DarNeasha continued to emphasize that protesting is only step one in the fight, "there is more to do than marching and demonstrating. Things need to start happening. There needs to be change." The Shoreline BLM chapter attended every City Council meeting to hold the city council members accountable for their actions. In November 2020, a city council member apologized to the students for not being true to his word. Through dedicated action, the Shoreline students made significant change in their community.

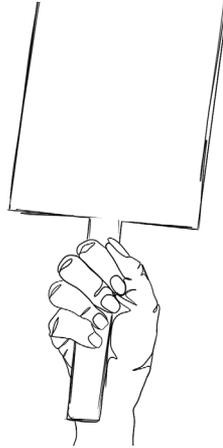
One of the accomplishments for the group included writing a 16-page Anti-Racist Policy that the city of Shoreline and the Shoreline School District adopted. The Anti-Racist policy describes what it looks like and what it means to be anti-racist, the biggest barrier to anti-racism, and what each of these things looks like in practice. The work that these students have done has sparked further activism throughout their campus and community and has shown them what groundwork can do through collective grassroots movements. It is through collective power that real change begins to happen. Collective action occurs when a group of people work together to achieve a common goal for the public good. Several massive social and political movements, such as the Civil Rights Movement, Women's Rights, Disabilities rights, and LGBTQIA+ rights etc. have been the product of collective action. The Shoreline students and other student led groups around the country have presented countless ways in which injustice can be begun to be remedied and made right. Along with getting anti-racist policies such as those that the Shoreline community adopted, BLM groups have called for defunding and reforming the police system.

Defunding the police has brought in a variety of

controversial opinions in terms of what that would mean, how it would look, etc., going forward. According to the ACLU [American Civil Liberties Union], defunding the police means reimagining law enforcement and reallocation of funds that are directly funneled into the budget for the police, and redistributed into resources that would further help the community. Such resources range from distributing funds towards education, de-escalation training, and further counseling, affordable housing, and accessible health care. One of the direct plans that has been suggested, offers that instead of allocating money to put police officers in schools that primarily teach students of color, spend the money to bring in counselors and mental health officials (Fernandez). Along with defunding the police, businesses, and schools have been working to implement anti-racist policies and practices into their missions to show solidarity with the BLM Movement. Following the BLM protests several universities, organizations, and businesses have provided statements about standing in solidarity. A business named *VideoAMP* vowed to prioritize anti-racist education for their employees. They also made this past Juneteenth an annual holiday for their company's employees giving them the day off. Other companies have promised to diversify their administration. All S & P 500 companies (Stock Market Index companies) have promised to appoint at least one woman and one person of color to their administrative boards. Although, there is more that needs to be more done than just appointing a few women and people of color to the boards, businesses are acknowledging a step in the right direction.

Right-wing media has portrayed the protests as useless and unproductive, describing them as violent riots. The BLM protests during the summer of 2020 were met with aggressive violence from law enforcement as well as anti-protestors who opposed Black Lives Matter. While media sources and conservative policy makers continue to push harmful and destructive narratives of the Black Lives Matter movement, productive change has occurred as a result from the collective

action of protests both in person and online. Not only did many businesses commit to anti-racist programming through pressure and encouragement from activists, but they set an important precedent that forced many others to reevaluate the many biases and prejudices they hold. There have been analogies that the road to anti-racism holds many lanes that need to be occupied. Those different lanes are all necessary to occupy, if the people in them are trying to change their beliefs (Stevens). Anti-racism work ranges from being quiet while doing research, action through organizing, and policy writing. Regardless of the lanes we occupy, we must work to actively listen, research, and understand the identities that we hold in order to be a voice for change.



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Indigenous History of the San Luis Valley: Follow the Water

Sebastian Campos

The San Luis Valley represents an unconquerable landscape set above the rest, a migratory corridor that transcends borders, and a microcosm of identities developed through contact. The San Luis Valley's 11,000-year human history is layered by the groups that have passed through; it is deep in the soil and on top of the mountains. The majority of its history is marked by natural migration, cohabitation of sovereign peoples, and acknowledgement that the Valley was no one's to own. Through creation stories and means of sustainment, this land provided life to its diverse Ute, Diné, Jicarilla Apache, Pueblo and Comanche peoples. First contact with the Spanish in the lands of the Northern Río Grande more than 400 years ago set into motion a series of processes that rearranged regional power dynamics. This migration, cohabitation, and acknowledgment among the Valley's First Nations shifted to coordinated efforts to defend identities rooted in the land. Native actions, then Spanish, Mexican, and United States reactions shaped the San Luis Valley.

Ute land usage dictated the terms of settlement for Spanish, Mexican, and United States citizens following the path of least resistance along its waterways. A Native-oriented region adopted the labels of its occupiers under three flags as Utes worked to assert their sovereignty through compounding processes of encroachment. A set of broken treaties between bands of the Utes and the US undermined tribal sovereignty and established reservations outside of the ancestral homelands. The extreme environment of the San Luis Valley developed its own multinational cultural landscape, isolated from the constructed borders of Colorado. What exists today is a Native

landscape labelled in Spanish, a microcosm of conflicting identities and shrinking biodiversity. It is in acknowledging and embracing the layered development of the corridor and the active role of its First Inhabitants that the veins of a living San Luis Valley will continue to flow. Follow the water, find the history.

Orienting to a Native Landscape

Watching over the San Luis Valley (the Valley or the Sacred Valley) is a living and breathing entity known to the Diné as *Sisnaajini*, to the Ute as *Peeroradarath*, to the Jicarilla Apache as *Nishnojini*, and to the Tewa-speaking Pueblo peoples of the Northern Río Grande as *Pintsae'i'i* (Krall 7-8). This entity takes the form of a 14,344-foot mountain, known today as Blanca Peak, at the head of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains (“Monster’s Back” to the Ute) of present-day southern Colorado and northern New Mexico (Mitchell and Krall 321). For 11,000 years, the Valley’s inhabitants and visitors have oriented themselves in relation to the great mountain, it has served as a cardinal direction and a provider to those that fall under its domain.

Situated between the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and the San Juan Mountains (“Shining Mountains” to the Ute), the San Luis Valley is North America’s largest alpine valley, capable of sustaining biodiverse populations 7,500-feet above sea level because of the waters flowing down from its ranges and up from its springs (Mitchell and Krall 319). To the north, the Valley is marked by Poncha Pass going over the Sawatch Mountain Range (an anglicized version of the shortened Saguache, which comes from the Ute word *Saguguachipa*) (Mitchell and Krall 319). To the south, the entrance along the Río Grande is populated by the Pueblos of the Taos Plateau. La Veta Pass over the Sangre de Cristo Mountains to the east serves as a bridge between the San Luis Valley and the Great Plains.

The Valley is an expansive, yet isolated, migration

corridor with a variety of ecosystems. These ecosystems range from grasslands to alpine tundra; the moving sands of the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve (*Saa waap manache* to the Ute and *Sei-anyedi* to the Jicarilla Apache) to the wetlands of the Río Grande Basin (Duran 243-258). The Valley has been home to diverse species of animals and plants, including bison, sandhill cranes, and alpine wildflowers beyond that of a sage-brushed landscape. This biodiversity is noted in prehistoric archaeological evidence, journals of colonizers, and current biological data. The Valley's First People, the Paleo Indians of the Clovis and Folsom complexes, followed ancient bison and other big game along the rivers formed at the end of the Ice Age roughly 11,000 years ago. Before the written words of history, archaeological evidence in the Valley placed seasonal camps of the First Peoples near ancient high-altitude wetlands with tools geared towards hunting migratory animals (Wilson 206). Through the formation of the San Luis Valley, there were its people and their "footsteps" (Krall 9).

The Río Grande (*Posoge* to the Tewa-speaking Pueblo) was born in the San Luis Valley. Branches of the Río Grande reach throughout the corridor, as do the Saguache and San Luis Creeks from the north, Río Culebra from the east, and the Conejos River from the west. The Río Grande itself serves as a north-south dividing line between cultures. From the headwaters of the *Posoge* to the top of *Sisnaajini*, this cultural landscape was developed and layered with labels hundreds of years before first contact with the Spanish and their *palabras*. Through stories and traditions, the history of the Valley's First Peoples flows like water from the mountains. The Sacred Valley served as a homeland to the Ute, Diné, and Jicarilla Apache peoples; a land of emergence for the Tewa-speaking Pueblos of the Northern Río Grande; and a land of migration for the Comanches of the Great Plains (Krall 9).

The Sacred Valley is the setting in which the Ute peoples came to be, emerging from the Shining Mountains and living in the Sacred Valley. The Ute Creation Story speaks of the Creator, Sinaway, tasking Coyote with opening a bag in the

“sacred grounds” of the earth’s early valleys (Naranjo, “Ute Creation Story”). Overcome with curiosity, Coyote prematurely opens the bag, releasing multitudes of people speaking in strange languages. By the time Coyote closes the bag, all that remain were a select few—the chosen ones. The oral history continues, “[Coyote] went to the sacred valley and dumped them out there. There was a small number of these people. But those few ones were the Utes, the real *Utes* from around here” (“Ute Creation Story”). The San Luis Valley was home to the Caputa, Mouache, and Tabeguache bands of the Ute Tribe. Archaeological data and oral history demonstrate that the Ute bands came to dominate the region as the primary inhabitants of the San Luis Valley from the twelfth century through the historic period and the nineteenth century (Van Ness 3). The Sacred Valley is the land of the Utes.

The Diné Tribe, emerging from the Fourth World into the Fifth World, oriented themselves to *Sisnaajini* as the eastern limit of Dinétah, their homeland. To the Jicarilla Apache, the same mountain is referenced in their creation in another Athapaskan dialect as *Nishnojini* (demonstrating ancestral connection to the Diné, coming south from the Bering Strait), still acting as a direction to the White Clan of the San Luis Valley (Krall 8). Within the waters of the Arkansas, Canadian, Pecos, and Río Grande (*Cut Soy*), the Apache found themselves located in the center of the Earth in the San Luis Valley (Mitchell and Krall 322). The Valley and its biodiversity along its veins of water served as a provider to the mobile peoples of the Ute, Diné, and Jicarilla Apache.

The Tewa-speaking Pueblos of the Northern Río Grande Region emerged from the waters of the San Luis Valley alongside *Posoge*. To many of these Pueblo peoples, their emergence place, *Sipapu*, is a sandy lake located at the base of the Great Sand Dunes of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains (Ortiz). The lands surrounding the lake were deemed “too sacred...” so the Pueblo peoples crossed the big river south and established themselves along the Río Grande in the Taos Plateau (White 60). The peoples of the Pueblos migrated north

seasonally to hunt, joining the Comanches coming from the Great Plains by way of what would become La Veta Pass over the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. Migration into the Valley brought Pueblo peoples and Comanches into contact with Ute, Diné, and Jicarilla Apache peoples.

The San Luis Valley is a region developed through 11,000 years of climate change and human history (figure 1). Before the Utes made first contact with the Spanish at the turn of the seventeenth century, there existed trade, conflict, and exchanges of culture between First Nations. The arrival of Spaniards on horses along the Río Grande represented one more migratory people entering the Sacred Valley.

The Spanish Tribe (1598-1821)

First contact with the Spanish by the Caputa and Mouache Bands of the Ute Tribe set into motion processes that rearranged power dynamics in the San Luis Valley. Encroachments by Spaniards into the region of the Northern Río Grande challenged the sovereignty of the Tewa-speaking Pueblos and Utes alike, though these incursions did not go unchecked. The introduction of European trade commodities in a multinational living space brought increased mobility and contact between the Valley's Tribes. Migration, cohabitation, and acknowledgement among the Valley's First Nations shifted towards coordinated efforts to defend identities rooted in the land. Land usage and the presence of the Utes in the San Luis Valley dictated the terms of Spanish settlement. The autonomous Ute Bands of the Caputa, Mouache, and Tabeguache asserted their sovereignty and dominated the landscape of the Sacred Valley from Spanish arrival through expulsion in 1821. The San Luis Valley was acknowledged by the Spanish colonial government as the land of the Utes through alliances and conflict.

Juan de Oñate's 1598 arrival into the lands of the Northern Río Grande was one of the first in a series of Spanish incursions. Blanket claims on lands of the Utes and Pueblos,

untouched by the Spanish, were made along the Río Grande. Among these was Governor Juan de Oñate's conception of New Mexico noted by one of his captains, Gaspar Pérez de Villagrà, in *La Historia de Nuevo México* in 1610:

"...I take and seize one, two, and three times... all those which I can and ought, the Royal tenancy and possession... at this aforesaid River of the North... without any limitation... And I take this aforesaid possession... founded in the said kingdoms and provinces of New Mexico, and those neighboring to them, and shall in future time be founded in them, with their mountains, glens, watering places, and all its Indian natives..."

Juan de Oñate claimed all development along the Río Grande in the name of the Spanish crown, to include the southern portion of the San Luis Valley and its First Peoples. The establishment of Santa Fe in 1610 marked the beginning of continuous contact, conflict, and settlement along natural migration routes. The Ute trails, trodden by footsteps over hundreds of years, became known as the "Old Spanish Trail" (Southern Ute Indian Tribe, "Early History"). Visitors that follow continue this route through the Valley.

The Mouache and Caputa bands of the San Luis Valley acquired the horse around 1640 and were the first Native Americans to adopt it into their culture, though the Tabeguache soon followed (Southern Ute Indian Tribe, "Chronology"). This reinforced the dominance of the Utes in the San Luis Valley as they were able to consolidate into well-defined bands, mobilize to hunt, and defend the breadth of their lands. The Utes acquired horses from the Spanish in calculated efforts to increase mobility and rearrange regional power dynamics. The Spanish, in return, often received hides and slave labor in the form of women and children captives of the Ute bands (Wilson 206; Rael-Galvez). The introduction of the horse into the multinational living space of the Valley fueled raids on neighboring Pueblo, Jicarilla Apache, Comanche, and Diné peoples. The Ute bands were able to dominate the region by controlling the distribution of the horse and trade alliances with

the Spanish, including a 1670 treaty organized by the Mouache Utes (McPherson).

The Pueblos of the Northern Río Grande countered waves of Spanish conquistadors, missionaries, and *pobladores* through compounding processes of colonization. The arrayed set of Pueblos were united under foreign occupation and exploitation in the form of missions and *encomiendas*, and they organized against the Spanish despite differences in culture and language under the leadership of the Tewa Popé out of the Taos area. The Pueblo Revolt of August 1680 was a simultaneous effort to assert sovereignty. The extent of its success goes beyond the 400 Spaniards killed and the total expulsion of Spanish influence for twelve years. Governor Antonio de Otermin noted an alliance between the Jicarilla Apache and the Pueblo peoples as they surrounded him with Spanish weapons requesting his surrender on September 8th, 1680 (“The Pueblo Revolt: Letter from Antonio de Otermin”). The success is represented by the effectiveness of coordinated efforts by First Nations in defending identities rooted in the land and the power vacuum left behind in the San Luis Valley. From 1680 forward, those First Nations of the Valley were seen as potential allies rather than subjects of blanket claims by the Spanish. The events of the Pueblo Revolt set the stage for the eighteenth century’s shifting alliances that leveled the playing field and developed the landscape.

By the time the Spanish returned to the Valley in 1694 under Diego de Vargas, the Mouache and Caputa bands had capitalized off of alliances with the Comanches and the Jicarilla Apaches to raid the Pueblos of the Northern Río Grande. In the journal of Diego de Vargas, the Native landscape of the Sacred Valley was depicted over the course of six days along the Río Grande and the Río Culebra. Diego de Vargas noted the biodiversity along the waters of the Valley and herds of bison in “the land of the Yutas” (Colville 131). He and his men were pushed north by the peoples of the Taos Pueblo along the path of least resistance. The turn of the eighteenth century was marked by raids on the Spanish and their Hopi

Pueblo allies in northern New Mexico by Utes, Jicarilla Apaches, and Comanches brought together through horsepower (“Chronology”).

A series of raids and counterraids between Spaniards and the allied forces of the Utes kept Spanish settlements out of the San Luis Valley through the mid-eighteenth century. The scope of conflict continuously shifted between the autonomous bands of the First Nations of the San Luis Valley and the Spanish. Fluid sets of alliances were formed to create positions of relative advantage in an interconnected landscape. As the United States fought for independence from the British, Ute bands fought for preservation of identity in the Valley against the Spanish. In August 1779, Mouache Utes and Jicarilla Apaches organized alongside New Mexico Governor Juan Bautista de Anza in a campaign against the Comanches under Chief Cuerno Verde north of the San Luis Valley at the Arkansas River (Saenz 339). Juan Bautista de Anza’s journal entries from August 19th and September 4th, 1779 captured the dynamics of a living San Luis Valley from his path over La Veta Pass and back to Santa Fe (Van Ness 6). This coordinated campaign was a product of temporary alliances to take out a common enemy. By 1789, the Mouache Band and Juan Bautista de Anza had organized another treaty to join arms in campaigns against the Comanches and the Diné (“Chronology”). As much as these campaigns were out of defense of Spaniards on the already established “frontier,” they were calculated strikes by Ute bands to solidify their position in the Sacred Valley.

The nineteenth century brought continued conflict between the Valley’s First Peoples and new contact with Mexican and United States citizens travelling through the corridor. Patterns of peace-making, trading, and raiding were constant. Captain Zebulon Montgomery Pike of the US Army encroached on Spanish-claimed Native lands in the San Luis Valley on January 27th, 1807 (Thomas 30). By the time he and his men arrived from St. Louis, Missouri there existed competing spheres of influence between the peoples of the Ute

bands and Comanches to the north of the Río Grande, as well as between the Pueblos and the Spanish to the south. Coming over the “White Mountains” near the “sandy hills” to see a “large river” coming out of the San Juan Mountains, Pike and his men had suffered extreme cold with five left to die on the trail with frozen feet (Thomas 30).

Captain Pike deemed the Valley “one of the most sublime and beautiful inland prospects presented to the eyes of man” on February 5th, 1807 (Thomas 30). After three weeks moving through the Valley, Captain Pike and his men were arrested by the Spanish at their stockade near present-day Sanford, Colorado on February 26th, 1807. The Spanish claimed Pike had encroached past the limits of the United States along the “Rio del Norte” (Río Grande), and he was then brought in front of both the governor in Santa Fe and the commandant General in Chihuahua, Mexico to explain his intentions and plead his innocence (Thomas 32). Pike’s arrest in the San Luis Valley marked an era of disputed borders drawn over the lands of the First Nations. Over the Sangre de Cristo Mountains and the Río Grande, lines were drawn and enforced in a migration corridor. The end of the Mexican War of Independence through the Treaty of Córdoba in 1821 brought the lands of the Northern Río Grande up to the Arkansas River under claim of the new Mexican Republic. The reality, however, was that the San Luis Valley was no one’s to own.

Those That Followed: The Mexican Tribe

The efforts of the San Luis Valley’s First Peoples to preserve identity and assert sovereignty transcended borders changing hands in 1821 and 1848. Those that followed the Spanish continued in laying claims over the lands of the Northern Río Grande and drawing lines over the San Luis Valley’s natural migration routes. The Utes of the Sacred Valley met the citizens of a Mexican Republic in an already established region, renamed in the language of Spanish colonizers and *pobladores*. A pair of Mexican land grants

in 1842 and 1844 were granted on Ute homelands out of desperate efforts to extend claims in the Valley and replace established Native populations. The San Luis Valley, developed over the course of 11,000 years of human history, was deemed a land on the frontier of two nations in Mexico and the United States, without the acknowledgement of its established First Nations. Resistance and land usage by the First Peoples in the Valley shaped the terms of Mexican land grants and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848.

The 1821 opening of the North Branch of the “Old Spanish Trail” through the San Luis Valley west over Cochetopa Pass (Ute for “buffalo,” noting the Valley’s traditional migration routes) brought increased trade through the corridor (Mitchell and Krall 321). Based partly on the trade routes of the Valley’s First Peoples, the “Old Spanish Trail” reached up from Santa Fe along the Río Grande to Los Angeles, California and opened up the isolated region. Jacob Fowler, a fur trader from Arkansas, found his way into the San Luis Valley by way of La Veta Pass on February 4th, 1822 and he captured the biodiversity of the San Luis Valley in his journal. In an entry on February 18th, 1822, Fowler notes the landscape built around the water, “the running and dashing of the watter has woren a way the rocks so as to form the present chanel” (Van Ness 7). In the journal, Fowler painted a mixed cultural landscape and a Valley full of beavers, elk, bears, antelope, big horned sheep, wild horses, wolves, and waterbirds. When Mexicans entered the scene in 1821, the San Luis Valley was a land dynamically formed by military diplomacy practiced by Ute bands.

Mexican land grants on their northern limit were aimed at maintaining claim over Ute lands and encouraging Mexican settlement along the Río Grande and veins of the Valley. These grants along rivers were immediately resisted by the Utes of the Sacred Valley. Up until the 1830s, the Ute bands had successfully repelled settlements in the Valley, though these land grants increased Hispano populations (refers to settlers of Spanish descent, or those mixed peoples who

identified more as Spanish). To the Valley's First Peoples, the Mexican Republic under President Antonio López de Santa Anna just filled the shoes of a foreign occupier left behind by the Spanish. The Conejos Land Grant covered 2.5 million acres within the natural boundaries of the Río Grande to the east and the San Juan Mountains to the west. Native Americans successfully expelled settlers of the firsts Conejos Land Grant in 1833, as "Navajos drove horses across the newly planted land and the settlers fled south" (Aker). But this momentary success was overridden on October 11th, 1842 when Justice Cornelio Vigil of Taos redistributed the communal lands to 84 families tasked with defending the lands ("Mexican Land Grants & Disputed Territory"). On December 30, 1843, the one million-acre Sangre de Cristo Land Grant was granted to Carlos Beaubien (actually his thirteen-year-old son, José Narciso) and his brother-in-law Stephen Luis Lee by New Mexico Governor Miguel Armijo (Saenz 344). Spanning from the Río Grande to the west, to the top of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains to the east, the Sangre de Cristo Land Grant would further challenge the right of Utes, Navajos, Comanches, and Apaches to be secure in their own lands. The Conejos and Sangre de Cristo Land Grants facilitated Hispano settlement of the San Luis Valley through the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo signed on February 2nd, 1848.

Mexican cession of territories with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo left the San Luis Valley within the lines of the United States. This inevitably brought the bands of the Utes into contact with citizens of an ever-expanding United States. The Taos Revolt of 1847, carried out by Taos Puebloans alongside Hispano neighbors against the occupation of US soldiers and the Americanization of the San Luis Valley, represented the same spirit of the Pueblo Revolt of 1680 without its success. Following the water, lines were drawn over Native lands.

Disputed Territories and Borderlands

The Río Grande represented a dividing line before territorial borders were drawn over the Sangre de Cristo and San Juan Mountain ranges; the river was both a provider of life to the inhabitants of the San Luis Valley and a marker of natural movement along the path of least resistance. Ute, Diné, Jicarilla Apache, Tewa Pueblo and Comanche peoples found sustenance in the biodiversity of the Valley, though those that followed abused its natural resources. United States citizens followed the water to find gold. Deliberate efforts to extract natural resources and replace Native populations brought the Ute bands of the Valley into direct conflict with US citizens and the soldiers that followed. After conflict with New Mexicans moving north into the Sacred Valley and the retaliatory destruction by the US Army of fifty lodges in New Mexico in March 1849, Utes pursued peace with the United States to maintain stability in a region engulfed in “frontier” warfare (“Treaty of Abiquiú”).

The Treaty of Abiquiú was signed on December 30th, 1849 by Indian Agent James S. Calhoun and Chief Quiziachigiate, a Caputa, along with twenty-eight subordinate chiefs of the autonomous Utes (Ratified Indian Treaty 256). It was this treaty that allowed for the United States to gain a foothold in the San Luis Valley, while it laid the foundation for relations between the Ute bands and the United States. Utes recognized the jurisdiction of the United States, their sovereignty, and their borders in exchange for money and rations. The treaty allowed for citizens to move freely through the San Luis Valley guarded by US forts. Article seven called for Utes to “cease the roving and rambling habits which have hitherto marked them as people” and “cultivate the soil,” despite almost one thousand years of seasonal movements and hunting through the Valley (Ratified Indian Treaty 256, art. 7). To the Utes of the Valley, this was deemed necessary for survival in a new geopolitical context. Just as their fluid set of alliances with the Spanish had allowed for the preservation

of identity and sovereignty, this too was necessary for the autonomous bands.

In 1851, the town of San Luis was established on the Río Culebra as the oldest town in what would become Colorado (Mondragon-Valdez 10). Despite inhabitation by migrating peoples for 11,000 years, San Luis represented a shift towards permanence in the San Luis Valley. From there, the Río Culebra Villages of San Pedro, San Acacio, Chama, and San Francisco soon followed (Mondragon-Valdez). Ranching and extensive agriculture, through the use of *acequias* (irrigation systems) and canals in the San Luis Valley, disrupted the lifestyle of the Utes and brought further conflict. On April 10th, 1852, the San Luis People's Ditch was established as the oldest communal irrigation system in present-day Colorado (Saenz 348). Communal land and water usage among the people of the Valley remains a staple to this day, following the living legacies of the First Peoples.

The establishment of Fort Massachusetts at the base of Blanca Peak in 1852 and its relocation to Fort Garland at the eastern entrance of the San Luis Valley in 1858 choked natural migration into the corridor and fueled continuous warfare. A Ute-US War lasted from 1854-1855, a symptom of the larger breakdown of the environment. The overhunting of limited game in the Valley by new occupiers and the disruption of the migration of the First Peoples eventually brought the demise of their traditional ways of life. Mouache Chief Cany Attle claimed the San Luis Valley in 1856 as an expression of sovereignty ("Chronology"). In efforts to simplify dealings with the First Nations of the Valley, the United States established a series of Indian agencies in Denver: for the Tabeguache Band, Cimarron for the Mouache Band and Jicarilla Apaches, and in Abiquiu for the Caputa Band. This simplification of the complex tribal dynamics in 1860 coincided with the formation of the quasi-rectangular Colorado Territory in 1861, which boxed in the San Luis Valley.

The 1859 Gold Rush in Colorado encouraged white people to encroach on Native lands and increased the calls for

Ute removal from the Valley after several decades of pressure. United States citizens in search of gold directly contributed to a declining Ute population through the introduction of disease and the stripping of hunting resources (Madsen and Rhode). In May 1859, the last mention of bison in the San Luis Valley was provided by Juan Bautista Silva south of present-day Antonito along the Río San Antonio (Kessler 322; Van Ness 6). The destruction of the Valley's biodiversity was reflected by the expulsion of its First Peoples and those that migrated through the region. Native migration was seasonal and coincided with the patterns of the Valley's wildlife. A colonized San Luis Valley was abused without its First Peoples.

A set of treaties between the Ute Tribe and the United States in 1863, 1868, and 1874 undermined the autonomy of Caputa, Mouache, and Tabeguache Bands and dislocated identities rooted in the Sacred Valley. On October 1st, 1863, the Conejos Treaty with the Tabeguache was in direct response to the Gold Rush and profitable land held by the band. The Tabeguache Utes effectively ceded the San Luis Valley to the US Government ("Chronology"). The band of Utes gave up portions in the San Juan Mountains of Colorado for mining in return for promises of cattle, horses, and rations (Ratified Treaty 328). This ten-year agreement was never carried out by the US. In addition to this, Chief Ouray, a member of the Tabeguache Band, was designated as the de facto head of all seven bands of the Utes in future dealings. On March 2nd, 1868, Chief Ouray negotiated a treaty as the figurehead of the Utes in Washington, DC (Treaty with the Ute Indians). The seven bands of the Ute (the Tabeguache, Mouache, Caputa, Wiminuche, Yampa, Parianuche, and Uinta), all autonomous in their own right, fell under the terms of the treaty. From this treaty, a reservation for the Utes was established on the western third of Colorado on the other side of the San Juan Mountains and their Sacred Valley (Treaty with the Ute Indians). After dominating the narrative of the San Luis Valley and resisting foreign occupation from the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries, the Ute peoples were moved to the western side of

the Shining Mountains.

Through the Indian Appropriations Act of 1871, the US Government shifted away from treaties with de facto tribal representatives entirely and towards executive orders and statutes in a complete depersonalization of the negotiation process. (Indian Appropriations Act of 1871 119-120). This shift took away the bargaining power of the First Peoples and replaced it with the voices of those drawn to the gold in the San Juan Mountains. Even after the establishment of the Ute Reservation outside of the San Luis Valley, the United States worked to appropriate the lands of the San Juan Mountains. With the 1874 Brunot Agreement, the US gave into the claims and complaints of United States citizens encroaching into the Shining Mountains. 3.5 million acres of Ute Lands were appropriated by the US Government for homesteaders. The Southern Ute Reservation was set for the Mouache and Caputa bands along the western portion of the border of present-day New Mexico and Colorado. The Brunot Agreement further allowed for hunting rights in the “Brunot Area” of southern Colorado (encompassing the western limit of the San Luis Valley), which was specified in article two, “. . .so as long as the game lasts and the Indians are at peace with the white people” (Brunot Agreement, art. 2). By the time the Colorado Territory became a state in 1876, the First Peoples who emerged from the San Luis Valley no longer populated the layered cultural landscape they actively developed.

The Tabeguache and the Utes of the Northern Ute Reservation made their way to a newly-established White River Agency in 1878 under Indian Agent Nathan Meeker, a Christian zealot who aimed to “civilize” the Utes (“Meeker Incident”). After paving over a racetrack, fist fighting a Ute leader named Johnson, and slaughtering horses of the Utes, Meeker faced the total mobilization of Utes on the reservation. The Meeker Incident of 1879 resulted in the death of Meeker, eight agents, two civilians, fourteen soldiers, and twenty-three Utes; it was a battle against tyranny for the Utes of the White River (“Chronology”). What followed was the passage of a

June 1880 resolution in the Colorado Legislature that called for the removal of the Utes from the state. In negotiations of another treaty in Washington, DC, Chief Ouray refused to give up the names of the killers or any more land in Colorado, though the Tabeguache, Yampa, and Parianuche bands were soon force-marched by the US Army into Utah in 1881 (“Meeker Incident”). The First Peoples of the San Luis Valley were dislocated through a series of compounding processes, though their legacies of resistance live on in the narrative of Colorado. The history of the Valley follows its First People.

A Native Landscape Labelled in Spanish

The extreme environment of the San Luis Valley developed its own multinational cultural landscape, isolated from the construction of the state of Colorado in 1876. The over-stripping of the Valley’s natural resources coincided with the expulsion of its First Peoples. It appeared with drought and the disappearance of the bison, a species that had migrated through the Sacred Valley since the end of the Ice Age. The gold rush and the mines that drew white settlers to the San Juan Mountains ran dry, but irrigation systems coming from the rivers and creeks that fuel agriculture in the Valley have only developed. Through embracing the living legacies of communal water usage and a “culture of conservation” left behind by the Utes, Diné, and Tewa-Speaking Pueblos of the Northern Río Grande, the community of the San Luis Valley has continued to live and provide off the lands (de la Vista and Armstrong 265).

What exists today is a Native landscape labelled in Spanish, a microcosm of conflicting identities and shrinking biodiversity. Renegotiations of the 1874 Brunot Treaty and partnerships with the United States have brought the Valley’s Ute bands back into their ancestral homelands to hunt, fish, and collect local plants for traditional and spiritual purposes (Krall 5). First Peoples of the Southern Ute Reservation, Ute Mountain Reservation, Navajo Nation, and Jicarilla Apache

Reservations that call the San Luis Valley home have reclaimed the narrative and made it clear that it is still Native land. Working alongside the Bureau of Land Management, National Forest Service, National Park Service, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the interconnected community of the Valley, the First Peoples are working to protect and designate the lands and waters of spiritual importance (Krall 8). *Sisnaajini* still provides direction as a living and breathing entity, *Posoge* still provides life to those of the Sacred Valley and beyond.

It is in acknowledging and embracing the layered development of the corridor and the active role of its First Inhabitants that the veins of a living San Luis Valley will continue to flow. Follow the water, find the shared future.



Figure 1. Satellite image of the San Luis Valley with geographical features labelled. The more than 8,000 square miles of the San Luis Valley are currently located between Colorado and New Mexico, though it is the land of the Utes, Diné, Jicarilla Apaches, and Tewa-speaking Pueblos. Courtesy of http://www.geospectra.net/san_luis/san_luis.htm.

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CHARTER

Gonzaga's Journal of Scholarship and Opinion

Thank you to the faculty, staff, students, and alumni who supported the Charter staff in this year's endeavor to discuss the meaning of Variation. We express our gratitude and appreciation. We would especially like to thank Dr. Dave Oosterhuis, Joanne Shiosaki, Kayla Cartelli, and Dr. Raven Maragh-Lloyd for their help, encouragement, and advice. Without them, this publication would not have been possible. A special thank you to Dr. Juliane Mora for encouraging this year's theme based off her communication course Resistance, Power, and Struggle.

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