

charter

GONZAGA'S JOURNAL OF
SCHOLARSHIP & OPINION

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VOLUME 54
2016-2017

| **boundaries**



Charter

Gonzaga's Journal of Scholarship and Opinion
2016-2017

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Letter from the Editor

Dear Reader,

Before I had taken on the role of Editor in Chief for Charter in September 2016, I had convinced myself over that summer that the job of "editing," meaning, to me at the time, the managing of a staff of people toward assembling a journal, was not the job for me. I had believed that I was not suited for the role, and supported that belief with a laundry list of excuses—too quiet, too shy, too deep of a voice, not the managerial type—you name it, I believed it. While I can go into the reasons why I believed I could not be an editor, the important part is that I became one despite the boundaries I had set.

There's an old saying: argue for your limitations and sure enough they are yours. And that is the point. I argued for my own limitations, and then those limitations set what I could achieve.

But boundaries are breakable.

As Luke Johnson wrote in his essay, the boundaries we set in a complex world in order to simplify our lives are socially constructed. Whether these boundaries are set up between people of opposing political parties, as discussed by Sarah Kersey in her essay, or as Jessica Stranger writes, established by our appearance, or are seen as part of our personality, such as the topic of introversion in Kaylee Bossé's essay, these boundaries can change. We construct them. We can deconstruct them, and, particularly, we can deconstruct them inside of a literary journal.

This year, we at Charter Journal posed the topic of boundaries to Gonzaga University. What boundaries does our community face? Who do we set boundaries up against? What boundaries do we choose to break? The theme covers a vast range of ideas, from trust, to technology, and to the Dearborn Canyon on the boundary between the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains of Montana. Our community at Gonzaga sent

us a fantastic variety of submissions addressing the topic of boundaries. And all of these submissions provide thought-provoking insight that may leave you with newfound questions of your own.

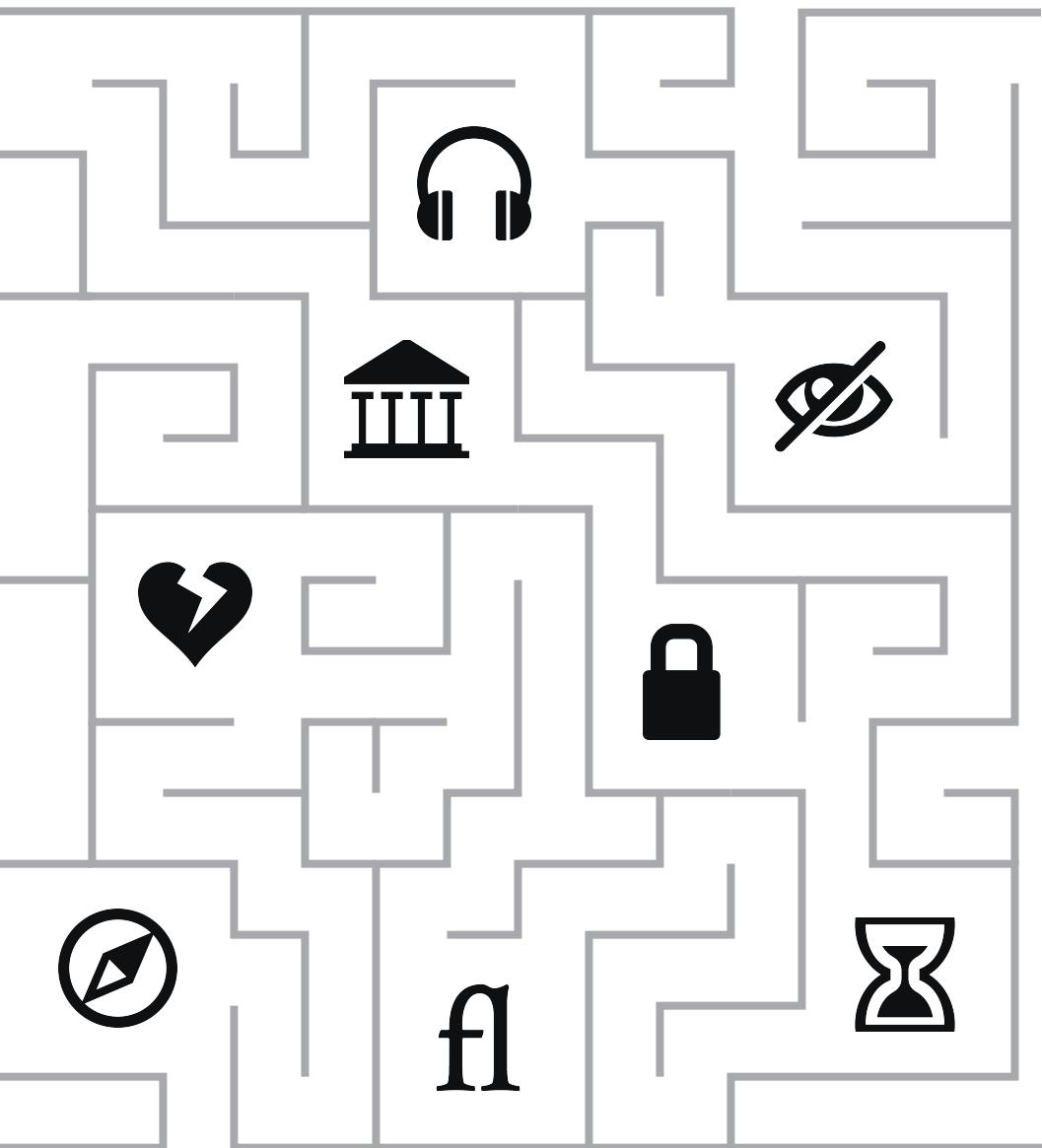
I thoroughly enjoyed editing this journal. It was an experience with a great staff that I would not have had if I had stuck to my own limitations.

I hope you enjoy what we have put together for you.

Sincerely,

Evan Olson

Editor in Chief



The Unconventional Student

Jessica Stranger

I entered into the musty, slightly-too-warm-for-comfort room; I looked around to see that most of it had filled up. The early arrivers saturated the ideal middle section of desks and scarcely populated the front row, leaving either the front or the back for the latecomers. Most of the students at this university arrive very early with almost ten to fifteen minutes to spare before the class begins. I stood there for a bit, then I began my trek down narrow aisles trying my best not to disturb my over-achieving counterparts. To the back row I went, just like Magellan on his premiere journey; unlike Magellan, this was not my first journey to the back of the classroom. I have been sitting in the back of the class far too much this year. My choice in sitting in the back row mimics my feelings toward school and my motivation within striving toward my larger goal in life. I aspire and dream about becoming a professor—spending my days teaching, researching, writing and inspiring generations to come to reach their full potential and change the world.

Unfortunately, in attempting to achieve my dream, I have run into a large problem: unemployment. I am a Millennial, and it is not uncommon, that for some unknown and unforeseen reason, there are many Millennials who cannot find jobs with their impressive bachelor's, master's, and doctorate degrees. A cloud of misfortune has swallowed up these new college grads, engulfing their hopes and dreams like a fire would engulfs dry wood. This fire of unemployment embitters new grads and creates a smoke of older and younger generations labeling Millennials as lazy snowflakes who are afraid of work.

However, this is blatantly, extremely, and interestingly false. It is estimated that in year 2020, Millennials will represent “46 percent of all

US workers.”¹ Additionally, Newsweek estimates that the Millennials, individuals between the ages of 18 to 35, will reach 75.3 million which surpasses the 74.9 million baby boomers.² Since there are so many of us receiving master’s, bachelor’s, and doctorate degrees, employers in many fields of work do not want to pay the justified wage for someone who has their master’s degree, and most of the time employers require these master’s degrees. In addition, Millennials face increased tuition prices, layoffs and lower earnings compared to the median income.³

What does all that mean?

It means that if you are Millennial and you want to pursue a career, you better hope to be damn near perfect because perfect is the prerequisite for any job, in addition to a master’s degree. So, if perfection is the requirement for working within the degree I have and still living a somewhat prosperous life, then why try now? Upon starting my college career at Gonzaga University, I did my best to fit the mold of the ideal student. I came to class with ten minutes to spare to find the seat in front and middle of the room, that way I could closely engage with my professor. I would carefully and decisively wear clothing with sophisticated sweaters and trousers, in order to impress my fellow colleagues and professors and to show them my aspirations of becoming a professor. I struggle with the idea that no matter how hard I try, the clubs that I am a part of, my leadership roles, my GPA, the recommendation letters and the summer internships, that statistically I will always be subpar and come up short for most employers. Unfortunately, I also represent the unconventional student and a hopeful professor.

The word unconventional has a strange and somewhat negative stigma. Society encourages everyone to be different, but not too different; just different enough to make life and society interesting, but not too different that as an individual you don’t fit society’s black and white molds. Well, for me, the words unconventional, different, strange and alternative describe my truest being. Since society has already established boundaries about fitting into the right amount of different or unconventional, I am already at odds with the world around me. However, as a part

of the Millennial generation, society and its upholders further dislike me and my presence within the professional world irks them at best. They establish set categories and boundaries in which I cannot pass for the many aspects that create me.

1. Professors should have no visible tattoos. I have already lost that battle with three tattoos and more on the way.
2. Professors should have no visible piercings, other than a simple, single ear ring for female professors. Again, I break rule number two: I have three in each ear and a nose ring.
3. Female professors should wear pantsuit, skirt with panty hose, or a blouse with slacks. Well, I refuse to feel uncomfortable, so I wear a blazer with a dress shirt, slacks, and canvas shoes when I dress up.

In addition to rules, many older generations have “unwritten rules” that they place there to watch you fail. Rules such as the “open door policy” meaning that my superiors say their door is open for new ideas or a quick chat about any issues; however, this is never the case. Sometimes the superiors either do not care, they are not even in their offices, or they have too much work to be pestered by their employees.⁴ Another unwritten rule includes laughing at your superiors’ jokes even if they say some of the flattest jokes in history.⁵ I admit that I do not portray myself as the most conventional employee or the most conventional student, but the boundaries of invisible or unspoken rules are installed to keep people from reaching their full potential. Society puts up unnecessary standards, norms and rules in order keep individuals inside their predisposed black and white boxes, which leaves little room for differences or people who choose not to follow the societal norms.

In addition to these never-ending boundaries of dress codes, apathetic supervisors, unwritten rules and the stereotypes about Millennials being lazy, who don’t want to work, many of the older generations compare the Millennials to snowflakes. This term emerged in order to criticize the younger generation of Millennials for being too sensitive. It is the stereotype for older generations to view the younger generations as being less resilient and more likely to take offense than earlier genera-

tions or their generation.⁶ "Snowflake" emerged a few years ago on American campuses as a means of criticizing the hypersensitivity of a younger generation, where it was tangled up in the debate over safe spaces and no platforming.⁷ However, I want to take back this insult and use it to tear down the boundaries that have been set up by the earlier generations. Snowflakes are unique: one of a kind. When snowflakes come together to create a storm, they have the power to stop the function of an entire city. Therefore, the term snowflake should be used as a term of empowerment for the Millennials because as the largest generation, Millennials have the power to rise up and command change from their superiors.

While it seems like I have every odd stacked against me and that the boundaries that I must endure are seemingly endless, I have the power to make a change and to achieve what I want to achieve. Even though I am unconventional, and I do not fit the models, I believe that I still will be able to find a job and make a living. At the beginning of this year, I felt unmotivated to succeed due to the obstacles that I had to overcome to succeed; however, I figured out that albeit I do not fit the normal societal standards, many more Millennials also feel these problems. With similar issues, Millennials have the will and power to overcome the stereotypes as snowflakes and change the societal standards to tear down the ancient and out-of-date boundaries that exist in society.

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A Step Back from Technology

Louis McCoy

What's the first thing an average college student does after waking up in the morning? Often before our feet even touch the floor, we reach out with groping hands like a hungry baby for a phone that has spent all night charging on the nightstand. What happened in the world while we slept for the last six to seven hours?

After lying in bed for some time responding to texts, scrolling through Facebook and Instagram, we finally decide to pick our head up from the pillow and get the day started. This usually includes taking a shower and brushing teeth, but where would we be without completing our morning business on the toilet? Might as well bring the phone along and continue to scroll through social media. Oh, don't forget Snapchat too! We click through stories of people we haven't talked to in months, some pulling all-nighters to get a tough assignment done or sharing a picture of their morning coffee.

Then we head off to get our breakfast, or maybe just coffee if sleep is especially difficult to shake from the eyes. How are we supposed to get through this nine o'clock class where the professor drones on about philosophy, physics, chemistry, or any of the other topics we pay thousands of dollars to learn while not dozing off?

There's a line at the best coffee place on campus, so we hang our heads to gaze into the screen facing up from our palm while we wait. Pictures of dogs, cats, food, art, beaches, running shoes, and cars slide across the phone so quickly they can hardly be processed by our hard-working minds. There's a meme here and there, sprinkled in with some videos of people who have found their fifteen minutes of internet fame. We only look up briefly to see that the line has moved forward and it's

almost our turn to order.

We arrive to class just minutes before the professor begins, thanks to the jerk who walked slowly through the hallway, texting and not leaving room for anyone to pass. Before sinking into our regular seat, might as well pull our phone out and scroll some more while just sitting here. Or at least that's what we see everyone else doing, so who would even be interested in talking? We don't want to be that person bothering others with conversation, breaking the social norm.

The professor starts talking and some of us put our phones on silent in our pockets. Others slip it into their backpacks, where it can be checked while casually grabbing a drink from the water bottle. Others still leave their phone on their desk next to sheets of paper for note taking, allowing themselves to glance at it every time it lights up with a new notification. Hiding in plain sight from the professor's gaze as they try to pass along their hard earned knowledge.

The moment class is over, just about everyone pulls their phone from its hiding place and glues their eyes to the screen as we walk out the door and to the next destination. What happened in that hour while we were in class? We all walk through the hallways, heads down, only occasionally looking up to narrowly avoid the person we're about to collide with or trying to recognize a friend's face in the blink of a moment as they walk past. You know what? That was a tough lecture and we deserve a reward, so the headphones come out and soon there's a skip in our step as we walk along to the beat of a classic hip hop song.

It's time for lunch, so we make plans with a small group of friends to go to the dining hall. While sitting in the entry way waiting for the others, we get bored. We need some kind of activity to keep our minds active, as school and western culture have taught us: every single waking moment of our entire life must be directed at some productivity. If not, you won't make it anywhere. We feel that subliminal pressure as we sit, and the awkwardness of making eye contact with people passing by; people you recognize, but not well enough to strike up a conversation with. So we pull out the phone, distracting us from the stress of social situations. It's easier than sitting alone with our thoughts, afraid to know what we might find there.

The friends show up, all in varying moods depending on their classes and how much they slept the night before. Some are groggy, bitter, ready to complain about their lives and all that's wrong with them. Others are just excited to eat lunch. Everyone gets into whichever line they want, and more often than not, the phones come out if they don't know someone before or after them.

Among the lunchtime conversation of hated professors, bullshit assignments, all-nighters, and the constant stress which plagues college students, there are always the phones. Sitting on the table, lighting up when a message comes in or one of the many apps decides it has something to tell us. This detracts from the conversation, causing people to lose interest or for others to feel neglected as they explain their day to a friend who won't even make eye contact. We have this inherent fear of missing out, thus we always have the need to be connected. Some leave the phone upside down in an attempt to show courtesy to their friends, but it has still earned its important spot next to the food, always in sight.

The conundrum about phones is, at the end of the day, they are truly amazing machines. We carry a fully functional computer on our bodies at all times, allowing us to be more connected to the entire world than ever before. Without even leaving our beds, we have access to immediate breaking news, sports analyses and constant updates from social media. Keeping in touch with those old friends from high school is now as easy as scrolling through a web page. We can press a pretend button displayed on a piece of glass, allowing us to speak face to face with someone living halfway across the world.

But when is the time to meet new people and interact with those around us? As we hide behind our phones all day, we send out this message that we are uninterested in those around us. "What's happening on my phone is more interesting than any conversation you could possibly offer" is the message I perceive. Or maybe we're all just scared of putting ourselves out on a limb. I can't tell you how many times I haven't greeted a friend on the sidewalk because they were too engaged with their phone to focus on their surroundings and make eye contact.

The week before my junior year in college, I traded my smart phone in for the classic middle schooler phone: sliding keyboard with actual

buttons, and, most importantly, no internet access. I was tired of feeling attached to a phone for everything and especially noticed when my 30-minute lunch breaks at work turned into staring at a screen which flashed images of memes and photos I honestly didn't care about.

My dad and I drove back to Spokane that week through thick, hot smoke from the summer wildfires and nearly ended up in Pullman because of road closures. Neither of us had access to a GPS. The smoke was so dark we could barely see the taillights from the car twenty feet ahead of us. But this car ride was beyond peaceful. We just sat there, listened to music and talked, without any phones between us shouting directions or stressing about if we had missed a turn. I learned to trust in the world and if we saw a sign beginning the detour, someone probably put up a sign further on directing us to Spokane.

Back at school in RA training, I found myself extremely isolated from the rest of staff. The schedule was entirely app-based, making me the only person to have to ask for a hard copy (which, by the way, I received a few days before training was over). While everyone was adding one another on snapchat, and using emojis, all I could do was text and call. They tried to include me, but emojis looked something like Russian letters on the screen of my prehistoric phone.

I found myself lying in bed, trying to fall asleep, staring into the light of a phone where nothing could happen. There was no snapchat, no Facebook, no internet, and still there I was, staring at the home screen waiting for my mind to be stimulated. At that moment I knew I was addicted, because I couldn't stop. It took about two weeks for my habits to change, where I finally could plug in my phone for the night and forget about it while sleeping soundly. I even started reading in those minutes before bed; not school reading, but just for pure enjoyment! College students say it's impossible to read for fun while in school, but I think we've just been distracted.

Despite feeling excluded from the culture of college, everyone sending GIFs and laughing together at the Snapchat that just came in from a friend sitting a few feet away, I was more free than ever before without a smartphone. If I arrived to dinner a few minutes early I took that time to organize my thoughts and to-do list, reflect on the day, talk

to someone I knew sitting nearby, or read a page or two from a novel. There were no memes, no celebrity news, no advertisements. Most of all, the desire to capture every moment with a photo was lost. I discovered value in sitting on a bench to watch the sunset, a pair of Red-Tailed Hawks constructing a nest in a nearby tree where their baby birds would soon learn to fly. A scene like that can't be captured through a camera lens. It felt like travelling back in time to a more peaceful era where things were as they should be, where individuals connect in person and not through some technological middleman.

Technology has brought some amazing things to our world: we put a person on the moon, a robot on Mars, captured video at the depths of the ocean, and created a machine to see the insides of a sick person to diagnose what's wrong with them. What other handheld device besides a smartphone has the ability to reach nearly every person in the entire world, give directions, track location, name songs from the radio, and provide answers to any possible question with the click of a button? The boundaries of the human mind are being stretched to great lengths, but what have we sacrificed in terms of human connection and well-being? Original thought has been nearly exterminated by the trends of pop culture and our desire to constantly be 'in the know.' Have phones contributed more to breaking down boundaries, or building them up? Just take a look around next time you're waiting for class to start.

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The Intimacy of Strangers

Alexandra Roland

Anonymity can be illusive. Standards for personal privacy have been redefined to account for the advent of social media and prevalence of social technology.¹ The increased ability to find personal connections via online channels creates the illusion that the world is smaller and more connected than it truthfully is. While the world continues to seem smaller and more within our grasp, this egocentric view continues to compound on itself. We gain the illusion that the world is composed of the understandings that we and our network have gained through direct and indirect experiences, while we become less aware of our own unawareness of the world as it is experienced beyond these parameters.

Within these parameters is where we operate; this is where we feel at home. We, not necessarily with conscious awareness, limit our interactions and surround ourselves with the people and experiences that fall within its breadth. Our version of the world becomes populated with what and whom we decide to bring into it.² And though we still challenge ourselves, urge ourselves to break past our comfort zone to bring ourselves beyond this boundary, these decisions are still a by-product of the world which we have constructed to surround us; these challenges still reside within this realm of personal understanding. We learn to navigate, and navigate successfully, within our own self-constructed worlds. We learn what interactions are successful—and reinforce those behaviors—and those which are not—and avoid such interactions.³ Thus, the social constraints that we find ourselves bound by are often self-imposed.

What, then, occurs outside of this self-imposed boundary? Here lie the strangers. Not the individuals that skirt around the outside of understanding or those who lie on the fringes of our social community, but

those that we lack any meaningful current or potential future tie to. And while the term strangers has recently taken on a specific connotation, largely due to xenophobia being at the forefront of much recent political discourse regarding quickly shifting stances on immigration,⁴ perhaps the idea of strangers, and accepting people as strangers, can be seen as something far less charged than it is often understood. A stranger, in the conventional sense of the word, is “a person or thing that is unknown or with whom one is unacquainted.”⁵ It implies infinite opportunity: a chance to learn from a vast breadth of experiences and understandings which are completely different than one’s own. And, conversely, that one could possibly be a source of understanding of a world that is vastly different from that which another resides in. Yet, we are often inclined to dismiss the strangers we interact with. It is not that we fail to appreciate that they live an immeasurably vibrant and unique life, rather that we accept that it will likely be something we will never be privy to.

But that is a notion that can be challenged. Because we each reside in our different self-contained worlds, perhaps interacting with those unknown to us may provide us with the best opportunity for personal introspection and growth. Here, the opportunity for interpersonal vulnerability exceeds that which can be found without our own environments. We should, in effect, be able to tell a stranger the secrets that we are unafraid to tell those within our social microcosm in fear of misunderstanding or how such information may shift dynamics within the relationship. And as someone particularly unwilling to divulge much to even those I consider close, I found the idea of this fleeting emotional intimacy rather enticing.

I, of course, have not been the only one enthralled by this idea of emotional intimacy between strangers. Marina Abromović, a performance artist from the former Yugoslavia, largely centered her performances in the interaction between herself and those unknown to her. In one of her earliest performances, *Rhythm 0* (1995), Abromović stood still and unmoving in front of a large group, who were instructed to do to her as they wished. They had access to a table containing a range of items: first nondescript items—a feather, honey, a polaroid camera—before they transitioned to something more macabre—an axe, a whip,

a gun with a single bullet.⁶ Art critic Thomas McEvelley described the gradual progression of the audience's treatment of Abromović during the six hour performance:

It began tamely. Someone turned her around. Someone thrust her arms into the air... In the third hour all her clothes were cut from her with razor blades. In the fourth hour the same blades began to explore her skin... Various minor sexual assaults were carried out on her body... When a loaded gun was thrust to Marina's head and her own finger was being worked around the trigger, a fight broke out between the audience factions.⁷

Abromović's piece speaks the high level of personal vulnerability needed to open one's self up to strangers: though perhaps not always as clearly seen as it is in Abromović's performance, challenging these social boundaries does not come without discomfort. Personal vulnerability is necessary when opening one's self up to strangers.

However, Abromović continued to challenge this boundary and explore the creation of emotionally intimacy with strangers. *The Artist is Present* (2010), an eight-week-long exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art, showcased many of Abromović's previous boundary challenging works (including a homage to *Imponderabilia* (1977), in which Abromović and her partner, Ulay stood nude on other side of a narrow doorway, forcing anyone who entered to chose whom to face). In addition, Abromović attempted in a new performance to blur the line necessary for meaningful connection between strangers.⁸ The performance was composed of only five components: two chairs separated by a table, Abromović on one end, and a museum patron at the other. Still and unmoving during the full seven hours per day the performance ran, Abromović would only lift her head to lock eyes with whichever museum patron who would sit across from her, who were able to sit for as long as they desired. There was no conversation, no physical contact, only eye contact. Patrons queued for hours, even overnight, and many visited multiple days for the opportunity to sit across from Abromović and stare into the eyes of someone unknown to them. The chance to connect with a stranger overpowered the social stigma often associated with it. And while we may be unwilling or unable to create this same

emotionally challenging experiment on our own, we do have the power to attempt to answer some of the same questions they have posed.

So, on a Saturday like any other, I posed the very question, one that I both had wondered about so ardently yet was still so uncomfortable asking of strangers with whom I share this city. A thirty-something taking a photograph in the street. A teenager carrying shopping bags. A man checking ticket stubs. A woman waiting for her reservation to be called. A man sitting alone in the food court.

And perhaps the exercise was something more self-serving than it was exploratory. And perhaps I was challenging my own personal boundaries in a form that was so completely shaped by my own choices. And perhaps their responses were more so a result of indecision than truthful contemplation. But, I chose, from within the comfort of my own self-created world, to accept what they said and derive truth from what they spoke.

“What is something you would be more willing to tell a stranger than someone you are close to?”

2:12 PM: “I don’t want to stay in my current job position.”

2:23 PM: “My breakup problems.”

2:28 PM: “I have Hep C and HIV.”

2:49 PM: “My political stance.”

3:04 PM: “I speak French.”

Endnotes

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At the Edges of Colonialism: Br. Carignano's History Painting of Fr. Marquette at the Mississippi River Frontier

Dr. Paul A. Manoguerra

With the founding of the Jundt Art Museum in 1995, the Oregon Province of the Society of Jesus gave the museum, on Gonzaga University's campus, a very large painting, about 68 inches in height by 107 inches in width, likely painted before 1910 by Brother Joseph Carignano, S.J.

Carignano, a native of Turin, Italy, entered the Society of Jesus as a lay brother at age 20. He was assigned by the Jesuits to the Pacific Northwest, and he worked throughout the region as a cook and an artist. His murals and paintings decorate the St. Francis Xavier Church in Missoula, Montana, the Saint Ignatius Mission, located on the Flathead Reservation, and the Mission of the Sacred Heart, Idaho, among other sites. On October 16, 1918, Carignano died in Yakima, and was buried in the Jesuit cemetery at St. Michael's Scholasticate (now St. Michael's Academy) on a hill overlooking Spokane.¹

Brother Carignano's subject for this oil painting—in the tradition of 18th- and 19th-century history paintings—is the arrival of Jacques Marquette on the Mississippi River in 1673. During the reign of King Louis XIV of France, Louis Joliet, a fur trader, and Marquette, a Jesuit missionary, led an expedition from a mission at the northeast corner of Lake Michigan into the center of the American continent. Joliet was an experienced cartographer and geographer, and Marquette was an accomplished linguist who spoke half a dozen Native American languages. Marquette was not the first Jesuit to reach the center of the North American continent, but he emerged as the most famous to do so. A fervent missionary, he founded three sites—Sault Ste. Marie and St. Ignace, in modern Michigan, and Kaskaskia in Illinois—which operated

Br. Joseph Carignano, S.J. (American, b. Italy, 1853–1919), *Fr. Marquette Discovering the Mississippi*, before 1910; Oil on linen, 69 ½ x 108 ½ inches; Jundt Art Museum, Gonzaga University; Gift of the Oregon Province of the Society of Jesus 1995.21



Mississippi River valley and westward. On May 17, 1673, Marquette, Joliet, and five men in two canoes followed the northern and western shores of Lake Michigan, paddled down the Fox River, portaged to the Wisconsin River, and then found themselves on the Mississippi River. As colonizing powers, Europeans used the information from the Joliet-Marquette trip and other expeditions to assist future traders and settlers in establishing commercial and cultural stations in the American interior and in marking the Mississippi River as the physical and metaphoric boundary of the American West.²

In the painting, a well-groomed, bearded male figure, wearing dark blue full-length robes, stands and steps in a slightly odd *contrapposto* inside a canoe. He—Fr. Marquette (absent Joliet)—feels too large for the canoe to remain properly balanced. The priest's head and shoulders rise above the horizon line in the painted landscape, and the drapery of his robes romantically flows across a leg and knee. He has placed, tucked into his belt as if a weapon, a crucifix and rosary. This bearded religious figure gestures in two opposing directions: toward a group of four Indians at his right, and off into the distance at his left. The priest's left hand sits at the center of the painted composition and of the entire canvas. Seated below the priest and in the canoe, an Indian holds an oar and looks off into the distance, away from the viewer. Filled with a quiver of arrows, a red blanket, a blue-green crate, and a broad-rimmed black Jesuit hat, the canoe, with only its back half visible, has been pulled alongside a grassy and rocky shoreline. Part of an asymmetrical grouping of figures, the priest faces in the direction of four other Indians: two males, a female, and a baby. These Indians dominate the lower left corner of the painting. At the far left of the composition, the female Indian, wearing a blue dress with red accents, sits on the ground. She holds a baby, in an almost translucent gown, on her lap. An Indian male lounges to the right of the woman, and he wears light-colored brown deerskin clothing, feathers in his long hair, hoop earrings, and a quiver of arrows at his back. A small deer skull rests next to his feet and on the rocky shore. Above the lounging Indian, the woman, and the baby, another male Indian stands framed at the left by tall trees. Facing Marquette, the Indian wears a fringed robe, resembling an ancient Roman toga, a beaded decorative necklace, hoop

earrings, and feathers in his flowing and long hair. With visible tattoos on his arms, he gestures with both hands and grasps a pipe. This standing Indian, with both hands, and the priest, with his left arm, point toward a horizon line painted across the center horizontal of the canvas. A wide river flows through the hilly landscape, and an Indian village lies across the river and in the right middle ground of the painting. The green of the landscape implies a late spring or summer season as the trees remain bursting with lush and feathery leaves. Sky mostly fills the top half of the painting. Yellows, oranges, and purples streak across the sky at sunset, as the priest motions toward the west and across the river, reflecting the sky and sunset with blues, grays, greens, and pastel yellows and oranges.

Carignano's technique and skill level straddle an artistic style somewhere between a self-taught, folk art-like, flat-yet-endearing image-making, and an academic, European art school *historia* masterpiece. He directly borrows from a number of other visual sources, including Wilhelm Alfred Lamprecht's 1869 painting, now on display in the library at Marquette University in Wisconsin, and an 1898 postage stamp, created to celebrate the Trans-Mississippi Exposition in Omaha, Nebraska. The international fair in Omaha, and its concurrent Indian Congress, were held in the summer and autumn of 1898, and were intended to showcase the "developed" West from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Coast. Business and community leaders from the 24 states and territories lying west of the Mississippi River envisioned the Trans-Mississippi Exposition as a way to stimulate the regional economy and to exhibit that the West, in particular, had recovered from the financial panic of 1893.³ Lamprecht's painting, the stamp, the world's fair, and Carignano's large canvas all participate in the mythmaking associated with the "civilizing" of the American West from its "discovery," with Fr. Marquette, up to the modern era.

Meanwhile, Carignano's painting, as did Lamprecht's, also builds upon early maps of the Americas, which sometimes idealized American Indian figures, especially in cartouche and peripheral imagery and often utilized ancient Greek and Roman sculptural types as inspiration. For example, in Carignano's painting, the pose and gesture of the standing Indian figure, ostensibly providing Marquette with directions, borrows

from the stance and pose of the ancient *Apoxyomenos* (“The Scraper”), the most famous marble version of which is in the Museo Pio-Clementino at the Vatican Museums. Figures, like Carignano’s Indian/*Apoxyomenos* and in map cartouches, inspired by ancient statuary, functioned as imagined ethnographic displays and represented the civilizing potential inherent in the persons being allegorized.

Fr. Marquette Discovers the Mississippi participates in the mythologizing of the often questionable record of conquest and settlement as presented in our shared American visual culture.⁴ In his painting, Carignano designates this colonial event as an initial step along what his fellow Jesuits deemed an ordained path directing settlement (and Christianity) westward. The painter draws upon a canonical artistic repertoire—grand compositions and figures from the European old masters and the classical past—which provides his large creation a visual language, an aesthetic and cultural seriousness, and a monumentality. On a basic level, the painting celebrates an important moment in the history of the Jesuits. Carignano and, of course, earlier image-makers featuring Marquette’s story, make heroic the Jesuit as a pioneer among future pioneers, controlling the “savage” as Christian civilization prevails across the threshold of the Mississippi and into the West. Carignano places the crucifix at Marquette’s belly, at his core. Marquette’s westward-pointing left hand, backlit by romantic, rosy light, mirrors the left arm, also projecting westward, of the crucified Christ on Marquette’s beltline. The painter and, of course, Marquette were both part of a male religious order that directly engaged in converting Indians in the West to Catholicism using objects and symbolism like the Marquette’s crucifix and rosary. Carignano shows Marquette and the Indians in conversation, and language functioned as an important aspect of the Jesuit approach to conversion. As American, Belgian, French, German, Irish, and Italian missionaries, the Jesuits in the Northwest, including Carignano, succeeded in their conversion goals in some ways because they were not a homogenous group directly representing specific national interests. Carignano’s intent with the painting may have been focused on a savage/Christian dichotomy not as a tool of American expansion but instead as a Jesuit cultural negotiation and exchange with the ultimate objective of conversion.⁵

By the time of Carignano's painting in the first decade of the 20th century, however, the Jesuit approach to pastoral work centered on Indian children, like the baby in the image, and education as a means of assimilation primarily to an American reality. The artist provides the Indian figures some agency, as they appear to be providing Marquette with directions and imparting knowledge about the landscape and people he has yet to experience beyond the boundary of the Mississippi. The woman and baby offer a sense of the natural aspect of families, and of the Indians, peaceful and domestic, comfortably connected to the landscape. Nonetheless, the deer skull in the immediate foreground, near the foot of the lounging male Indian, symbolizes the lack of a real future for these Indians. In his image, they function at the boundaries, literally at the margins of the canvas, of the binary meanings of savage/civilized and terror/beauty, as the painted landscape radiates with the sublime sunset. The painter presents the Indians as an Other, in physiognomy and in clothing and adornment, in contrast to the striking Jesuit, at the heart of the composition and the narrative, and whose countenance and gestures recall the images of God at creation in Michelangelo's frescoes on the vault of the Sistine Chapel. Carignano, as a Jesuit lay brother painting in the early 20th century in the Inland Northwest, problematically upholds both the powerful ideal of the greater good of Manifest Destiny and the sacred sanction of Christian progress and conversion to Catholicism.

Endnotes

- ¹ For more on Br. Carignano's biography and his other paintings, see Andrew Loen Maddock, *Contemplations on the Sixty-one Frescos of Brother Joseph Carignano, S.J. in Saint Ignatius Church, Saint Ignatius, Montana and the Life of Brother Joseph Carignano, S.J.: A Little-known Artist of Admired Works of Art* (Berkeley: Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley, 1988).
- ² See Jay P. Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience: A History from Colonial Times to the Present* (Notre Dame and London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), pp. 31-42.
- ³ See Jess R. Peterson, *Omaha's Trans-Mississippi Exposition* (Charleston: Arcadia, 2003).
- ⁴ For one excellent museum exhibition dealing with this type of American image-making about the West and the frontier, see William H. Truettner, ed., *The West as America: Reinterpreting Images of the Frontier, 1820–1920* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991).
- ⁵ See Gerald McKeivitt, *Brokers of Culture: Italian Jesuits in the American West, 1848–1919* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), pp. 120-149. Thank you to Dr. Laurie Arnold, Director of Native American Studies, Assistant Professor of History at Gonzaga University for this chapter and for her insightful comments on this essay.

Hate Speech vs. Free Speech: How to Identify the Boundary

Sarah Kersey

I was raised in a conservative, Republican household. Against the odds, out came a liberal. My parents have been extremely supportive in allowing me to have my own beliefs as I allow them to have theirs. My parents have never tried to change my mindset, and I do my best to accept that their views contrast to my own. I believe that everyone is entitled to their own opinion. An article in *USA Today* plainly states that “our nation was founded on the democratic principle that we can respectfully and civilly disagree with one another, but always strive to allow everyone’s views to be heard.”¹ But the key word we need to pay attention to right there is the word “respectfully.” How do you draw the line? When does speaking to a fellow human being cross the boundary from utilizing your free speech to throwing hate speech at another person?

On November 8, 2016 I was lying in my college dorm room. We were two days past my 19th birthday and two days closer to graduating. I kept refreshing the page, waiting to see the final results of this year’s election. I kept telling myself that there was no way that he could win. It isn’t possible that people could support someone who, in my opinion, actively demeaned women, people of color, Muslims, the disabled, and immigrants. There was just no way.

But there was a way. And that way prevailed.

I’ve had a lot of instances in my life where I’ve felt lost or hopeless. These moments are required to accompany you throughout adolescence. However, my heart has never felt as heavy as it did in that moment, when the results finally came through. A winner was declared, yet half of America took the biggest loss they’ve ever felt.

Hours later, I made the poor choice of scrolling through my Twitter

feed. I could barely believe what I saw. So much hate, so much white supremacy, and so much intolerance. It felt like I was being attacked by this wave of pure hatred that the country had been trying to suppress for the past eight years. Apart from the hate, I found sorrow. My friends of various sexual orientations, mourning the step backward the country had seemingly taken, watched their relatives recede back into homophobia. My friends of different races expressed how scared they were to go outside. My friends who are sexual assault or rape survivors bawled into their hands as they were forced to accept that no, we as a country may not be moving forward in terms of enforcing the idea that 'no means no'. My friends with disabilities were offended and upset that once again, they had been demeaned to the status of less than a person. My female friends furiously realized that patriarchy and male misogyny are still very much alive. All of these people, heartbroken over the loss they felt. On the other side of them was hate. I saw so much hate speech that this presidential campaign gave permission to set free. And it wasn't just the conservatives throwing hate speech at the liberals. It went both ways. The liberals were outraged at the loss they felt the country had taken, the conservatives triumphant and unfiltered, and everyone in a state of anger toward one another. To me, America has always resembled a ticking time bomb and it was like I finally watched it explode. We are constantly at each other's throats during political cycles, arguing that one of us has to be right and the other has to be wrong - that there is no in-between. It seemed to me that it was only a matter of time before everything just exploded into chaos.

In that moment that the winner was announced, I saw it: the road we were heading down and what the future might look like with these circumstances. I saw every sexual assault victim losing confidence in the system, tucking away their horrible experience in some dark place where no one would ever have to know. I saw the head of the Supreme Court slamming that gavel as *Roe vs. Wade* and *Obergefell vs. Hodges* were overturned, repealed, and destroyed. I saw my birth control being yanked away from me, along with the rights to my body. I saw every person of color running down the sidewalks, away from the white men so insistent on being dominant. I saw every member of the religion of Islam packing

their bags and leaving town, leaving the state, leaving the country because the better life they came here to pursue no longer existed. I saw my father, whose company heavily relies on imports and exports, packing up a box in his office. I saw my childhood friend's parents, crying when they realized that their twenty two-year attempt at gaining citizenship had all been for nothing, because there was a strong chance they may be forced to go back to a country they never felt safe in. I saw it all. I saw it all and it hurt.

It wasn't just that I saw the potential for all of this to happen. I saw it put into words online. I saw insults being tossed into the Twitter-sphere and clogging up my Facebook feed. Arguments broke out, once someone told someone else they shouldn't be allowed to say this or that. This immediately resulted in uproar, and in that moment, limiting someone's free speech seemed to become the newest cardinal sin.

It is much easier to fight with someone on Facebook or Twitter than it is to do so in person. We are seeing hate in our world, at rallies and in our communities, yet we are much more aware of the injustices that are happening online. The public library of science states that "there is a fundamental difference between face-to-face and Internet-mediated interactions."² It's much easier to throw harsh words at someone when you only have 140 characters and a shield between you and them. That doesn't make it acceptable.

How do you draw the line? Where is the boundary between opinion and hate speech? How do we define it? When does respecting another person's views morph into staying silent while those views you used to respect now consist of throwing hate speech into the air? When does one stay silent and when does one speak up?

Hate speech is "all forms of expression which spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, anti-Semitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance."³ You'd think that this definition would be self-explanatory, yet confusion often arises from its use and where it differs from using your constitutional right to free speech.

Sometimes it's easy to see where the line should be drawn. When a 78 year old was caught on video punching a young protester at a Trump rally,⁴ we had obviously crossed a line. In that situation, the man was

not expressing his opinion respectfully, but instead instilling force onto another human being out of anger and hate. Yet sometimes, the lines get blurred. I saw a post on Facebook the other day from a girl I knew in high school stating that abortion is murder and that anyone who has had an abortion is a disgusting human being. While many pro-life supporters believe that abortion counts as murder, perhaps the line was crossed when a direct attack was made on someone's character.

So if you ask me, and I am by no means an expert, where the boundary between hate speech and expression lies, I say to you this: the second you start attacking, mocking, or ridiculing someone's character or an aspect of who they are, you have crossed a line. Our definitions may differ on what constitutes mocking, but I think as long as we are treating others with respect, we will not be in danger of crossing the line. You still have the right to say what you do, but it's important to recognize that instead of using your free speech to be heard, you are using it to tear others down with hate speech. One's political opinions and stances are just that: opinions and stances. They do not constitute who they are, and therefore we should not attack someone's character for an opinion they possess. Our beliefs may contribute to who we are, but they are independent of our character. I am a liberal, but that is not all that I am. I am also a daughter, a friend, a sister, a cousin, a writer, a poet, a reader, and so much more. Human beings are complex and deserve to be treated as such, and not solely judged on one aspect of who they are.

At the end of the day, we have to go back to our homes, our dorms, our lives, our routines, and move forward. We keep living in spite of the notifications on our Facebook, alerting us that someone has said something that's insensitive. We have to. If our world stopped every time someone said something mean, we would be stagnant. We cannot control the actions or words of others. We cannot force them to stop speaking their mind, even if it does cross a boundary and become a disrespectful form of hate speech. Regardless of what we post on the internet, we will all go home tonight to our roommates, families, or our pets. We will all wake up tomorrow hoping for it to be a good day, hoping for better things to come, and believing that they will.

Endnotes

- ¹ “Trump’s hateful speech can do lasting harm,” *USA Today*, n.d., Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed January 24, 2017).
- ² Angelo Antoci, Alexia Delfino, Fabio Paglieri, Fabrizio Panebianco, and Fabio Sabatini. 2016. “Civility vs. Incivility in Online Social Interactions: An Evolutionary Approach.” *Plos ONE* 11, no. 10: 1-17. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed January 31, 2017).
- ³ Funda Gençoğlu Onbaşı. 2015. “Social Media and the Kurdish Issue in Turkey: Hate Speech, Free Speech and Human Security.” *Turkish Studies* 16, no. 1: 115-130. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed January 31, 2017).
- ⁴ Stephon Johnson and Cyril Josh Barker. “TRUMPED AGAIN.” *New York Amsterdam News*, March 17, 2016, 1-39, Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed January 24, 2017).

Melting Boundaries

Kaylee Bossé

“Go on, ask.” My older brother gave seven-year-old me an encouraging nudge forward, but my eyes widened with fear as the counter loomed far above me, casting a gray shadow across my face. A golden “M” shone in the center of the wall behind it, and beneath the beacon gleamed a soft serve machine, a work of art engineered with newly polished silver. From the masterpiece of an apparatus flowed perfectly formed, conical swirls of creamy deliciousness in every flavor imaginable. My mouth watered longingly at the sight of the melty treasure. All of it could be mine, I thought. All I have to do is open my mouth. I’m going to do it this time. I’m really going to do it.

I looked back hesitantly at my brother. He gave me another reassuring smile and instructed, “Okay, just stand on your tippy toes and ask the nice lady for some ice cream, KK.” I drew in a deep breath, stepped closer to the counter, willed my brain to open my mouth and form sounds that hopefully were words, and.... I balked. Ashamed at yet another reveal of my unmistakable (and at the time, seemingly unfixable) introversion, I burst through the swinging door of McDonald’s to the playground in an attempt to hide in the colorful labyrinth of large plastic tubes, which were unfortunately crawling with sticky strangers. I stood frozen in a daunted trance, but was immediately affronted with hoards of sweaty children in seconds, several of which implored me to join their game of “house.” Horrified, I barged back out of the swinging doors that were flanked by some slightly frightening plastic representations of Ronald McDonald, hot tears forming in the corners of my eyes. And then I ran.

However, as explained by Susan Cain in her book, *Quiet: the power*

of introverts in a world that can't stop talking,

It makes sense that so many introverts hide even from themselves. We live with a value system that I call the Extrovert Ideal—the omnipresent belief that the ideal self is gregarious, alpha, and comfortable in the spotlight... Extroversion is an enormously appealing personality style, but we've turned it into an oppressive standard to which most of us feel we must conform.¹

I certainly fell victim to this damaging mindset while on my sprint through McDonald's. Not only was I pursuing the comforting solitude of the restroom, I was chasing a sense of security and a personality more desirable to others (it seemed as though society had dictated that this was "extroversion"). But even as I chased what seemed like a happier reality, I was still attempting to escape my overwhelming introversion. At that point in time, I didn't know that it wasn't something you can run away from. It was a boundary to be confronted, but not a problem that needed to be fixed or an aspect of my personality that I needed to be ashamed of, as I would soon learn.

Yet I pumped my legs harder and harder, until, SMACK! My brother let out a deafening *oooooff!* but still managed to catch me in a bear hug, placing a small, ages 3+ Barbie toy in my hand in a good-intentioned, brotherly attempt to comfort me. What he didn't understand was my aversion to McDonald's wasn't just a fear of clowns (although that certainly played a role in the development of my dislike for the fast food chain). He didn't understand that the counter represented not only a physical barrier to the frozen perfection that is ice cream, but a psychological barrier that prevented me from simply asking for it. What he didn't understand the most was that the shadow cast on my face was not just a product of blocked light, it was symbolic of an ominous cloud of insecurity.

This entity seemed to accompany me wherever I went. No matter how much the luscious scent of freshly baked cookies tickled my nose, I could not seem to ask the Albertson's lady for a free sample. The being hovered menacingly above as I hid under the table at family dinner outings, unable to order my own meal. It taunted me as I recoiled when

called on by the teacher at school, laughing in cruel glee along with the other students who snickered at my apparent muteness.

As traumatizing as all this seems, my brother was not completely wrong in guiding me out of my comfort zone on that fateful day at McDonald's. From him I learned that you have to stretch yourself, yet refrain from totally sacrificing who you are to fit societal views of the ideal personality. In her inspiring book, *Quiet*, Susan Cain expands upon this idea of balancing one's introversion with the demands of a largely extroverted society. To answer the question of whether one should try to alter their behavior and to what extent before unhealthily exhausting themselves, Cain turns to the Free Trait Theory. This theory states that we are born with fixed personality traits, but can act differently in service of a core personal project. On this subject, Cain remarks,

Shakespeare's oft-quoted advice, 'to thine own self be true,' runs deep in our psychological DNA. [...] Yes, we are only pretending to be extroverts, and yes, such inauthenticity can be morally ambiguous (not to mention exhausting), but if it's in the service of love or a professional calling, then we're doing just as Shakespeare advised.²

As I grew more mature and was confronted with more and more situations that demanded a more outgoing persona, this quote rang increasingly true for me. Each time I presented one of my new pieces of writing to the public or my peers, talked to someone new, or performed onstage for dance or choir, I indeed had to act more gregarious than I was. But I didn't regard what I was doing as mere "acting," "putting up a facade," or "being fake" because each time I pushed myself, I gained confidence and became more comfortable in my own skin. When my work was finished, I allowed myself to settle back into my true being, and was careful not to take on more new experiences than I could handle. By championing kindness to myself throughout the entire process instead of resenting my introversion, I was able to rise above both my inner and outer critics. Now, I no longer struggle with the classroom bullies of yore who gleefully pointed out my introversion and supposed lack of personality. In fact, most people are now surprised to learn that I am an introvert given my bubbly persona. Thus, my experiences helped me to work through my

struggles and become a better version of myself.

However, I don't regret my extremely introverted past. In fact, it has made me into who I am today. I find truth in psychologist Anders Ericsson's words about individual work. In an interview with Susan Cain, he says that deliberate practice is most fruitful when done alone. This is because you are able to "go directly to the part that's challenging you. If you want to improve, you have to be the one that generates the move. Imagine a group class—you're the one generating the move only a small percentage of the time."³ When others thought I was simply being "anti-social," my time spent alone in my room writing stories or practicing ballet facilitated a priceless ability to focus and work hard, as well as a heightened sense of creativity. These solitary sessions helped me discover my passions for both writing and the performing arts, through which I am able to express different aspects of my personality.

I will always feel a nervous knot taking root in the pit of my stomach when confronted with new situations, even as small as asking for a free small kid's cone at McDonald's. I now realize this makes me who I am, an introvert who is sensitive and attentive to others, who loves the performing arts, and who is thriving above all else. My introversion is no longer a negative label or boundary to forming connections. Instead, it is a window of opportunity to continue breaking my boundaries and becoming my best self.

Endnotes

- ¹ Susan Cain. *Quiet: the power of introverts in a world that can't stop talking*. New York: Broadway Paperbacks, 2013.
- ² Ibid.
- ³ Susan Cain. "The Rise of the New Groupthink." *The New York Times*. January 14, 2012. Accessed 2017. <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/15/opinion/sunday/the-rise-of-the-new-groupthink.html>.

Boundaries: A Bioregional History of Place

Dr. Greg Gordon

You know, I think if people stay somewhere long enough—even white people--the spirits will begin to speak to them. It's the power of the spirits coming up from the land. The spirits and the old powers aren't lost, they just need people to be around long enough and the spirits will begin to influence them—A Crow elder¹

Looking Out

I once lived on the edge--on the boundary between two great ecosystems, the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains. From the ridge above my home, I could see the southern end of the Rocky Mountain Front jutting abruptly from the Plains. The fortress walls of the Front stretch from horizon to horizon trammeling the largest wilderness area in the lower 48 states, the Scapegoat/Bob Marshall. Yet, the wildness keeps spilling out despite efforts to contain it.

My river—the Dearborn—begins at the Continental Divide, where a waterfall formed by melting snow tumbles off a 100-foot escarpment of Scapegoat Mountain. The river quickly sloughs off the mountain and shoots out onto the Great Plains, where it winds along the Front before dropping into this canyon.

Between the Front and the Dearborn Canyon lies a grassland strip of broken ridges like the scattered backbones of huge ancient creatures. To the north, this strip merges into the Great Plains, but here, a relatively recent volcano tossed up the Adel Mountains in the path of the river, creating a pine-studded ecological island in the rolling prairie.

During the Pinedale glaciation, (15,000-10,000 years ago) the

lower forty miles of the Dearborn River were part of an ice-free corridor between the cordilleran glaciers and the continental ice sheets. Simultaneously, the Adel Mountains formed the southern bulwark of Glacial Lake Great Falls, thus providing a zone for human and animal movement up and down the Rocky Mountain Front. Although exact dating is uncertain, artifacts in Blacktail Cave on the South Fork of the Dearborn date back at least 5,000 years. Bear effigies suggest the possibility of a much earlier occupation. The Old North Trail, a prehistoric precursor to Interstate-15 used by ancient bison hunting cultures, ran through this corridor.²

The volcanic topography and soils conspire to provide rich biodiversity in the Adels, blurring vegetative boundaries. Rocky Mountain juniper share the mountains with limber pine and Douglas fir. Yucca and prickly pear cactus flower in the shadow of ponderosa pine. Valued among the Blackfeet Indians as an anti-inflammatory, yucca root was also used to treat broken bones. Blackfeet parties often traveled to the Adels to collect large quantities of the roots to take north where the plant was scarce and fetched a high price in exchange for other goods. Also rare farther north, bitterroot grows in abundance in the sandy volcanic soil along the Dearborn and is still harvested by the Blackfeet. The proliferation of fences, a demarcation of new boundaries, in recent years, however, renders this activity increasingly difficult.³

Because of its proximity to the Rocky Mountains, high elevation species overlap with ones from the Great Plains here in the Adels. I've seen white-winged crossbills picking at a ponderosa while meadowlarks sang from nearby mullein stalks. The two birds most characteristic of timberline, the mountain bluebird and Clark's nutcracker, breed and nest in the Adels, before heading to the Rockies for the late summer. Some of the bluebirds even forgo the high country, staying here to raise their second brood. Come fall, the Clark's nutcrackers, mountain chickadees, and nuthatches return for the winter. Numerous migratory birds stop for a few weeks in the spring waiting for the mountain snows to melt.

Bald and golden eagles share the skies, and it's not uncommon to see both in the same day. Golden nest in the cliffs while bald eagles build aeries in the tall pines along the river. The Dearborn River provides an

artery from the Continental Divide to the Missouri, breaking through the topographical boundaries of mountains, plains, and canyon. Occasionally one sees white pelicans flying up from the Missouri, or Canada geese using the Dearborn as a landmark on their migration. Whitefish and brown trout swim up from the Missouri, while brook and rainbow trout travel downstream from the mountains.

When they traveled through the area in 1805, Lewis and Clark noted that this was the margin of eastern cottonwood and narrowleaf cottonwood. Returning over Lewis and Clark Pass the following year, Lewis recorded the first sign of bison on the return journey from the Pacific. Meriwether Lewis wrote, "It appears that the buffaloe do sometimes penetrate these mountains a few miles," thus documenting the ecological porosity of the Rocky Mountain Front.⁴

From the viewpoint on my ridge, I can easily distinguish Haystack Butte, a cone-shaped mountain rising like a giant anthill just east of the mountains. Lewis referred to it as "Shishequaw mountain," an unknown, but clearly native reference. A Blackfeet shrine at the base suggests its sacred nature. Unfortunately, this was looted long ago. Haystack Butte and other landmarks like Heart Butte and Chief Mountain fulfilled dual roles as sacred places and as navigation points along the Old North Trail. All three mountains stand apart from the Rockies blurring the transition between mountains and plains.⁵

During historic times, the Dearborn country oscillated between Shoshone and Blackfeet control until the Blackfeet pushed the Shoshone out of the area in the early 19th century. Nevertheless, this was the southern margin of Blackfeet territory and often saw Crow, Kootenai, Flathead, as well as Shoshone hunting parties. Meriwether Lewis, in fact, traveled up the Dearborn in 1805 looking for the Shoshone. He worried that the retort of guns might frighten them off "supposing us to be their enemies who visit them usually by the way of this river."⁶

The broken topography of the Rocky Mountain Front and presence of the mountains to the west helped mitigate the climatic fluctuations of the open plains to the east. The relatively reliable water and precipitation created prime buffalo country and was fiercely defended by the Blackfeet. This was one of the last holdouts of the bison. Despite the guarantees of

the 1855 Lane Bull treaty, which granted the Blackfeet exclusive rights to the country north of the Missouri to the Rocky Mountains, other tribes continued to hunt here.

As bison became increasingly scarce across the northern plains, this locally abundant supply of bison induced the Métis (descendants of French trappers and Chippewa/Cree) to settle in the Dearborn area. Establishing permanent settlements in the 1860s, they made a quick transition from buffalo hunters to cowboys, providing cattle for traders at American Fur Company forts along the Missouri. In 1866, the Jesuits established St. Peter's Mission at its fourth location between the Sun and Dearborn Rivers. However, in 1874, the U.S. Government retracted the Blackfoot Reservation boundary 75 miles north to Birch Creek, and St. Peter's became a Métis school and mission.⁷

After the Riel Rebellion in Canada, more Métis and Cree Indians immigrated to Montana seeking political asylum. Local discrimination, combined with fear they would be sent back to Canada, led many of the Métis to seek refuge in the mountains and in the Dearborn Canyon, where they lived primarily off the land.⁸ Tucked into the mountains, the Métis lived in cabins and tents strung out along the river where they worked as "wood hawkers," cutting trees and hauling them to sawmills owned and operated by white settlers at the mouth of the canyon, who in turn marketed the lumber in Augusta and Ft. Benton. Young men found jobs on the large ranches that were beginning to become established in the area, while women spent the summers harvesting berries and roots.⁹

Gradually, it became apparent that the land could not support a large, permanent, subsistence-based population, and the Métis began drifting into Augusta and Great Falls. Recurring droughts made farming marginal, and ranching proved to be the only viable form of agriculture. However, this required larger landholdings than the Métis could string together. Wealthy individuals began amassing larger spreads. For example, in 1885 Dave Auchard bought fifty sections of railroad grant lands from the Northern Pacific for 90 cents an acre. He quickly alienated smaller outfits by constructing barbwire fences, thereby preventing access by sheepherders to other open lands.¹⁰

While buffalo brought the Métis, gold brought other settlers. John

Mullan completed his military road from Ft. Benton to Walla Walla just in time for the gold seekers to flood down from Ft. Benton to the new strikes at Last Chance Gulch. The settlement of Dearborn Crossing sprang up in 1862 as a way station halfway between Helena and Fort Benton. Dearborn Crossing coincided with the intersection of the Old North Trail and the Buffalo Trail that the Indians of the Columbia Plateau used on their bison hunting expeditions. By 1866, the Ft. Benton-Helena stage was running three times a week. A year later, Dearborn Crossing boasted a hotel, salon, mercantile, post office, as well as a toll bridge. A schoolhouse soon followed, and before long more than a hundred people lived in the town along with troops from the 13th infantry, stationed in a stockade to ward off Indian attacks.¹¹

While the Mullan Road served as a thoroughfare for goods and people between Ft. Benton and Helena, immigrants also recognized the potential of the intervening landscape. In his 1863 report to Congress, John Mullan referred to the Dearborn area as, “one of the largest and richest bodies of land that I have seen east of the mountains. Mullan added that the “timber from the mountains and rock at hand will supply all the requisites of the first settlers.” While he noted the area was rich in game, he also “believed it to be an ordination of Providence that” the millions of buffalo “that now blacken the western plains . . . [would] disappear with the red man” and be replaced by “sheep tended by white men.”¹²

Indeed, twelve years later sheep arrived from Ft. Benton. The 1880s saw more than 60,000 sheep along the Rocky Mountain Front.¹³ Upon arriving in the area in 1879, Fisk Ellis recalled seeing “a deep carpet of vegetation over the Flat Creek hills,” but within a few years the range was already overgrazed and cattle had trampled the creeks so that “where they were sweet clear waters in 1879 were murky evil tasting ones in 1882. Where there were 100 fish in 1879 there were only five or six in 1882.”¹⁴

Geology and glaciation created a unique bioregion, one that merged North America’s two great ecosystems, the Rocky Mountains and the Great Plains. Wildlife, especially bison, flourished in this transition zone. While the Old North Trail and the Buffalo Road provided native hunters with access, the Mullan Road punctured the region’s isolation

drastically increasing its porosity as livestock and settlers streamed in. However, when Anglo settlers attempted to impose a different ecological model they soon discovered the limitations of this marginal landscape.

Digging In

With the help of a few friends, I began to dig a rubble-trench foundation for my cabin. We excavated a four-foot deep, 18" wide trench, and began filling it with rubble from the base of a cliff just a few hundred feet away. The Adels are composed of a unique rock called Shonkenite, which crumbles easily and is often exposed, making a perfect source for angular rubble. Shonkenite is found only in three places in the world, all in small, isolated mountain ranges near Great Falls, Montana. It is an extrusive rock, similar to basalt but with large chunks in it resembling a chocolate pudding mix that didn't get enough water or wasn't thoroughly mixed. Some of the rocks are quite striking and flecked with large black augite crystals. I selected these for the rock wall foundation.

I then scavenged boards and timbers from the collapsed homestead across the road. Cut to no standard dimension, the beams measured 3 inches thick by 8 inches wide and 16 feet long. They were probably cut and carried from nearby Sawmill Creek. I saved the better beams to incorporate into the cabin. The wood was covered in lichen and weather beaten. While scrounging for adequate boards, I discovered a four-page newspaper spread. The newspaper, from Minneapolis was still quite legible, although rather delicate and crisp. It was dated Christmas, 1904.

The year before building the foundation, I visited Leroy Wiseman at his house at the head of Sawmill Creek where he has lived since 1972. Although he was 83, nearly blind and could no longer drive, Leroy still lived by himself near the end of the road, far from neighbors or a phone. When I told him where I lived he responded, "Oh, the McKinster place. I worked for McKinster herding sheep. McKinster was a big Scotsman. He moved to Cascade and became mayor, then he died in '62."

"Did he homestead that place?" I asked.

"Oh, yeah, there was lots of homesteads. See they came down around 1910 and homesteaded for a while. Then in the '30s, it was so dry they

all left. I once talked with an ole cowboy that came through this country then. He said land was selling for two dollars an acre, but he wouldn't have none of it. Wasn't a blade of grass anywhere, wouldn't have been any good for his cows."

"Course this country's changed a lot since then. Changed a lot. A lot more trees. All those trees along the road didn't used to be there," Leroy continued.

"I bet fires had a lot to do with keeping it open," I suggested.

"Oh yeah, the cattlemen didn't put out any fires, they'd just as soon it burn, provide range for their cows."

"How long did you work for McKinster?" I asked.

"Oh, not long, about a year or so. See he was running sheep, and so was I. So I moved up near Simms with my sheep. Then I got a job with the railroad. All I got out of that was a pension. Course it don't cost much livin' up here," he mused.

Leroy continued, "My boy had a place up here. But he ran into some financial problems and sold it. This feller bought it and he logged it all off. There were some fourteen inch firs there, those trees were four or five hundred years old, and he just cut them down and left," Leroy said, shaking his head.

Leroy said, "They brought us a gas stove, but we didn't like it so I had them take it back."

"You cook on a wood stove?" I asked, looking at Leroy's large, wrinkled hands. I thought his hands were too large for his shriveled up little body, capped with a tuft of pure white hair.

"Yup, a 1929 wood stove. Light a fire every morning heat up a pot of coffee."

Leroy told me he left North Dakota in 1937 heading for California in a Model T looking for work. "Nobody had any money. I was working for 25 cents a day haying. That's when there was hay to be taken in. No one was buying any of the crops but we harvested anyway, no sense in letting them rot in the fields," he said.

"I worked near Boise for a few months harvesting apples. When that was finished, I headed for L.A. Nearly drove into downtown Burbank before they saw the Model A with North Dakota license plates and turned

me around. Well I headed back north to San Francisco, where my cousin was, and I worked long enough to get a train ticket back to Montana,” he concluded.¹⁵

The first decade of the 20th century marked the peak population in the Dearborn watershed. According to the U.S. Census records, Harry McKinster arrived from Minnesota sometime between 1900 and 1910 along with thousands of others. In 1910, the land office in Great Falls was processing up to 1,500 claims each month.¹⁶ By 1916, McKinster held land patents on three 30-acre parcels. In 1921, Harry extended his holdings to 240 acres, and then four years later added another thirty acres.¹⁷ McKinster managed to hold on through the depression when Leroy arrived to tend his sheep for a year.

McKinster was wise enough to claim two of the best springs in the area. The one on Sawmill Creek still provides Leroy and a few other residents with their drinking water. The other spring at the old homestead supplies my neighbors and me with our water.

After years of hauling water from the spring, we decided to dig a trench and lay PVC pipe to each of our four residences. The area never having been electrified, we installed solar panels to power the pump. We anticipated that the abundance of water would allow us each to have an extensive garden. Borrowing a technique from dryland farming, we also dug a swale, a trench on contour, four feet deep, and two feet wide. Into the swale, we planted fruit trees in hopes of establishing an orchard. However, we soon discovered that we were all competing for a finite resource. The delivery of water was limited by the hours of sunlight hitting the solar panels. Over the years, our gardens shrank, and the fruit trees died from lack of water and deer herbivory. We found that while we had adequate water for domestic use, raising crops was not feasible.

One hundred years earlier and a few miles upstream, the state engineer reached the same conclusion regarding the Dearborn country. In 1888, entrepreneur Donald Bradford claimed 7,500 cubic feet per second (cfs) of water from the Dearborn River and formed the Dearborn Canal Company in order to build a dam and canal. The river, however, reaches flood stage at 1,025 cfs and often drops below 50 cfs in late summer and autumn. Work on the canal ceased in 1890 and remained idle until 1902

when the State Arid Land Grant Commission purchased the project.¹⁸

With the passage of the Carey Act, the Dearborn Canal was reinvigorated and became “the first irrigated canal owned and operated by a state on the American continent, and is considered the beginning of a great movement toward arid land irrigation under government control.”¹⁹ Or so claimed the Helena *Evening Herald* in 1901.

The Helena newspaper then reported that out of half a million acres in the Dearborn watershed, 75,000 acres were suitable for cultivation and irrigation. The 28-mile canal would throw the land open for settlement.²⁰ The newspaper quoted directly from an 1891 promotional pamphlet produced by the Dearborn Canal Company: “With the exception of corn, any cereal can be grown in the Dearborn Valley. . . . For the purpose of the dairy, and for the raising of milch cows for milk, butter and cheese for market, there is no county any better adapted than the Dearborn Valley.”²¹

The pamphlet put an unabashed spin on the arid climate, stating, “The fact that rain in sufficient quantity to develop a crop is not to be had, is not only a disadvantage, but is a decided blessing. When water can be conveyed to the root of each individual plant at the will of the farmer and merely by the raising of a gate, rain is superfluous. . . . Harvests are never interrupted by showers.”²²

Artistic renditions made to look like photographs showed massive quantities of water rushing through an aqueduct. Spin progressed to outright fabrication by the end of the pamphlet, which featured a section titled, “Climate—winter from one to six weeks.” The text read, “Our winter begins about the middle of January. Some years it continues for six weeks, but the average length does not exceed three weeks.”²³ This statement hardly describes the country that currently holds the record for the coldest recorded temperature in the lower 48 states, 78 degrees below zero.

Three years later, John Wade, the state engineer, was unequivocal in his commendation of the project. He admonished the state for representing to homesteaders that Dearborn Valley has “very desirable land . . . fully reclaimed from its desert state; ditch in perfect order, ample water supply . . . with no immediate expense to the settler . . . **when none of**

these things are true” (emphasis in original).²⁴

His report continued, “At this writing there is not a single bona fide settler upon this land . . . Many have been induced to come, but none to stay, and the reason is easily seen.” Wade cited high land prices, uncertain water rights, costs of lateral construction from the canal, over-allocation of water, and no fund for canal maintenance.²⁵ A single line in Wade’s recommendations summed up the entire region: “the amount of water available in the Dearborn River is small, insufficient in fact, to irrigate the land already patented to the state.”²⁶

The total failure of the Dearborn Canal may have been a blessing in disguise, for the land remains largely unreclaimed with the soil in place. However, overgrazing took its toll, and as photographs and accounts from the 1930s attest, there was nothing but bare dirt throughout the area. As homesteaders abandoned their claims, neighboring ranches either purchased the land or simply used it as open range, exploiting it to avoid using their own land. Thus, some small ranchers were able to run livestock over an area that far exceeded their own holdings.

McKinister held on to his place, leasing it for grazing until the 1950s. In the 1970s, land developers began buying up the old homesteads and subdividing them into lots ranging from 5 to 50 acres for recreational home sites. Leroy was the first to move back, yet the land was still in terrible shape. Lumarie Strickland, who moved to the area in 1980, stated, “When Michael [her husband] first brought me here I looked around and thought, ‘Oh my God, it’s a desert!’”²⁷ As the land use patterns shifted and people were no longer dependent upon agriculture, they became increasingly concerned about the degradations caused by open range grazing practices. With cooperation from large ranching operations that wanted to maintain stock purity, resident landowners succeeded in establishing a “herd district” in 1993, effectively ending open range.

Circling Back

Tucked up against the rocks above my cabin, I find myself perched on another, albeit smaller, ecological boundary. Above me native vege-

tation dominates. Waist-high fescue and native bunchgrasses cover the hillsides along with a plethora of wildflowers. Lupines and larkspur add tints of indigo while arrowleaf balsamroot and black-eyed Susan's provide splotches of yellow among thousands of tiny white daisies and orange globemallow. Dark green blobs of sumac and wild roses sporting pink blossoms line the gullies. However, fifty years after the last crop was harvested, the outlines of the hay field are still apparent below, where exotic species have become deeply established. Native bunchgrasses mingle with crested wheatgrass in a narrow transition zone, interspersed with mullein and bindweed. Leafy spurge casts a yellow pallor across the green hillside. Cheatgrass moves into any disturbed area, along the driveway and all around the cabin. Across the road, a monoculture of knapweed excludes all other plants around the ruins of the old homestead. The erosion around the homestead is so bad that my neighbors are thankful for the knapweed holding the soil in place; it keeps their cabin from tumbling into the ravine. Along the river, willows and horsetail ferns have quickly recovered since cattle have been removed in the past few years. Along the benches, however, the fragrance of clover is overwhelming and knapweed is pervasive.

Looking down upon the Dearborn Canyon, I see only a few scattered dwellings, summer cabins, and old house trailers, gutted, and abandoned. I can count on my fingers the number of permanent residents between the Missouri and the old Dearborn Crossing on Highway 287.

The USGS map of the area shows more abandoned homesteads than contemporary structures. The only settlement left in the watershed is the Milford Hutterite colony, placing the entire area well below the two-person/square mile that defined the "frontier."

As the human population has decreased, the wildlife populations have slowly rebounded. With the recovery of the vegetation has come the re-establishment of deer and elk herds, along with their predator, the mountain lion, whose tracks are often visible after a snowfall. Coyotes and bobcats are now ubiquitous, and for two years a black bear and her cub resided on my property.

I hike upstream following the river as it carves a serpentine route through the dark volcanic rocks studded with ponderosa pine. I pass

Sawmill Creek where there is no longer a sawmill. Around the next bend I come to the abandoned homestead at Sheep Creek, where there are no longer any sheep. There is, however, an enormous eagle aerie perched precariously atop a massive ponderosa next to the river.

Farther upriver, Flat Creek flows into the Dearborn. Called Beaver Creek on an 1855 map, it was renamed Flat Creek after the trappers had removed all the beavers. Now beavers, as well as otters, have reinhabited the watershed.

These rivers (the Dearborn, Sun, Teton) flowing off the Rocky Mountain Front carry some of the purest water in the world. Snowmelt along the Continental Divide percolates through thousands of feet of limestone, filtering out organic impurities, heavy metals, and other contaminants, leaving it cleaner than rainwater. Where the Dearborn leaves the Scapegoat Wilderness, it rushes through a series of rock shoots and forms deep pools. The water is completely transparent, with just a tinge of blue, and I do not hesitate to take a long drink straight from the river here.

Every year thousands of brown, rainbow, and brook trout, and whitefish migrate upriver to spawn. For years, the Dearborn served as one of the Missouri's most important fisheries, in that it was remarkably free of whirling disease. However, by 2003 infection rates from the disease were nearing 100 percent.²⁸

Driving along the Front, I stop by the old Dearborn Crossing. Cows graze in the hay field where a thriving community once stood. Across the river rises the castle of Silicon Valley billionaire Tom Siebel. Nineteenth century land mogul Dave Auchard raised eyebrows when he built a two-story house a few miles from here. Siebel's second home contains seven bedrooms, nine bathrooms and a twelve-car garage.

Across the bridge, I spy the Dearborn cemetery and consider hiking over to it, but the way is blocked by a red *no trespassing* sign and a four-strand barb wire fence surrounding Siebel's Dearborn Ranch. A pronghorn buck frantically attempts to find passage through the fence. Unlike deer and elk, pronghorn can't jump fences, but must go under. Three other bucks wait on the opposite side for their trapped companion. They all seem loathe to leave until they reunite. Finally, the lone buck finds a place where the fence crosses a gully, and he squeezes under. Pronghorn,

it seems, also have trouble with defined boundaries.

When Meriwether Lewis and his party dropped into the Dearborn off the Continental Divide, they saw buffalo for the first time since crossing the Rockies the previous year and were “much rejoiced at finding ourselves in the plains of the Missouri which abound with game.” They recorded seeing “a great number of deer, goats and wolves,” and “immense herds of buffalo.” That evening Lewis killed a large white wolf. The following day they saw pronghorn, elk, and wolves, and shot and killed a grizzly swimming across the Sun River. The previous year they recorded numerous bighorn sheep in the Dearborn and Missouri canyons.²⁹

The bison were gone by 1880. The grizzlies, goats, and bighorns retreated into the mountains. The once prolific bighorns that remained perished from diseases contracted from domestic sheep, while fences severely limited pronghorn movement. And just as John Mullan predicted, settlement wiped out the wolves. Beginning in 1895, Montana offered a \$3 bounty on wolves. Then, in 1908, the legislature allocated \$1,500 to experiment with trapping wolves and coyotes, infecting them with mange and releasing them so they would infect the wild population. Apparently that wasn't enough for area ranchers, and in 1910, Augusta offered a \$20 bounty on wolves. The last pack was eliminated in 1920, and the last wolf finally hunted down and killed in 1969, although this was probably a dispersing wolf from Canada rather than a resident.³⁰

A paradigm shift occurred sometime after that last wolf was shot. Maybe it was part of a national wave or perhaps we had finally dwelled here long enough that the wildness of the place permeated our own mentally constructed boundaries. Nevertheless, in 1972, Montanans petitioned the U.S. Congress to designate the Scapegoat Wilderness straddling the Continental Divide and encompassing the upper Dearborn watershed. The following year Congress passed the Endangered Species Act, which afforded protection to wolves, former pariahs of the West.

However, just outside the wilderness boundary lies a zone of potential oil and gas reserves. The geology that created the conditions for wildlife abundance also trapped hydrocarbons deep with the overthrust belt. For the last 25 years, oil and gas companies have eyed these reserves. Conser-

vation groups and residents have repeatedly defeated drilling proposals that would transform the Front into an industrial zone. The pressure to drill, however, is unrelenting.

The western frontier marked a boundary, if not on the landscape, certainly in our minds. On one side lay unfettered land, wild and free. On the other side, the land was strung with fences, drawn and quartered into parcels. Here, in this one corner of Montana, despite a century of numerous attempts to civilize and contain it, the land remains ecologically resilient. The human population has scaled back and the wildlife returned. Too cold and too dry, the Rocky Mountain Front proved ideal for bison and nomadic hunters but poorly suited for agriculture.

When we learn to live within the limitations of the landscape and appreciate its natural abundance rather than imposing our preconceived notions of how the place ought to be, eventually our boundaries may become more permeable than we once thought. In the end, this might prove our salvation.

Driving the dirt road along the base of Haystack Butte, I see movement through the tall grass. Pulling over, I notice a coyote and a badger hunting ground squirrels together, a behavior I had read about but never witnessed. I looked around and recalled that ten years ago, another wolf dispersing from Canada, a 125-pound male, had been trapped, radio collared and released. The following spring he had found a mate and raised four pups on this ranch. Their den was not far from the old Black-foot shrine at the base of Haystack Butte. Instead of killing the wolves or demanding they be removed, this rancher now sanctified their presence.

A cold wind descends off the Front, and I wrap my coat around me, still intent on watching the badger and coyote. They keep moving, the badger stopping to dig furiously, while the coyote trots ahead, hoping to snap up a flushed ground squirrel. The two hunters pass through a barbed-wire fence as if it was not even there.

Endnotes

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- ⁷ Rosalyn LaPier, "Métis Life Along Montana's Front Range" (paper presented at Joseph Kinsey Howard/Center for the Rocky Mountain West Conference, Great Falls, MT, Sept. 17, 1998), 5-6.
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- ¹⁶ Keller.
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- ¹⁸ John W. Wade, *Report to the State Engineer*, Feb. 27, 1904, Montana Historical Society; Stream Flow Data, United States Geological Survey.
- ¹⁹ Helena Evening Herald. Oct. 5, 1901.
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- ²² Ibid.
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The Hidden Boundary: Working Class in America

Molly Wilson

White trash. Trailer trash. Redneck. Okie. Hillbilly. While these words seem harmless, their implication is actually quite horrific. These terms are not labeled curse words, or socioeconomic-slurs, nor are they excluded from everyday speech in the way that they should be. In calling a human being “trash” they are recognized as worthless, disposable, and unneeded.

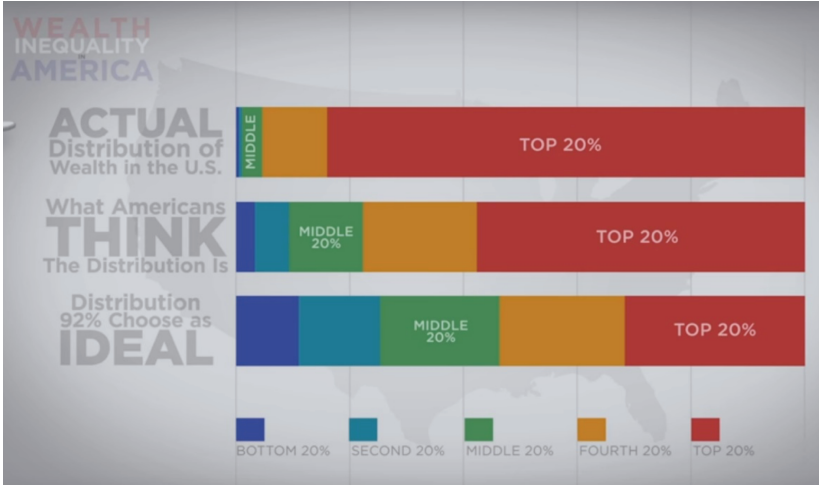
In the United States, an estimated 31% of people struggle to keep up with their most basic living expenses. Many Americans agreed that they would not have the money available to cover a \$400 emergency.¹ For the majority of these people, this is not a savings issue, it is a money issue. Members of blue-collar, working-class America—those who can be defined as working in wage-labor positions—wobble among the poverty line, or struggle to make ends meet on a day-to-day basis. This economic status of working class assumes economic disparity and carries the weight of these words and stereotypes. The poverty line is a boundary; however, the implications of living paycheck-to-paycheck is the true boundary for working-class Americans.

What is unfortunate about the United States is that those considered “poor white trash” no longer have to live under the poverty line to be considered as such. The income inequality in the U.S. has drastically changed in the last few decades. While the bottom 90% has continued making around \$31,000 for the past 30 years, the top 1%’s income has gone from half a million dollars in 1979 to 27 million dollars—meaning that, as of 2015, 1% of the American population has 40% of the nation’s wealth.²

What, exactly, does this wealth inequality mean for the working class?

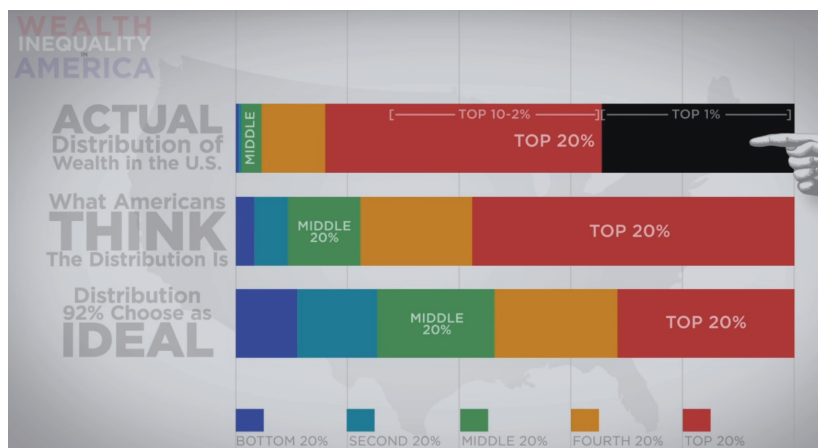
It means a life of growing up being told that if you work hard, you can succeed—anyone, no matter their socioeconomic status at birth, can live the American Dream. However, because of the wealth inequality and economic boundaries of our nation the American Dream is no longer as attainable as the country wants it to be. According to CNN Money, 70% of those born in the lower bracket remain there. Of the other 30%, only 4% of them make it to becoming high earners. Is this what the American Dream looks like?³

In response to this wealth inequality, a Harvard business professor and a behavioral economist analyzed American assumptions about the distribution of wealth in the country. In order to compose this chart, over 5,000 different Americans of various backgrounds were interviewed. The discoveries were astounding, and can be viewed through the chart below.⁴



For the most part, the participants in this study know that wealth inequality is an incredible problem in our country. The fact that they believe the top 20% of the population controls 60% of the wealth is alone a skewed concept of the ideal American wealth distribution. What's even more shocking is the actual distribution: 85% of the wealth in America is controlled by 20% of its population, leaving 80% of Americans to fight for 15% of the wealth. The bottom 40% of Americans—130 million people—are barely viewable on the chart. It is hard to even recognize the

percentage of wealth they are left with. And the amount of wealth that Americans believe the top 20% should be in control of is actually under the control of 1% of the population. This is made more clear in this version of the chart:⁵



This indicates that what the amount of wealth Americans think should be controlled by 65 million people is actually being controlled by just 3 million rich, powerful professionals.

Not only does this chart represent shocking wealth inequality, it also represents a nation that is very confused about the true nature of American wealth. This confusion creates hatred on both sides of the socio-economic spectrum. Working-class Americans feel that the only way to succeed is to work harder and break the boundary of poverty. While the working class admires the wealth of the upper class, they resent professionals for their ability to obtain jobs that they cannot. Joan Williams, author of “What so Many People Don’t Get About the U.S. Working Class,” speaks on these findings in her article.

One little-known element of that gap is that the white working class (WWC) resents professionals but admires the rich. Class migrants (white-collar professionals born to blue-collar families) report that “professional people were generally suspect” and that managers are college kids “who don’t know shit about how to do anything but are full of ideas about how I have to do my job,” said Alfred Lubrano in *Limbo*. Michèle Lamont,

in *The Dignity of Working Men*, also found resentment of professionals—but not of the rich. “[I] can’t knock anyone for succeeding,” a laborer told her. “There’s a lot of people out there who are wealthy and I’m sure they worked darned hard for every cent they have,” chimed in a receiving clerk. Why the difference?⁶

Members of the working class watch as corporate professionals within the companies they work for spend lavish amounts of money; they live paycheck to paycheck and barely scrape by. Naturally, they are resentful. From the upper-class perspective, the working class are lazy, undeserving, and uneducated—but still ask for government handouts to help them with the things they aren’t working hard enough to afford. This hierarchy of stereotypes creates an aura of superiority in the upper class and frustration in the working class.

Although the upper class finds it easy to believe the working class is simply not working hard enough, that is not always true. The average CEO in the top 1% makes 380 times the amount of an hourly employee’s pay. In order to make the same amount of money as their CEO, hourly employees would have to work 380 times harder. Is the CEO really working that much harder than the hourly employees, or does it have more to do with opportunity?

Doing the math, it is not challenging to understand that life with a minimum wage job is not an easy one. Peter Van Buren, a man fired from the state government for whistleblowing, writes about his time being forced back into the low-wage economy in his essay, “Nickle and Dime in 2016”:

[A] minimum wage worker in New York manages to work two jobs (to reach 40 hours a week) without missing any days due to illness, his or her yearly salary would be \$18,720. In other words, it would fall well below the Federal Poverty Line of \$21,775. That’s food stamp territory. To get above the poverty line with a 40-hour week, the minimum wage would need to go above \$10.⁷

The minimum wage in and of itself is a boundary for the working class. Even with two jobs, hourly workers cannot make ends meet. Van Buren describes the back breaking work that he had to endure. Federal

laws require just a fifteen-minute break during a six-hour shift, and a forty-five-minute unpaid break for a shift longer than six hours. The physical pains of the work, coupled with difficult working conditions and customers, made the job nearly unbearable for Van Buren. Many of the people Van Buren were working with were “trying to juggle two or three jobs, each with constantly changing schedules, in order to stitch together something like a half decent paycheck.” In a society that praises economic opportunity, the ability to work and keep a job should be enough to feed, at the very least, yourself. But, with a minimum wage as low as it is, and a working class that is so hard to escape, this American Dream is looking like less and less of a reality.

While it is easy to get lost in the idea of economic opportunity, it is important to remember the struggles of the people serving at restaurants, checking out groceries, and stocking the shelves. The boundaries that America creates in terms of wealth are astounding. With 80% of the country left with 7% of the wealth, there is not much room for economic improvement. The boundary created in the wealth inequality and inopportunity of the United States is unchanging, unless something is done to create a more equal economy.

The solution that must be put in place to fix the current wealth inequality and American income boundaries cannot happen overnight. Many Americans cannot even wrap their heads around what economic reconstruction would mean for the United States. The first steps to fixing this complicated problem begins with education. Education of the wealth inequality in the United States must happen before any kind of change can occur. The confusion regarding wealth inequality in this country was clear in the 2016 election. Americans naturally shied away from Bernie Sanders and socialism because they are unaware of the inequality that could potentially be fixed by a restructuring of our capitalist economy. Perhaps, if everyone was aware of the amount of wealth that lies in the hands of 1% of the population, their minds would be swayed. Education is the key to shifting these economic boundaries.

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The Removal of Gendered Bathroom Signs

Kevin Dolan

The dualism of the current common gender signs creates a system where any person who does not identify as male or female (transgender) is not recognized. The proposed political intervention is simple: remove bathroom signs specifying gender. Men and women do not require different toilets, sinks, mirrors, etc. in order to use a bathroom. Therefore, bathrooms are divided on the basis of gender, not sex.¹ Social theorist Gayle Rubin describes the “sex/gender” system as “the set of arrangements by which a society transforms biological sexuality into products of human activity, and in which sexual needs are satisfied.”² This sex/gender system, of which gendered bathrooms are a prime example, supports the ideology of patriarchy and gender.

Patriarchy functions in such a way that the social constructions of gender will minimize women and limit their ability to pursue life and to live.³ In order to smash and dissolve the social constructions that propagate the patriarchy it is necessary to also remove the physical manifestation of the patriarchy. It is completely necessary to eliminate all unnecessary divisions, specifications, and propagations of gender.

This division also creates an artificial mandate to perform one’s socially assigned gender, particularly in the case of young children. Young children, when unaltered and non-gendered through clothing and hair length, do not have the physical characteristics that are often used to distinguish adult men from adult women (protrusion of breasts, width of hips and shoulders, height, facial hair, etc.). If young children are not clearly and visibly marked—given the appropriate hairstyles, clothing (including color, brand, topic of interest), shoes, and patriarchal education on what it means to be a boy and a girl—their peers, guardians,

teachers, and the rest of society won't know which bathroom a child is supposed to use.

Gendered bathroom signs play a crucial role in the social reproduction of gender. They validate the organization of classrooms into boy lines and girl lines, and the oncoming proliferation of "boy activities" (football, toy cars, etc.) and "girl activities" (gymnastics, dolls, etc.). Performance of gender is mandatory long before a child can choose how they express and perform their identity or develop social or political consciousness. The child is pushed into the role of "boy" or "girl" and becomes increasingly caught up in a situation where

men are assumed (and expected) to be in control at all times, to be unemotional (except for anger and rage), to present themselves as invulnerable, autonomous, independent, strong, rational, logical, dispassionate, knowledgeable, always right, and in command of every situation, especially those involving women. These qualities, it is assumed, mark them as superior and justify their privilege. Women, in contrast, are assumed (and expected) to be just the opposite, especially in relation to men"⁴

Despite the injustice of patriarchy, some girls and women will "try to overcome her situation as inessential object by radically assuming it,"⁵ becoming hyper-feminine. While boys and men sit on the other side of power in a patriarchy, many will also radically assume their situation by becoming hyper-masculine, constantly trying to perform through aggression and dominance, particularly in relation to women. The ways that people perform gender and assume roles of gender are profoundly consequential and highly unnecessary, making the removal of unnecessarily gendered institutions particularly urgent.

The removal of the gendered bathroom signs serves multiple purposes. First, the absence of gendered bathroom signs would serve to eventually dissolve an aspect of patriarchy and slow or lessen the rapidity of gender reproduction (social reproduction). Second, the confusion caused by the absence, removal, and replacement of gendered bathroom signs would serve to reveal the absurdity of the signs in the first place. Public bathrooms at sporting events, concerts, and other crowded areas would likely become more equitable, whereas in the gendered bathrooms women

frequently have to wait much longer than men to go to the bathroom.

One potentially significant issue with the removal of gendered bathroom signs is the loss of a safe space for women. If assault became an issue, then additional security near or in bathrooms would become necessary, which would call into question whether the political intervention was beneficial in the first place. This could also manifest itself in less concrete ways, such as men dominating conversation and space in bathrooms all the time.

The absence of gendered bathroom signs would probably not create bathroom androgyny (preexisting urinals would be a giveaway to the former gender identity of the bathroom), but it would be a significant step in allowing for additional freedom. Perhaps more importantly, it would eliminate another layer of irrational and unfounded gender specification and division.

Endnotes

- ¹ Bathroom assignment is based on gender, not sex, because nobody checks a person's genitalia, genetic makeup, or anything else that would verify a person's biological sex before that person is allowed to enter and use the bathroom. It is only a person's appearance, and the way that a person's appearance fits social constructions of gender (body type, clothing, quantity and fashion of hair, style, etc.) that allow a person to pass through the social turnstile of the bathroom door.
- ² Gayle Rubin, *The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex*. (N.p.: n.p., 1975).
- ³ I would also argue that living within the falseness of patriarchy is detrimental to any person's ability to pursue life and to live. In the case of men, despite the immense opportunities for power, dominance, and control, gender also permeates, dictates, and forces men's identity, behavior, and livelihood. Men are both the beneficiaries and slaves of patriarchy. Boys are taught, coerced, and forced into being and desiring domination and violence. Just like with girls and women (although to a much lesser extent), it is not possible for a boy or man to have full freedom to choose who he wants to be, who he is, and who he will be when he is required to serve and propagate the patriarchy. The propagators of patriarchy do not limit themselves to the domination of women. Men's desire to dominate, humiliate, and abuse, hits women first and men second. Everybody gets hit and women get hit more often, frequently, and harder.
- ⁴ Allan G. Johnson, *The Gender Knot: Unraveling Our Patriarchal Legacy* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple UP).

- ⁵ Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (London: Vintage Classic, 2015). Print.
- ⁶ Some have voiced concerns about the potential for assault and sexual violence in gender-integrated bathrooms. These concerns are undoubtedly important yet misunderstand the current structure of gendered bathrooms. One might say that men (who commit the majority of sexual violence) could sexually assault women if bathrooms were integrated. However, there is nothing to stop men from going into women's restrooms and assaulting people in the current structure—one does not need to show their genitalia in order to enter either bathroom. This is not to say that sexual assault won't occur—it already does at alarming rates.⁷ However, it is not proximity, as would be the case in gender-integrated bathrooms, which causes people to commit sexual assault, but rather a fundamental lack of respect for and recognition of the autonomy of other human beings.
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Boundaries, Learning, or Bluffing: What Makes Us, Us?

Luke Johnson

What makes you different from other things? Where do you draw the line around yourself? Who is your we?

Humanity has a long history of creating boundaries both physical and figurative to protect ourselves from others. We want to distinguish between us and them. We want to keep our dominant identity over machines. We want things to be simple. As we navigate this messy, entangled, and gray world, we want to make things understandable.

The act of defining an in group and an out group in our society predates writing. We built walls to physically distinguish between ourselves and our neighbors, enemies, or those unfamiliar to us. We constructed these boundaries out of an apparent threat to our safety. These types of boundaries in contemporary society are much more difficult to define. The labels that we apply to outsiders sometimes do not apply because the boundary we are creating is socially constructed. Not to say that things that are socially constructed are fictional, because “[reality], that is everything we understand about the world, is socially constructed.”¹ These socially constructed categories are flexible and do not apply in all cases. We see a mess and we want to understand it.

We want to take a gradient world and make it categorical. We do this because it is how we learn, think, and process. We want things to be discrete because it is simple and easy. But, simplicity is a myth. Take language as an example. Language is how we form thoughts, language is how we remember, language is how we communicate; even the finite words that we use are not categorical. As Joan Bybee illustrates in her piece, “Language Usage and Cognition”, “[Since] linguistic categories are derived from concrete utterances, they usually overlap with neighboring

categories derived from similar tokens; that is, there are no clear-cut boundaries between them.... [L]inguistic categories are gradient and organized around prototypical members.”² This brief explanation allows us to explore the world with a new lens. We do not process the world as categories, but as collections of prototypes. We need examples to build mental prototypes. Then, when we encounter something new, we can make comparisons to the different prototypes in our minds. When you encounter a dog with three legs, you do not say, “No, dogs have four legs, therefore this is not a dog.” You put the pieces together and fit the three-legged dog into the four-legged prototype.

Learning of this type was once considered a solely human ability. But now, we are training computers to use the same process. In his *New York Times Magazine* article, “The Great A.I. Awakening,” Gideon Lewis-Kraus describes the recent explosion of neural networks in artificial intelligence: “Humans don’t learn to understand language by memorizing dictionaries and grammar books, so why should we possibly expect our computers to do so?”³ We pride ourselves on our ability to reason and we have since the time of the great Greek philosophers. Reason was what distinguished us from other animals. If we can create machines to reason as well as (or better than) us, how can we maintain the monopoly on intelligence? There are computers that can do things humans will never be able to do, like figure out what is the fastest route to a point using real time traffic, but because we do not value this task as a signal of intelligence we do not consider programs like Google Maps to be intelligent. So what boundary are we drawing and can we define the differences? Is it gradient like our language? What do we have to lose?

The Turing test has been popularized to the point that many people now misunderstand it. Looking at the original piece, you can see that Alan Turing was not interested in having a cohesive conversation with a machine, he wanted the machine to deceive him.⁴ We could infer then that he thought that intelligence was not just performing categorization like humans and communicating like humans, but it would involve the machine knowing that it was a machine and that in order to pass the test, it needed to lie to the human put in front of it. So maybe, we can distinguish ourselves from machines not because of our ability to reason, but

because we can lie to each other well. Whatever the reason, we still live in a society where the question of computer consciousness and morality is left unexplored because of the boundaries we construct. We refuse to see the intelligence we create as the same or similar to our own. There are many ideologies, social norms, and religious thoughts that keep us from grappling with these questions. If we can create an intelligence, what right do we have to keep it as a tool? Where is the line? Maybe Google Maps, Translate, and Flights are intelligent, but is my washing machine? Does redrawing the boundary to intelligence matter?

We do a lot to make sure that we know who we are and we can easily distinguish a them. We draw boundaries around ourselves, between our words, and between our intelligences. We do these things because it makes things easier, but at the core of it, what makes us, us?

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Blind Trust and Barriers

Turns out, you trusted that person in the car next to you before he hit you, and you're actually better for it

Samantha Ollmann

If asked, “Would you place your life in the hands of a stranger?”, many would immediately say “no.” It’s an obvious reaction, and a good one too. We’ve been taught our whole lives that we can’t trust strangers, that we should be wary of the unfamiliar. As a child you hear stories of kids who were kidnapped looking for a lost puppy, and of people who left with someone they didn’t know and never came back. This sort of fear sticks with you into adulthood. So when asked, “Would you place your life in the hands of a stranger?”, it’s perfectly understandable to say “no.” However, the fact of the matter is that we already do it, and it’s not entirely a bad thing. It allows us to break down barriers we usually keep up, and it gives us advantages and lessons we wouldn’t typically have. It’s this blind trust in strangers that is what allows our society to be what it is.

This innate trust we have in people isn’t something we question until it’s absolutely necessary. It isn’t until that trust is breached do we realize that we had put that trust in someone. I experienced an obvious example over the summer. I worked at an intensive care facility (ICF) for vulnerable adults—a vulnerable adult being someone over the age of 18 with severe mental and/or physical disabilities. These people require some of the most basic care: clothing changes, showers, transportation, feeding, medication, and haircuts, functions that most students on Gonzaga University campus take for granted. It doesn’t occur to most that someone can be completely dependent on another human being for these basic cares. One doesn’t usually think that you’d depend on a complete *stranger* for those cares either.

Even working at the ICF, at first it didn’t occur to me that these clients I cared for had to put such blind faith in me. I knew the gravity

of the work I was doing—I was terrified of screwing up a med pass—but my clients didn't know how wary I was. They had no reason to believe I was nervous. They just had to trust me.

There was a day when I was trying to take care of a woman who had severe physical and mental disabilities; she was confined to a wheel chair and struggled with basic motor-functions, and she also had problems with speech. She dropped one of her number flashcards, and when I failed to understand quickly enough that she was asking me to get it. She had what we call “behaviors”¹—actions that are either because of, or amplified by, a mental disability. This time, she screamed like she was getting murdered, threw herself around in her chair, and physically harmed herself by biting on her lip so hard she began to bleed from her mouth. It was by far one of the most rattling experiences I've had in my entire life, and it was also incredibly tragic. I felt terrible that I was, at least in part, the cause of this reaction.

I didn't understand why she was so frightened of me. *I* knew I was qualified to take care of her, that I'd gone through the training; I knew that if given a bit of time I'd understand what she was trying to ask of me. Then I realized that there was no reason why *she* would know these things. To her, I probably looked like an inept wide-eyed nineteen-year-old. Admittedly, she wasn't entirely wrong. Because of the rules, she had to just deal with my shortcomings in taking care of her—that it took me longer to understand what she wanted, that I was a bit slow with med passes because I was new to tube meds—she just had to hope that was all it was. If I screwed up, there wasn't a damn thing she could do about it. She had to trust me with her life.

When I was first hired, I got a file on all 12 of my clients. In these files there was medical history, family history, prior accidents and events, special notes, emergency contacts, last home, friends, everything I could possibly want to know. All she knew about me was that the company hired me. The company's hiring record included someone who was stupid enough to give herself a cosmetic piercing in the ICF bathroom; with that knowledge, I could understand why she would be terrified.

Through this experience I was both grateful for the life I had been given, and became wary of how often I just trust other people. Though

I am not dependent on another for basic cares, when I get in a car and drive, I trust that those around me will drive according to the rules. When I go to classes, I see my professor is (usually) a doctor “something,” and assume they have the credentials to teach me. It isn’t until this trust is breached, such as if I were in a car accident or my professor explains that they don’t know what they’re talking about, do I recognize the trust I had in them and how it’s been breached—how a trust that I unconsciously placed in someone was betrayed.

And we do this with the world around us! We expect the environment around us to conform to what we expect, and we follow this idea. According to sociologist J. Delhey, this blind trust is “the belief that others will not deliberately or knowingly do us harm, if they can avoid it, and will look after our interests, if this is possible.”² You’d think with how many times we’ve been tricked or turned around that we’d put up walls, but we don’t. Even when the most extreme betrayal of trust happens in the world around us, we still don’t put up walls. This trust is what keeps us from being uncertain of the world all the time,³ and thus acting like skeptics.

We learn lessons from blind trust, and also recognize great advantages of this trust. If we didn’t place this trust in others, we’d be a complete mess. Society today would be completely skeptical, we would have walled off our entire country by now, and tried to become completely dependent on ourselves. Blind trust stops us from picking through every facet of our lives and trying to predict the future before it happens. It allows us to associate with the general community, to take weak social ties and make them stronger.⁴ From trusting the person who makes us coffee in the morning to not deviate from our order, to trusting that our laws (or someone with the power to) will stop our president from doing something extreme, we put that trust in others. Though sometimes it fails us, and we end up feeling a burn we never expected, other times it really comes through.

Blind trust is the safety net that helps our country stabilize, while at the same time gives us some of our grandest pitfalls. As a concept, no one would ever *choose* to put empty faith in someone. Those at the ICF would probably prefer to have complete control of their lives, but in order to have the best life they can they *must* depend on others. That’s

true for everyone. If we want to live our best lives, we have to have a little faith in people we've never met. And I prefer it that way. I don't want a society that doesn't trust a neighbor. I don't want a society that uses stereotypes and rumor to determine its actions, where hearing something once makes it a true enough statement that we use it to wall ourselves in from others. The world would become an isolated and cold place. Blind trust allows for diversity, for understanding, and for connection with others. It is something that we don't like to dwell on, but connects us to more than we think.

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Between Non-Fiction and Fiction: Getting to the Heart of the Matter

Isabella Manoguerra

Tim O'Brien writes in "How to Tell a True War Story," that "in any war story, but especially a true one, it's difficult to separate what happened from what seemed to happen."¹ In any case, the factual truth of a happening may be separate from the individual experience of that happening. The concept of storytelling stretches across the realm of all writing, but within the boundaries of the genre non-fiction, a newly popular subgenre emerged: *creative non-fiction*.

When I told my boyfriend this was the topic of a class I'm taking here at Gonzaga, his immediate reaction was: "Isn't that an oxymoron?"

At first impression, these words do seem at odds with each other. We think of non-fiction not within the realms of storytelling, but informative, solely for utility. Non-fiction without a creative modifier implies information with a lack of inherent entertainment. Here is where the confusion lies. On the boundary line between fiction and non-fiction rests creative non-fiction, a genre that explicitly and implicitly seeks to inform, entertain, and discover in the process.

The genre begs the question of necessary truths: Which details *must* be included in order to get to the heart of the story? Arguably, none at all. Tim O'Brien, esteemed novelist, tells a series of wartime stories in "How to Tell a True War Story." Each time, the speaker asserts that "this actually happened."² At the end of the piece, however, the speaker reveals what many would consider to be a lie. "All you can do" he says, "is tell it one more time, patiently, adding and subtracting, making up a few things to get at the real truth."³ The truth, O'Brien might argue, does not rest with real events but the fact that they could have happened, sometime, somewhere. The story gets to the heart of a truth beyond the events themselves.

In contrast to Tim O'Brien's perspective, Lee Gutkind of literary journal *Creative Nonfiction*, believes the element of truth that must be present within the genre lacks that ambiguity. As creative non-fiction writer, Gutkind says, "this is the pledge the writer makes to the reader – the maxim we live by," that maxim being absolute truth.⁴ By this estimation, the word creative is not by default the interpretation of the events, but "refers to the use of literary craft...in a compelling, vivid, dramatic manner."⁵ In the context of literary journalism, we as an audience may appreciate this more black-and-white approach, expecting complete honesty without exaggeration.

Emily Dickinson's poem "Tell All the Truth but Tell It Slant" inspired the title of Brenda Miller's writing guide *Tell It Slant*. Dickinson implies in her poem that truth must be told "gradually," so as not to shock. Dickinson writes perhaps to suggest the truth must be told in relation to the appropriate reception of an audience.⁶ While Miller adopts aspects of this view, she focuses on the empirically understood experiences of a person. Miller asserts that "powerful writing always emerges from the physical, specific, and sensory details of your own experience."⁷ This aspect of non-fiction writing, although based in truth, has the room to become something beyond isolated events when interpreted first by the author, then by the audience. Does the subjectivity of the story produced then render that story less true? Miller urges us as writers to tell "my truth rather than *the* truth,"⁸ implying that while this subjectivity, although an arguably skewed version of events, is no less true than the next person's truth.

Miller may perhaps represent the middle ground of these three authors, and while O'Brien and Gutkind are at odds with their beliefs about what Truth with a capital "T" must inherently include, this gap speaks to the complicated nature of the genre. So while "creative non-fiction" may not be classified as a true oxymoron, the literary scope of the genre itself, in fact, becomes contradictory. The boundaries that separate truth from fiction fall in and out of focus when analyzing the parameters of what this genre means and the necessary aspects of truth-telling within a story. The boundaries of Truth change in scope as each author takes up the pen to write. Creative non-fiction, while by nature ambig-

uous, allows both the writer and the reader to extract a meaning beyond the words on the page and the events related. As Vivian Gornick writes: "What happened to the writer is not what matters; what matters is the larger sense that the writer was able to make of what happened. For that, the power of a writing imagination is required."⁹

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Authors

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