

The background of the cover is a night landscape. The sky is a deep, dark blue, filled with numerous small, bright stars. In the lower portion of the image, there is a range of dark, silhouetted mountains. In the foreground, there is a dense forest of evergreen trees, and a paved road or path is visible at the bottom edge of the frame. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

# IMAGINATIONS

A COLLECTION OF ESSAYS  
VOLUME 7 - 2023-2024





# ImagiNATIONS

**Volume 7, 2023-2024**

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*Many thanks to University College alumna, Professor Emerita Mildred A. Schwartz (University of Illinois Chicago, BA UC54, MA56), for her generous financial support of this publication.*



We are delighted to mark the 25th year of the 21st century launching ***ImagiNATIONS V.7***, the undergraduate journal of the Canadian Studies program at the University of Toronto. Here, you will find a range of outstanding essays on diverse topics, critical and creative, historic and contemporary, attesting to the caliber of our students' scholarly achievements and the vitality of Canadian Studies.

This volume would not be possible without the dedication of our student editorial team, co-editors-in-chief Iseabela Sousa and Trinity Roche, contributing editor Margaret De Leon, and our editorial assistants Siya Duggal, Jasmyn Reardon-Manek, and Max Ray-Ellis. Thank you all!

We are very grateful to University College alumna, Professor Emerita Mildred A. Schwartz (University of Illinois-Chicago), for her generous financial support of this publication.

Siobhan O'Flynn

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## EDITORS' LETTER

**ImagiNATIONS** celebrates the work and research of University of Toronto students covering Canadian Studies topics across various disciplines. This issue hosts essays and reflections rooted in political science, Canadian culture, Canadian history, Canadian history and Indigenous studies, criminology, and interdisciplinary studies. The nature of the issue is a testament to the varied approaches and interests of our writers as well as the breadth of ways to conceptualize and research Canada.

As editors, we have had the great privilege of reading this cohort's engaging and enlightening papers. The papers in this issue delve into discussions of colonialism, identity, culture, and power through diverse lenses and perspectives to show the multiplicity of peoples and communities of Turtle Island and Canada. From dialogues on the potential impacts of Indigenous and Afro-Diasporic speculative fictions in challenging colonial systems to analyses of the experiences of Black refugees in Canada, our 2023-2024 writers dive into ideas of anti-colonial systems, implications of controversy, and sociopolitical issues.

We would like to extend our thanks and sincere appreciation to our editorial team—Siya Duggal, Jasmyn Reardon-Manek, and Jonah Rosen—for their expertise and professionalism while reviewing this cohort's papers. Without their dedication, this issue would not be possible.

Furthermore, the valuable support of the Canadian Studies Undergraduate Students Union (CANSSU) and Cameron Miranda-Radbord, President 2023-2024, cannot be understated in the production and dissemination of this issue.

And of course, thank you to our writers. You make the University of Toronto the wonderful academic community we all love.

Sincerely,

Isebela Sousa and Trinity Roche

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*Reimagining Futures: Indigenous and Afro-Diasporic Speculative Fiction in Challenging Colonial Structures*

**Merveille Massamba**

Indigenous and Afro-descendant speculative fictions and designs have emerged as visionary forces in challenging colonial and oppressive structures within today's society. These speculative fictions have helped in imagining futurisms that embody important themes within the Indigenous and Afro-descendant speculative fictions that reflect the resistance and dismantling of discriminatory social frameworks. Based on this, this essay will explore the intersectional solidarity and connection between Indigenous and Afro-descendant speculative futurisms, and analyze how they both challenge colonial and racist structures that are present in today's society in Canada. This will be explored by dissecting various fictitious works such as "How To Survive the Apocalypse for Native Girls" by Kai Minosh Pyle and "Sunrise" by Nnedi Okorafor. This will also be examined through the analysis of themes such as cultural revival, the centring of Indigenous and Afro-diasporic identities, and alternative systems of governance.

Indigenous speculative fictions and the various topics explored within these works can relate to the "lived experiences of many Indigenous communities" (Eguibar-Holgado 2022, 3). These experiences that Indigenous communities have faced and continue to face include land displacement/dispossession, migration, cultural erasure, and more. This is all derived from the issue of settler colonialism, in which Indigenous people face land "displacement" as a form of "alienation" from their communities and cultures. However, Indigenous communities use speculative fictions and storytelling as a way of "resisting colonization" and finding reclamation amidst these injustices (3). The reading "How To Survive the Apocalypse for Native Girls" by Kai Minosh Pyle is an Indigenous speculative fictitious work that embodies Indigenous futurisms and reflects the experiences of Indigenous communities. In the story, the main character, who is an Indigenous woman, creates a guide on how to survive an apocalypse, which can also be identified as a colonial attack that is affecting Indigenous women. The main character, who is also the narrator, shares her personal and lived experiences that reflect her identity as an Indigenous woman while discussing her survival guide. This apocalyptic story focuses on how Indigenous women and communities navigate the future as they are affected by issues of colonialism. However, the reading also explores Indigenous futurisms, which allows readers to visualize what a future without colonization and racism would look like and how this would affect Indigenous communities.

Afro-descendant speculative fictions have always been invested in sharing the histories "of those from the African diaspora" (Gipson 2019, 85). Many engage deeply with historical fiction, African-American fantasy, and science fiction (Gipson 2019). These speculative fictions are often very creative as they explore cultural aesthetic genres such as the arts, which include music, photography, painting, etc. These cultural aesthetics that combine these arts and other genres, such as science fiction and historical fiction related to Black individuals, can be viewed

as an example of Afrofuturism. This term, which was coined in 1994 by cultural critic Mark Dery, is a cultural movement that uses these aesthetics and themes in order to envision liberated futures for Black individuals (Chambliss 2022). Afrofuturism is “rooted in the experiences of oppressed people,” which is why these stories emphasize how the exploitative systems of power within society affect Black communities and individuals. Many Afro-descendant speculative fictions have used Afrofuturist themes and ideas in order to display these narratives and allow readers to imagine what a future that embodies Afrofuturism entails. One Afro-descendant work of speculative fiction in particular that explores these themes and genres is “Sunrise” by Nnedi Okorafor in *Africanfuturism: An Anthology edited by Wole Talabi*. This science fiction speculative reading focuses on the main character, Eze Okeke, who is a Nigerian sci-fi writer, and explores their experience in a technologically advanced society. This story focuses on Eze’s journey back to their country of origin, Nigeria, with their “Personal Individual” (PI) named Sunrise, who is Eze’s virtual assistant. This reading primarily brings attention to the role and presence of artificial intelligence in human society, which can be viewed as one aspect of Afrofuturism in this context. Overall, these two speculative works of fiction are connected through the ways in which they touch on very important themes and topics related to decolonization as Canada grapples with its colonial history.

One theme that is evident in both stories is cultural revival, specifically focusing on Indigenous and African cultures. Canada has had a deep history involving the cultural erasure of marginalized communities and individuals, specifically Indigenous people. Indigenous people have faced an ongoing cultural genocide as a result of settler colonialism in Canada. However, Indigenous speculative fiction, including “How To Survive the Apocalypse for Native Girls,” has depicted societies in which these cultures, practices, and traditions become reclaimed. The author Pyle highlights the determination of Indigenous people to preserve their cultures and heritage even during the apocalypse that is affecting Native women in the reading. This is evident through their community’s prioritization of kinship, which is identified as their “main law” that connects their community together and is rooted in love (Pyle 2020, 33). This is an important practice among Indigenous people because it connects them to their community and environmental surroundings. This is also displayed through the mention of Indigenous clans, specifically the Eagle Clan within the story. In fact, the main character’s close friend, Migizi, happens to be from that same clan (34). Clans are a very common cultural tradition within Indigenous culture that brings families together. With these key examples of cultural practices and traditions during an apocalypse affecting the Indigenous community of women, Pyle showcases how cultural revival can be a form of resistance against cultural assimilation.

Similarly, Black individuals often face many challenges regarding their cultural identity and sense of belonging in Canada. This is based on issues such as Canada’s history of racism and segregation, challenges related to cultural assimilation for Black immigrants, racism and stereotyping, and more. These challenges can often result in many Black individuals feeling disconnected from their cultural roots. In “Sunrise,” the main character, Eze, also shares this feeling of disconnect from their African heritage after spending time away from Nigeria for a

while. However, despite these challenges, Eze's interactions and moments shared with their family and surroundings within their hometown evokes a sense of cultural identity and belonging. This is evident when the main character, Eze, makes their way back home to Nigeria from America. The author provides many examples of Eze becoming reconnected with their culture during this part of the story. One example includes Eze deciding to make "spicy tomato stew" and "fry ripe plantain" as a meal to eat for the day, which is a very common Nigerian dish. Another example includes when Eze decides to go to the market to buy some food for their family, and ends up getting "smoked fish, ogbono, eggs, egusi" and more, which are also very common Nigerian foods (Okorafor 2020, 11). Key moments like these serve as a reminder and moment of realization regarding Eze's African identity. Eze undergoes a process of reconnection with their African roots, ultimately finding a renewed sense of cultural identity and belonging. Author Okorafor does her best to show that amidst challenges, issues, and even changes that African individuals face within society, there is so much importance in experiencing cultural revival, which is an important aspect of embodying Afrofuturism.

Another important theme is the centring of Indigenous and Afro-diasporic identities. Despite Canada's commitment to a multicultural society, mainstream narratives often fail to centre marginalized identities, specifically Indigenous and Afro-diasporic identities. This is evident within literature and media, where these marginalized voices are often silenced, tokenized, or simply non-existent (Harding 2005; Miller 2024). However, in Pyle's reading, the author sheds light on issues that Indigenous individuals often face, such as colonialism, cultural erasure, and resilience. For example, as the main character writes her guide on how to survive the apocalypse she is experiencing, directed toward a future Native girl who is surviving the apocalypse, she states "What is there to say when you're going to lose yet another person who you love most in the world?" (Pyle 2020, 35). In this specific moment, the protagonist of the story discusses the challenges she faces from this colonial attack on her community, which reflects her personal experience as an Indigenous woman. Being able to centre these voices and identities means being open to actively hearing about the intersectional experiences that Indigenous women face. Centring their identities also allows others who do not possess these identities to understand what these individuals experience in a society that is dominated by racist and colonial structures.

The lack of recognition for African identities and voices is also a serious problem that is also touched on in Okorafor's reading. In "Sunrise," although Eze is depicted as an accomplished and admired science fiction writer, they seem to face challenges regarding proper recognition due to their cultural identity. For example, while Eze is about to board their plane back home to Nigeria, a white journalist stops them to interview them about the new and technologically advanced airline they are boarding. However, after the interview, Eze states that "He didn't ask what I thought Nigerians would think of the flight experience." In this interaction, although Eze gains recognition as a writer, their cultural identity and heritage seems to not be a topic of interest. Even before the interview took place, the interviewer initially thought Eze would be a "white guy using a pen name" before meeting them in person (Okorafor 2020, 9). Eze's

experience touches on the pervasive issue of overlooking African identities within mainstream spaces and environments. This reflects a broader pattern of marginalization faced by African individuals, regardless of what their accomplishments may be. Thus, Okorafor displays the importance of amplifying African identities and voices within these narratives, which challenges the current narrative that excludes them.

In addition to the themes of cultural revitalization and centring marginalized voices, the readings also explore the theme of alternative systems of governance. Within the two narratives explored in the readings, there is a clear critique of the power structures that are present within the two societies. There is also a clear vision of a more desirable, equitable, and inclusive future. In Pyle's reading, it is clear that there is a current colonial attack on Indigenous communities and individuals, specifically Native girls. This society is governed by principles that are rooted in colonialism and racism, which clearly affects Indigenous identities. This also reflects Canada's power structures and how they are rooted and dependent on the colonization of Indigenous people, which comes as a result of the racist history of the settler colonialism of Indigenous individuals. However, the main character's survival guide in Pyle's reading suggests a resistance toward colonial models that govern society. Instead, it pushes more toward Indigenous-led systems of power that prioritize community well-being over individual profit. This is evident as this guide seeks to support future Native girls who may experience this same issue, therefore prioritizing community support. Valuing the other themes that were previously mentioned, such as cultural revival and centring Indigenous voices and identities, also contributes to this new society in which Indigenous-led systems of power are prioritized. This alternative system of governance embodies Indigenous futurisms by presenting a future in which Indigenous principles, such as communalism and respect for the land, are favoured and brought to fruition.

Moreover, in "Sunrise," this alternative vision for the future seems to be more technologically advanced. Although it may not explicitly be a form of governance, with the depiction of the futuristic Skylight airline and virtual artificial intelligence (A.I.) assistant, it seems as if this society symbolizes a departure from conventional systems of control. Commonly in Canada, advanced technology and A.I. have been used for surveillance technology in public environments such as airports. In traditional governance structures such as this, surveillance serves as a tool for maintaining control and enforcing discipline and compliance among individuals. This also maintains power dynamics that hold certain groups of people, such as non-racialized individuals, in privileged positions while individuals who are outside of this category remain marginalized, thus reinforcing the status quo. However, the use of advanced technology and A.I. as explored in the reading has empowered all individuals to challenge these oppressive colonial systems that enforce surveillance among marginalized individuals. For example, when Eze engages in a conversation with their P.I. about the topic of freedom of speech and responsibility, the P.I. challenges conventional notions of individuals rights and autonomy by stating "To express one's self is to live... It's always wrong to deny life" (Okorafor 2020, 11). This interaction highlights how A.I. technologies can challenge



traditional standards of surveillance and control by suggesting that freedom of expression is a fundamental aspect of its existence. A future that embodies Afrofuturism values the exploration of advanced technology, where Afro-descendant communities are at the forefront of this innovation.

In conclusion, the exploration of Indigenous and Afro-descendant speculative fictions offers a clear insight into the intersectional solidarity of marginalized communities in the face of oppressive and colonial structures within society. These fictions allow marginalized individuals to envision futures where cultural revival, centring Indigenous and Afro-descendant voices, and exploring alternative and more equitable systems of governance are highly valued. It is important to use these themes in order to strive towards a future within Canada that tackles discriminatory power structures and honours the uniqueness of all cultures.

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## *The Notwithstanding Clause: A Positive Intent With a Less Positive Reality*

### **Tisya Raina**

Section 33 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, or the notwithstanding clause, was instituted during the Canadian patriation process with the goal of preventing a person from bringing an action in court claiming that a law violates fundamental freedoms, legal rights, or equality rights, therefore invalidating their claims (Compilation 1982, 1). Conceived as a pre-emptive measure that allows provincial or federal governments to protect that law, the clause acknowledges that there can be situations where a government will want to pass a law, or maintain an existing law, that disregards Charter-protected rights or freedoms of sections 2 and 7-15 (2). Participants of the 1981 First Ministers Conference, where section 33 was agreed upon, including Minister of Justice Jean Chrétien, Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau, and Attorney General of Ontario Roy McMurtry, supported the introduction of the notwithstanding clause claiming that it would ensure provincial sovereignty, judicial progress, and more citizen involvement (Federal-Provincial 1981, 52-54). While created with positive intentions and lofty goals in mind, Section 33 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (i.e., the notwithstanding clause) has not promoted provincial sovereignty or judicial progress, but has increased inequalities and enhanced the voice of the electorate, rendering it largely ineffective in terms of legislative activity.

### **Provincial Sovereignty and the Division of Power**

One intent of the notwithstanding clause was to assist in giving provinces sovereignty, thereby maintaining a divide of power according to Minister of Justice Jean Chrétien (Compilation 1982, 5). Giving provinces the option to opt out of certain sections of the Charter allows each provincial parliament to make decisions based on the will of their people. The notwithstanding clause thereby has the potential to effectively foster stronger provincial identities and promote diversity of political thought throughout Canada. Furthermore, by giving provincial parliaments the ability to question laws and their implications within their jurisdiction, a divide of power is maintained as multiple institutions hold law adjacent powers. However, in reality, this provincial sovereignty and divide of power are easily infringed upon by the Supreme Court. Ontario attempted to use the notwithstanding clause in 2018 to circumvent Section 2 (b) with the *Efficient Local Government Act* in which the size of Ontario municipal councils in Toronto would be subject to a decrease in size (Brosseau et al., 2018). By decreasing the size of municipal councils, fewer citizens are represented. In one of the most diverse cities in the world, a lack of diversity would make it impossible for electoral results and municipal decisions to properly reflect the desires of the electorate. These were the Supreme Court's concerns with this act, which resulted in the Supreme Court overturning the decision before it was even put to a vote within Ontario. The intervention of the Supreme Court impeded on the sovereignty of Ontario while also revealing that the portrayed division of power is easily evaded (Kahana 2002,

229). The contrast of intent and reality in this situation exhibits how the notwithstanding clause promotes an illusion of provincial power rather than actual power. As soon as the province participated in legislative activity that the state did not approve of, the state intervened. The illusion of power promoted by the notwithstanding clause is dangerous because if power is portrayed as present rather than fully absent, it is unlikely that there will be a demand for said power. In this respect, the clause seems to be obstructing the progress of positive legislative activity and not promoting provincial sovereignty and the divide of power.

### **Promoting the Judicial Process**

Another intent of the notwithstanding clause, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau says, is to encourage the questioning of the Charter, promote the judicial process, and thus nurture the legislative progress (Federal-Provincial 1981, 52). With similar reasoning to the first intent, giving provinces the ability to question the Charter and therefore Canadian governmental institutions defines this document and these institutions as contestable and open to change. Essentially with the notwithstanding clause, a mechanism for legislative progress is embedded within the Canadian government. However, in reality, the questioning of the Charter promoted by the notwithstanding clause does not support legislative advancement. Rather, it supports the ability to enact temporary change, whether it be positive or negative. A prime example of this is the use of the notwithstanding clause by the Legislature of Saskatchewan in 1986 to circumvent Section 2(d) with the *Saskatchewan Government Employees Union (SGEU) Dispute Settlement Act* (Kahana 2001, 269). The Act was used to discourage union strikes and ordered workers to get back to work. However, this Act directly contradicted the Court of Appeal for Saskatchewan's decision from their provincial human rights code that back-to-work orders are unconstitutional. The Act was repealed within two years (Kahana 2001, 270). The discrepancy between an older decision from the provincial human rights code, which is perceived as more progressive, and a newer decision under the notwithstanding clause, which is perceived as regressive, reveals that perhaps the notwithstanding clause does not support legislative progress but rather supports temporary change. Moreover, because of the conflict between the governmental institutions in Saskatchewan, it can be claimed that the notwithstanding clause promotes legislative activity within provinces because a precedent was set for proceedings when there is a disagreement between provincial institutions in Saskatchewan and potentially other provinces that follow common law. While intent did not translate into reality with the notwithstanding clause not nurturing legislative progress, in this scenario, the clause does promote legislative activity.

### **Inequalities of Rights**

Opponents of the clause predicted a negative impact of the notwithstanding clause, namely its potential to foster inequalities between provinces by supporting the concept that rights do not

have to be shared by all Canadians (Kahana 2002, 233). The notwithstanding clause, conceived when Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau needed to have all Canadian provinces agree on the Charter of Rights, was ratified with the objective of decreasing concerns about the all-encompassing nature of the proposed Charter and coming to a consensus about the contents of the Charter during the patriation process. By avoiding an all-encompassing Charter, provinces are allowed to question specific sections of the Charter and use the document as they see fit under predetermined guidelines. By giving provinces the choice to pick and choose what rights they bestow upon their citizens, the opportunity for some provinces to restrict these basic rights arises, suggesting that the notwithstanding clause could foster inequalities in access to rights between citizens in different provinces, thus fostering inequalities between Canadians. However, this claim is deemed moot since the process for instituting an act under the notwithstanding clause requires a simple majority vote in favor of the act from the members of provincial parliament. Since these members are voted in by their constituents and must retain their favour to stay in power, the members represent the opinions of their constituents. Therefore, the notwithstanding clause extends and protects rights according to the desires of the majority of the population via the vote of their elected representatives. The focus on the majority could raise concerns about the rights of minority populations. However, nearly every aspect of the Canadian political system does not cater to minorities. From the Prime Minister being chosen through receiving the most seats to local laws only being passed with 51% of people in favour, the majority often takes priority. In reality, no significant inequalities between Canadian citizens have been facilitated by the notwithstanding clause.

In 2000, Alberta proposed the *Marriage Amendment Act*, thereby circumventing Section 15, which sought to ban same-sex marriage within the province. However, it did not come into effect because of a previous ruling that made any rulings pertaining to marriage federal jurisdiction (Brosseau et al., 2018). This use of the notwithstanding clause did have the potential to block same-sex marriage in Alberta and promote inequalities between citizens in different provinces. The potential inequalities furthered by the notwithstanding clause were contradicted by the federal government and any precedent set in this situation, but without them there is a possibility that the Act could have been passed, suggesting that the notwithstanding clause has a real potential to promote inequalities of access to rights. Furthermore, the *Marriage Amendment Act*, *Efficient Local Government Act*, and the *Saskatchewan Government Employees Union (SGEU) Dispute Settlement Act* all have been used as methods of denying Charter-given rights rather than potentially expanding upon these rights. All the presented case studies and most uses of the notwithstanding clause in general have not been used to further the advancement of equalities of rights between citizens, but to increase inequalities of rights.

### **Citizens and the Judiciary**

Attorney General of Ontario Roy McMurtry supported the notwithstanding clause because it advocates for all legislative decisions to be endorsed by the electorate despite the presence of a

non-elected judiciary (McMurtry 1982, 69). As Canada's Supreme Court judges are nominated by prime ministers and not voted in by the people, their decisions cannot always be said to represent the people. The notwithstanding clause, however, pushes for all legislative decisions to be supported by citizens through its simple majority vote system. In 1988, Quebec's *An Act to Amend the Charter of the French Language*, which circumvented Section 2(b) and Section 15 of the Charter, limited the use of English signage in Quebec. This Act is the only act passed with the use of the notwithstanding clause to last the full five-year duration. The Act thereby represented the people's wants and then, when it no longer aligned with these wants after the five-year term, expired and was not voted in again. This implies that the notwithstanding clause is a quick-acting clause that allows governments and citizens to test out legislation without committing to it (32). The value in such a clause is that new legislation is first given a trial run, thus allowing both citizens and the government to see the effects of it without there being a long process to repeal it in the situation that the law is not suitable. As the citizens play the vital role of electing the members of provincial parliament, they also play the vital role of instituting and reinstating legislation passed under the notwithstanding clause, thereby making the notwithstanding clause a mechanism that furthers the involvement of citizens, a focal point of all democracies.

The lack of resounding effect on legislative activity and judicial change caused by Section 33 over its nearly 50 year existence suggests that it is a lot less significant than it is made out to be. Chrétien believed it would promote parliamentary sovereignty and a divide of power, but in reality it did not (Compilation 1982, 5). Trudeau believed it would encourage the questioning of the Charter and consequently promote judicial progress, but again, in reality, it did not (Federal-Provincial 1981, 52). Opponents of the clause believed it would promote inequalities between citizens in different provinces, but we have yet to see that in practice (Kahana 2002, 233). McMurtry believed it would advocate for increased citizen involvement in the judiciary, but this is only seen in one case study out of the 17 uses of the notwithstanding clause (McMurtry 1982, 69). The effects of the case studies mentioned, including Ontario's *Efficient Local Government Act*, Saskatchewan's *Saskatchewan Government Employees Union (SGEU) Dispute Settlement Act*, Alberta's *Marriage Amendment Act*, and Quebec's *An Act to Amend the Charter of the French Language*, are largely limited in the overall context of Canadian law, thus reiterating the claim that the notwithstanding clause has had a minimal effect on legislative activity across Canada.

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**Nicole Smyth**

## **Introduction**

The Canadian Farmworkers Union (CFU) was officially formed on April 6, 1980, after many meetings, strikes and protests to demand that the Labour Relations Board of British Columbia recognize the CFU as an official union. The CFU also requested that British Columbia's provincial government ensure better working conditions, pay, and benefits for its workers. One of the main reasons the CFU was so successful was because of its ability to incorporate social and humanitarian issues within its advocacy. This allowed the union to take on the nuance of intersectionality. This essay will argue that the role women play in the CFU and the CFU's ability to form an intersectional union allowed it to successfully challenge hegemony, the Canadian government, and modes of production to set a precedent for future labour relations. This essay will explore this topic by looking into the CFU and its demands, neoliberal policy failures, the success of the CFU, and last, unskilled labour and social reproduction.

## **The CFU and its Demands**

One of the obstacles faced by the CFU is the racist history of unions in Canada. The first labour law was passed in Canada by John A. MacDonald in 1872. It was called the *Trade Unions Act* and allowed workers to organize into unions. Furthermore, early trade unions were concerned with white labour and saw the threat of immigrant labour as something to be solved with harsher immigration laws. Companies also benefited from this racism because it functioned as a successful union-busting technique. If racial tensions between workers are maintained, it becomes more difficult for workers to organize. Authors of *Unfree Labour? Struggles of Migrant and Immigrant Labour in Canada* describe that the difficulty for unions to address immigrant and racial issues is because of "history of racial exclusion and subordination in a newly formed settler society." Another struggle these types of unions face is the precarious status of their immigrant labour.

Labour organizations can view migrant workers as "a drag on the labour movement because when workers are deportable and replaceable, it is difficult for unions to call up their bargaining chip of threatening to withdraw labour power." Another major issue in Canadian unions is their inability to properly address the concerns of women workers. During my research for this project, much of the literature about the role of women in unions is dominated by the role of white women rather than the inclusion of immigrants or women of colour. Thus, even when women are included, the pendulum swings in favour of whiteness. The issues of both race and gender in unions are challenged by the organization of the CFU.

The CFU's demands surrounded working conditions, housing, health and safety standards, contract systems, promoting culture, and education services. Another important

demand it made is for maternity leave and forms of child care. Since there are many mothers working the fields, they often bring their children with them to either work or play. This is a safety concern as children have gotten hurt in the fields and some have even died. For example, three young boys drowned in a gravel pit while their parents were picking in the berry fields. Although dangerous, one woman explains her reason for bringing her children to work: “We could never afford to pay a babysitter whose charges would be almost equal to my wages.” Thus, the demands made by the CFU are inclusive to the women in its unions by not only addressing their concerns but empowering them to be politically active.

In *Political Economy Gender, Race, and Class: Looking at South Asian Immigrant Women in Canada*, author Tania Das Gupta explains that feminist scholars find the link between the “personal” and the “political” to be a contingent point for unions when considering their women members. Furthermore, for women to be able to “participate effectively in larger political movements, women of colour and working class women have to personally be empowered.” This is something the CFU excels at, as evident in its high membership of South Asian women, which is because of the union's concern with social and humanitarian issues.

### **Neoliberal Failures: The 1967 Immigration Act and 1971 Multiculturalism Policy**

Before the 1970s, there was a national ban on all immigration from India, which began with the 1908 *Continuous Journey's Act* and stayed in effect until 1947. This type of policy was covertly racist and we see the Canadian government acting in the interest of maintaining racial hegemony. After the removal of the 1947 racial quotas and citizenship policies, Canada implemented the 1967 *Immigration Act*. Subsequently, most South Asians began to migrate in the 1970s to Canada and, along with this migration, a gendered pattern of employment began to emerge. Men tended to go into jobs that had established unions while women were reserved for lower-paying jobs with little to no unionization, and their work excluded them from most labour benefits and protections under the law. In Fraser Valley, BC, approximately “80 to 90 percent of all farm workers were from Punjab and an estimated 60 to 70 percent were women.”

One of the documents provided by the CFU archives is *Conditions of Domestic Work* in which a woman describes the difficulty in finding a job after two years of working in Canada as a domestic worker. She explains, “The Immigration Officer who interviewed me told me I did not have enough points on my education, employment qualifications and age.” This woman was only 32 and the officer continued to say that “he regretted that the likelihood of my being accepted as an immigrant was not very good.” These domestic workers are often denied further education or aid from the government that could qualify them for permanent immigration status or to allow upward mobility. This specific incident reinforces neoliberal failures of the 1967 *Immigration Act*. Neoliberal policies are market-oriented policies and thus the worker is made especially exploitable in favour of profits. Moreover, to the benefit of the state and corporations, the non-citizenship status of immigrant workers allows for increased exploitation as they are



exempted from labour laws and protections afforded to citizen workers. This incident seems to act in complete opposition to the *Multiculturalism Policy* introduced in 1971.

The 1971 *Multiculturalism Policy* intended to “promote respect for cultural diversity and grant ethnic groups the right to preserve and develop their own cultures within Canadian society.” The policy committed to multiculturalism in four ways: assistance in development and growth of cultural groups, assistance in overcoming barriers, promotion of creative exchanges between groups, and assistance in learning French and English. The book *Complaint!* by Sara Ahmed can offer some interesting insight into the role of this policy. Ahmed looks into the role of complaints in school systems and corporations. She states that “To be heard as complaining is to not be heard. To hear someone complain is an effective way to dismiss someone... Racism as such can be dismissed as a complaint.” In a separate article written by Ahmed, she discusses the institutional performance in writing documents that promote race equality. She suggests that people “end up doing the document rather than doing the doing.” These two works by Ahmed reveal a sort of paradox when put together. The 1971 *Multiculturalism Policy* creates a scapegoat in which citizens and the state can escape claims of racism by referring to policies committed to inclusion. These policies also reinforce cultural hegemony as the populace is passive and thus consents to such racism because these documents seem committed to racial equality. As Ahmed points out, these are not actualized but a mere symbol and tool for the state to refer to when they want to dismiss racism. The CFU is able to challenge this by recognizing the performative nature of many labour policies and requesting Canada to ‘do the doing.’

### **The Successful Organization of the CFU**

The CFU became a successful union because of its ability to understand the needs and issues temporary immigrant workers face. Unions that aim to help marginalized and temporary workers often have a difficult time unionizing because they face unique obstacles compared to “regular” unions, which usually cater to citizens and white people. As explained in *Unfree Labour*, “for racialized workers, class solidarity is often mediated through race, gender and place of origin, opening the potential for cross-racial and multilingual alliances.” The author continues by adding that “migrant workers rarely identify themselves as part of the Canadian working class because their struggles are specific to their conditions of ‘temporariness’... that prevent them from enjoying essential freedom.” This leads to unions finding unique ways to organize and also new tactics of resistance. For example, as outlined in the film *A Time to Rise*, we see the classic picket strikes but we also see cars or buses of union members drive out into fields with megaphones and encourage workers on farm fields to come and strike with them. This is a successful tactic because the workers left the fields to join the larger protest. Another main reason for success is rooted in diversity of leadership.

The president of the CFU, Raj Chouhan, was himself a temporary immigrant from India and a farm worker. The ability to utilize language in a way that “ties the economic exploitation and socio-political marginalization of migrant farm workers to the logics and practices of racial

oppression” is one reason for the effectiveness and success of the CFU. In a speech given on May 31, 1980, Chouhan says, “As long as the provincial government does not extend labour laws to farm and domestic workers, it is guilty of discriminatory action through inaction. It is maintaining areas of oppression into which people can be driven through societal discrimination.” This speech, along with others, attempts to target the government’s policies on freedom and labour rights. He often questions how a country such as Canada, which is rooted in freedom and multiculturalism, cannot extend those same rights to South Asian migrant workers. Canada and its populace often pride themselves on the freedoms they enjoy. However, these freedoms often only extend to citizens of Canada. Given Canada’s racist past, and even current policies to keep Canada white or temporary immigrants temporary, we can infer that these freedoms are meant for the social reproduction of white Canadians. These temporary workers sustain the very freedoms citizens enjoy while simultaneously being told these freedoms are not for them. This can be seen in a comment made in the film *A Time to Rise* when a white worker says he believes that farm work is a fine job and does not need more rights. The fact that these workers do not have or qualify for citizenship affects not only the way they are treated on an everyday basis but how they are perceived in larger institutions of politics.

### **Unskilled Labour and Social Reproduction**

For developed countries like Canada, the work done by migrants is often seen as undesirable because it does not pay well and is physically demanding. However, Canada still needs this work to be done and “hiring temporary workers is a way of meeting labour-market demands without incurring high administrative costs.” In a document provided by the CFU, one woman explains, “most important, I was in a job that no Canadian wanted.” She continues, “people look upon us as nothing.” In these programs, women migrants are particularly impacted because they make up a majority of sectors with the fewest protections, lowest wages, and most demanding conditions.

The CFU recognizes the label of “unskilled” on farm and domestic workers. By labeling these workers unskilled, they are not allotted the same types of protection under the laws and, combined with their non-citizenship status, they are seen as secondary workers, especially women. Women’s employment is regularly underestimated and this fact is reflected in the number of women engaged in domestic and farm work who are underpaid more than their male counterparts. This further makes women vulnerable to assault or violence in the workplace. The lack of protection from the law also means that when something like a sexual assault or an accident occurs, workers go to family members or trusted communities rather than the law or mainstream institutions.

Women workers are usually seen as secondary workers or as fulfilling “feminine qualities” in the work they do. These feminine qualities or “women’s work” is exploitable because there is no market value attached to it or their labour. In *Conditions of Domestic Work*, one woman explains that people often ask “why we leave our country and clean someone else's

house” and that they do not recognize domestic work as equal to “working in a hospital, hotel or nurses’ home.” She explains that the deskilling of her labour manifested in the way the home owners or employers and their children treated her: “Most employers treat women as less than equal... they talk to us as if we were children. And their own children don’t ... have any respect for us.” She reinforces that Canadians don’t want to do the work she does and thus it is reduced to “dirty work.”

One of the most interesting statements this woman makes is, “I feel comfortable with the work – like most women I’ve been doing it unpaid all my life.” Thus, it is not just the lack of respect she receives based on her status but that the work she engages in is usually unpaid and thus results in low wages. These sentiments are best reflected by author and historian Silvia Federici, who states in her book *Caliban and the Witch*, “[it] was the enslavement of women to procreation... defining women in terms – mothers, wives, daughters, widows – that hid their status as workers.” Since women engage in work associated with these titles, the work is not seen as labour but rather as a woman’s duty.

In *Beyond States and Markets: The Challenges of Social Reproduction*, Isabella Bakker and Rachel Silvey look into the role of women in social reproduction and global labour markets. They define social reproduction as referring “to both biological reproduction of the species (including its ecological framework) and ongoing reproduction of the commodity labour power.” Since women are more engaged in what is usually deemed “women’s work” in regards to patriarchy and traditional gender roles, it is considered of lesser value in the labour market than other kinds of labour, such as resource extraction. This allows already vulnerable women to be further exploited by labour markets and national policies. To apply this to South Asian women working in domestic and farm work, their social reproduction value is twofold. First, they contribute to the development of Canadian society by either taking care of Canadian children or working during harvest season, which thus allows Canadians to buy produce at a low cost. The second value is tied into their ability to be an easily exploitable group of workers. This results in lower wages and less protection by the government and thus is a benefit to the capital-owning class.

An important aspect of social reproduction and transnational labour is the reproduction of hegemony for the state. Immigrant women are used most in caretaking roles for other people's families, but in doing so, they are not able to take the same kind of care of their own families. This is done out of necessity, as a woman interviewed in the film *A Time to Rise* says: “we are starving so we do it.” However, taking care of someone else’s family creates disunion within their own family. What would aid in family reunification would be allowing these women to work for higher wages and have increased access to educational resources to allow for upward mobility. However, since Canada is worried about its own citizens, it creates obstacles, such as the 1967 point system, to keep women in these roles at risk of deportation or replacement. As explained in an article titled “Myth of Immigrant Women as Secondary Workers,” the author states that in “countries with immigration policies that place a strong emphasis on human capital, policymakers need to recognize the difficulties in the advancement of immigrant women

if they want to take full advantage of their potential.” What this statement does not seem to consider is that policy makers are interested in the social reproduction of their country above the well-being of temporary immigrant workers. This is especially true in light of Canada’s past overtly racist immigration policies to protect the white race. In that same film, the woman goes on to say that “this is their country. We are just labourers.”

## Conclusion

This essay has explored the Canadian Farmworkers Union and its ability to challenge the Canadian government and hegemony. This is done by discussing the CFU and its demands, neoliberal failures, its successes, and last, unskilled labour and social reproduction. During the 1980s, the CFU extended its reach to Ontario. Then, in 1993, BC’s New Democratic government granted an extension of health and safety regulations to agriculture workers. However, in 2003, the Liberal Party started cutting fair wage acts for temporary workers. Anti-immigrant sentiments are on the rise because about 63% of Canadians believe we should lower the number of immigrants accepted. These more recent developments highlight that, although the CFU was a successful union both practically and symbolically, more progress is needed, especially when it comes to how Canadians understand citizenship and rights.

## Figures



Figure 1. Farm Workers Organizing Committee meeting, mostly attended by women farmworkers of the Fraser Valley, BC, circa 1979



Figure 2. Child labour in the fields during strawberry harvesting, Fraser Valley, BC, circa late 1970s



Figure 3. Farm Workers Organizing Committee marching to Mukhtiar Growers Ltd. in Clearbrook, BC, July 17, 1979



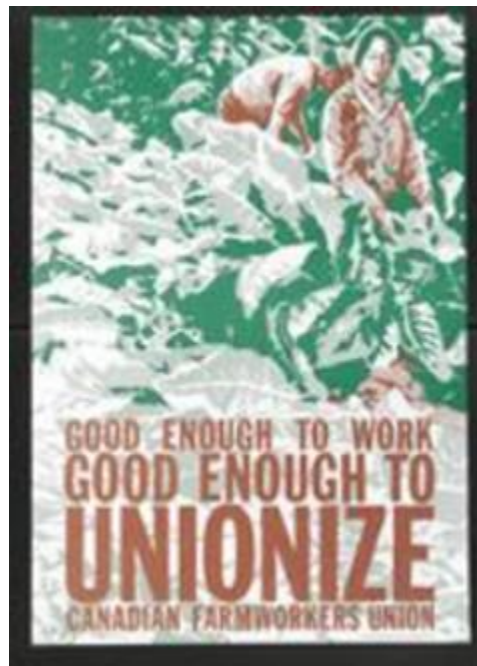
Figure 4. Mukhtiar Growers Ltd., Clearbrook, BC, July 17, 1979. FWOC demonstration for back wages. Women farm workers take direct action.



Figure 5. McKim Farm workers and the Sidhu family at the Robeson Square Law Courts, Vancouver, BC. Law Union lawyer Stuart Rush, on behalf of the Farm Workers Organizing Committee, represents the Sidhu family of farmworkers who had been cheated out of wages, circa 1



Figure 6. Canadian Farmworkers Union Founding Convention, April 6, 1980. CFU President Raj Chouhan addresses the crowd after his election. CFU Secretary Treasurer Charan Gill claps.



7. Canadian Farmworkers Union Poster, 1981

Figure



Figure 8. Canadian Farmworkers Union benefit, circa early 1980s. Inder Chouhan, Raj's wife, sits at right.

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**Jonah M. Rosen**

## **Introduction**

On an unseasonably warm Saturday evening in September of 2022, thunderous applause erupted from an Ottawa convention centre. Pierre Poilievre, the scrappy MP from Carleton, had been elected leader of the Conservative Party of Canada in a landslide victory, garnering 68% of the vote (Tasker 2022). Described by *The Economist* as “Canada’s Trump” (2022), Poilievre’s win was seen as a sign that populism had arrived in mainstream Canadian politics. Populism, however, is not new to Canada. Rather, it has been a defining feature of Canadian political parties and elections for almost a century. Poilievre’s recent success, then, signifies an evolution from the well-established regional populism that Canada is familiar with toward the global movement of right-wing populism seen throughout Western liberal democracies in the past decade, representing a more globalized era of Canadian politics. This paper will first establish a working definition for populism. We will then examine Canada’s history of populist political parties and the connections between regionalism, populism, and Canada’s political system. We will then analyze how Poilievre’s modus operandi compares to and differs from populist movements of Canada’s past, as well as from other contemporary populist movements in Europe and the United States. Finally, we will explore what this means for Canadian politics, from its effects on how we think about the intersections between global and domestic political movements, to attempting to understand what this says about and what the future holds for our electoral system.

## **On Populism**

Before we can assess populism’s past and present in Canada, we must first define it – a notoriously tricky task. This paper will draw on the most widely accepted definition of populism within academia, Cas Mudde’s ideational approach. Mudde proposes that populism is a “thin-centered ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic camps, ‘the pure people’ versus ‘the corrupt elite,’ and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people” (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2017). Mudde considers populism “thin-centred” because it requires a “full ideology” (e.g., conservatism, socialism, liberalism, etc.) to be effective, which is why populism can be employed by all sides of the political spectrum, as it has in Canada, and it is not necessarily a pejorative term. This paper will also adopt the concept of Max Weber’s charismatic leader, which refers to leaders who reveal clear-cut solutions to societies’ problems, and who have a near-mystic bond with their followers based on their often-exaggerated abilities (de la Torre 2017; Dow 1969). In the populist context, a charismatic leader is viewed as both being part of and having an instinctive understanding of the common people, even if they are often part of a privileged class. As Albertazzi and McDonnell put it in *Twenty-First Century Populism*, “the

cornerstone of the relationship between charismatic populist leaders and the people is that while they remain one of the people (whether in terms of their vocabulary, attire, declared pastimes etc.), their unique qualities and vision mean that only they can be the saviour of the people” (Albertazzi and McDonnell 2008, 18).

### **Regionalism or Canadian Populism**

Canada’s electoral system has a populist habit. Throughout the 20th century, a wide variety of populist movements sprouted across the country. In Canadian political discourse, these movements are typically depicted as examples of regionalism. Regionalism in the Canadian context refers to the distinct identities and interests of the various geographic regions of the nation, and the role those distinctions play in shaping politics (Cochrane et al. 2020, 41). The following paragraphs will demonstrate how these two concepts are intertwined by examining two of the most prominent populist parties that both emerged under very different circumstances and banners in western Canada.

The Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) was founded in Calgary in 1932 and had its first convention in 1933, where it detailed its goals in the Regina Manifesto, which one organizer deemed greater than the Magna Carta (Naylor 2016, 17). The CCF was explicitly populist, arguing for increased direct democracy to put power back in the hands of “ordinary people” (Blake et al. 1991, 5). Owing to its background as an agrarian protest movement, the CCF posited that power was concentrated in elitist cities (Naylor, 5). At the most basic level, its members were seeking greater representation for their own group (prairie farmers), who they saw as the authentic “people,” fighting against the urban “elite,” who had outsized control but did not share their interests.

Populism tends to emerge in dire conditions. During the Great Depression, socialists identified legitimate failings of the capitalist system, and yet they were met with inaction from successive federal governments, both of which argued that the economy would recover without government (Naylor 2016, 3, 77, 88; Bonikowsky 2013). In contrast, J.S. Woodsworth, the sensitive, devout man who first led the CCF, calling for laws to protect farmers and institute unemployment and health insurance, gained immense popularity (Bonikowsky 2013). Woodsworth would be described as a “saint and a prophet [...] an object of secular veneration and near-religious reputation” (Pulkingham 2010, 42). Similarly, Tommy Douglas, the most famous CCF leader, was crowned the “greatest Canadian” by CBC viewers in 2004 (CBC News 2004). This glorification of populist leaders aligns with the concept of charismatic leadership.

In 1987, Preston Manning, a businessman and son of populist premier Ernest Manning, established the Reform Party. It would develop into the most influential right-wing populist movement in Canadian history, becoming the official opposition in 1993. Utilizing the slogan “The West Wants In,” the Reform Party argued that western Canada’s regional interests were not being properly represented by the Progressive Conservatives, who were out of touch, having been corrupted by the “tax-grabbing bureaucratic elites” of central Canada (Laycock 2012).

Manning himself considered the Reform Party to be populist (Flanagan 2009, 20). According to David Laycock, “Reform constructed ‘the people’ [...] as westerners, shut out of the real halls of power in the federal system.” Reform was adamantly opposed to the welfare state, which they viewed as working only in the favour of special interest groups, including racialized peoples, Indigenous peoples, immigrants, and francophone Quebecois, rather than ‘real’ or ‘ordinary’ Canadians (Laycock 2012). It is because populism defines a narrow group as the “pure people” that it so often engages in dangerous exclusionary politics, as in the above case.

Although the vision of the Reform Party is diametrically opposed to that of the CCF, they both envisioned the implementation of populist state mechanisms to execute their policies. These included greater direct democracy (Reform argued for an increase in the use of referenda, for example) and the decentralization of power: Reform called for more power to be given to the provinces and a relaxation of party discipline (Laycock 2012; Rayside and Farney 2013).

Manning exemplifies populist charismatic leadership. Tom Flanagan, author of *Waiting for the Wave: The Reform Party and the Conservative Movement*, writes that “to a remarkable degree, the Reform Party is the personal project of Preston Manning” (Flanagan 2009, 4). Whether or not this is accurate, it is the mystical attachment to Manning as a leader who through sheer “intelligence [...] hard work (and) the ability to communicate with ordinary people” is able to mobilize a people (1). The party did not have ties with any external organizations, choosing instead to stress the “vertical linkages between individual members and the leader” (Rayside and Farney 2013, 44). Moreover, the Reform Party gave Manning an unprecedented amount of power for a party leader, allowing him to almost single-handedly dictate policy (47).

It is evident when comparing the CCF with the Reform Party that populist mechanisms have been employed by both sides of the political spectrum within Canada. Additionally, the comparison exemplifies the strong connection between Western regional identity and the feeling of political alienation, demonstrating regionalism and populism’s intertwinement. Regionalism offers a paradigm wherein it is easy to conceive of your community as the “pure people.” While this has emerged in a variety of Canadian regions, the sentiment has always been strong in the west, where political and economic power has been perceived to be concentrated within central Canada since Macdonald’s National Policy practically proposed western Canada as a large farm in service of urban centres in Ontario and Quebec (Morris 1997, 2). As Moscrop writes in *Canada’s Enduring Populism*, “the perception, in this case, is that central Canada elites insist they know what is best for the periphery from their perch in the distant core, or, perhaps, do not care as long as they can serve the needs of the country’s more populous cities and regions” (Moscrop 2013). In this way, strong regional identities have nurtured populist rhetoric and successful populist movements.

## **Structural Activators and Inhibitors of Populism Within Canada's Electoral System**

Canada is extremely large, which means that there are enormous differences in the ways Canadians live from coast to coast to coast. It is for that reason that regionalism is such a prominent force in Canadian politics. Given that Canada is a pluralistic society, the most successful strategy for political parties has been to engage in brokerage politics, wherein parties attempt to appeal to a broad base by accommodating a wide range of views and crafting policy that attempts to address a plurality of people's interests (Morris 1997, 10).

Brokerage politics acts as both an inhibitor and activator of populism. Successful brokerage politics satisfies a plurality of people, who will then be unlikely to feel unrepresented by those in power. Moreover, because brokerage parties are not anchored to a single ideology, they can quickly adapt to include policy that appeases those who may have been tempted by populism. This is one of the reasons the CCF lost steam in the post-war period, as Mackenzie King shifted politically, borrowing CCF policy and thus undercutting its support on the left (Deshaies 2019, 189). Canada, though, is too large to satisfy everyone, and so populism tends to emerge where brokerage politics fails to appease certain regional groups (Morris 1997, 10).

Political parties in Canada have historically high levels of party discipline, strong leaders, a franchise approach to the selection of party personnel, and are generally extremely centralized, which feeds directly into populist rhetoric (Morris 1997, 10). At the same time, once populists enter parliament, they tend to be unable to sustain their success, either folding as a party or tempering their populism. The Reform Party's lack of party discipline was unmanageable, resulting in complete incoherence on their actual party positions (Rayside and Farney 2013, 47). Thus, current partisan structures seem to be at odds with successful populist movements, which are forced to centralize in order to function within Canada's Westminster system, a system that tends to alienate its grassroots. This is a strong inhibitor of populism, although we are yet to see how this will play out in the case of Pierre Poilievre, who only became leader a year ago.

First Past the Post (FPTP) awards seats based on the number of electoral regions won rather than the popular vote. This disproportionately rewards regional movements, allowing them to have electoral success disproportionate to their national appeal. The Bloc Quebecois, for example, received 7.6% of the vote in the last federal election, but because it is an exclusively Quebecois party and therefore is highly concentrated within Quebec, holds almost 10% of the seats in the House of Commons (Elections Canada 2021). FPTP also leads to large areas where parties have no representatives. This feeds into populist rhetoric concerning unrepresentative governments, as there are regularly entire provinces with no MP within the governing party, exacerbating regional polarization. The democratic deficit inherent to Canada's electoral system therefore creates dissatisfaction and populist backlash.

While regional movements have won both provincial elections and substantial amounts of seats on the federal level, their growth potential is necessarily limited by the fact that they are regionally based. They cannot expand to other regions, a necessity to win a plurality of seats in the House of Commons. For this reason, Conservatives and Liberals have historically been

brokerage parties, engaged in a tight race to appeal to as many of Canada's diverse regions as possible, while populism has been reserved for smaller, regional parties.

### **The Populism of Pierre Poilievre**

The historical limitations on Canadian populism may be beginning to wane, however, as populism has been embraced by the Conservative Party through the election of Pierre Poilievre as its leader. This is the essential differentiating factor between Poilievre and previous populists: his potential for unparalleled success. Unlike previous Canadian populists, Poilievre is not directly tied to a regional movement, and he oversees a major party. He is also currently very popular; in September of 2023, the Conservative Party was 19 points ahead of the Liberal Party in national polling (EKOS Politics 2023). This section of the paper will argue that, given this important distinction, he is much more closely aligned with the 2010s wave of right-wing populists experienced globally than any of the previous Canadian populists, indicating a significant shift in Canadian politics.

Over the past few decades, the world has become increasingly globalized, defined by interconnected economies. Globalization has induced increased wealth inequality and, over the past few years of war, disease, and global inflation, it has produced major economic turmoil. As we saw with the CCF during the Great Depression, that is fertile ground for populism (Rodrik 2018; Ulgen and Inan 2022). As crises become increasingly global, it also becomes near impossible for domestic governments to effectively respond to them, leading to high levels of political dissatisfaction (Albertazzi and McDonnell 2008, 1). Globalization, though, is not just economic. It is also about the flow of ideology through the increased digitization of information (Manyika et al. 2016). For years, social media has been tied to the rise of right-wing populism thanks to the boundless spread of misinformation and the unbridled power of echo-chambers (Schroeder 2018). This is pertinent to understanding populism in this country as Canadians share social media with Americans and are therefore highly susceptible to being influenced by their politics (Wray 2020). With Poilievre as CPC leader, this has clearly extended to right-wing populism.

Poilievre views Canada as broken, having been corrupted by a small group of elitist, bureaucratic "gatekeepers" who block "common sense" policy and impede personal freedom (Conservative Party of Canada September 14, 2023). Common sense politics is a classic populist trope, which was incidentally also used by previous Canadian populists like Preston Manning, which frames the government as out-of-touch, and invites people to consider simple, instinctual policy solutions (Albertazzi and McDonnell 2008, 1-2; Flanagan 2009, 20). This trope manages to find its way into nearly all of Poilievre's policy proposals, rallies, and House of Commons speeches (*Parliamentary Debates* 2023).

Poilievre weaponizes the "pure people"- "corrupt elite" paradigm in ways that are consistent with the global right-wing populist movement. Poilievre frames experts as part of the corrupt elite. In March of 2023, he tweeted that "Liberals say common people should shut up and

do what the “experts” tell them. Here’s the thing: the common people are the experts” (@PierrePoilievre March 5, 2023). He uses this argumentation to undermine vaccine mandates and robust climate action (Tasker October 27, 2023; *The Globe and Mail* 2023). The populist backlash against experts is a global phenomenon based on the framing of experts as members of an academic elite, and which became especially prominent due to right-wing vaccine skepticism during the COVID-19 pandemic (Baghranian 2020; Wollebæk et al. 2022).

This also applies, most concerningly, to undermining democratic norms and governmental institutions. Pierre Poilievre has attempted to undermine the authority and the independence of the Bank of Canada, saying that he would fire the governor were he to become Prime Minister (Tasker June 10, 2022). When he received backlash for these comments, he doubled down, tweeting that “the elites in Ottawa are beside themselves that I would hold them to account for harm they've caused to everyday people [...] I don't work for the elites. I work for you, the people” (@PierrePoilievre May 6, 2022). Right-wing populists are also known to attack the free press (Kenny 2020). Trump, for example, called journalists “the enemy of the people” (Remick 2018). Poilievre has not shied away from this rhetoric. He regularly attacks the credibility of the Canadian press, calling it “Trudeau’s personal news service” (@PierrePoilievre October 25, 2023). Most famously, he has called for the CBC to be defunded (Taylor 2023). Poilievre also frequently engages in the populist right’s culture wars, arguing that “authoritarian wokeism is a growing threat to our freedom” (@PierrePoilievre September 23, 2023). He warns that elites use wokeism to divide the people so that government bureaucrats can more easily control the population (Bradley 2023).

For the new age of right-wing populists, the enemy is not just domestic, it is also global (Schroeder 2018, 62). Poilievre often rallies against the World Economic Forum (WEF), which he argues is composed of global elites whose beliefs do not align with those of ordinary Canadians, and who have direct control over Canadian policy as they seek to implement the “radical woke agenda” (Conservative Party of Canada, August 3, 2023). As such, he banned all his “future Cabinet Ministers from attending WEF conferences,” fully embracing the conspiracy theories surrounding the group, another hallmark of populist politics, and one of the reasons he is so often accused of spreading misinformation (Conservative Party of Canada, August 3, 2023; CBC News August 13, 2023; Bergmann 2018).

In addition to copying other right-wing leaders in terms of style, Poilievre is supported by the right-wing populist movement. He has been praised and cheered on by populist influencers including Alex Jones, who identified him with Bolsonaro and Meloni as part of a global right-wing movement that is challenging the “new world order” (On Canada Project 2022). Moreover, Poilievre’s movement has benefited from grassroots American support. Poilievre was extremely supportive of the Freedom Convoy, which was financially supported by Trump supporters in the United States, thus helping to cement Poilievre’s popularity among the Canadian right wing (Thompson and Rocha 2022). These international support structures influence domestic politics and are another marker of a new more global way of doing politics.

Poilievre displays characteristics of the charismatic leader archetype. The modern-day Conservative Party has retained much of the leadership structure of the Reform Party, which centralizes power in the leader's office, reinforcing their influence and importance within the party (Rayside and Farney 2013, 48). Poilievre has made several efforts to appear as a member of the "people," including undergoing a makeover that saw him ditch his glasses and tie, replacing them with jeans, a t-shirt, and a pair of aviators (Tasker July 20, 2023). There is no doubt, then, that Poilievre has embraced right-wing populism as part of a global movement, differentiating him from his regionalist predecessors and presenting him with a genuine chance of winning an election to become Canada's first truly populist Prime Minister since perhaps John Diefenbaker (Campbell 2023).

## **Conclusion**

In 1974, Ricard Simeon and David Elkins wrote that "Canadian politics is regional politics" (Simeon and Elkins 1974). For decades, regionalism has been the central paradigm with which Canadian politics has been understood. Canada is now experiencing a paradigm shift. While regionalism still carries weight, and certainly western Canada has been especially supportive of Pierre Poilievre, his success can only be understood in the context of larger global movements. As we have examined, this applies to the root causes of Poilievre's success, his chosen methods and messaging, and his international support base. This shift is concerning. For the past century, the two main parties utilized brokerage politics, meaning that in order to have success, they needed to expand their base to be as large as possible, taking on new ideas and working on unifying Canadians. Populists, who are intrinsically polarizing as they operate by dividing the population into the people and elites, work on making their base angry enough about their condition that they will mobilize politically (Roberts 2022). The loss of one of Canada's brokerage parties to populism will therefore further divide and polarize Canadians. The effects of increased polarization brought on by populism can be seen in Canada's neighbour to the south, where government has become increasingly dysfunctional (FSI Conference on Global Populisms 2017).

Moreover, Poilievre's commitment to subverting the truth by embracing the language of conspiracy theorists, undermining expertise and the free press, framing social justice as a tool of the elite, and attacking government institutions, erodes basic democratic norms. By comparing Poilievre to the largely regional populists of Canada's past, this paper demonstrated that, while populism has been a defining feature of Canada's politics and while Poilievre builds on many of the precedents set by those populists, his ties to a larger global movement signifies a new age of Canadian politics, one marked by increasingly globalized political forces and by the potential for unprecedented polarization. Whether the structural forces that inhibited previous populist movements will affect Poilievre's ascendance is yet to be seen. Time, and elections, will tell whether Poilievre is a flash in the pan or the new norm.



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## *The Face-Off: Controversies and Contradictions Facing “Hockey Night in Canada”* **Jithvan Ariyaratne**

### **Introduction**

“Hockey Night in Canada” (HNIC) has long been one of the most popular and successful programs on Canadian television. Broadcasting the headline National Hockey League (NHL) matchup every Saturday night, HNIC was first broadcast via radio in 1931 and then expanded to television in 1952. HNIC is the longest-running program on Canadian television and holds the Guinness World Record for “longest-running TV sports program,” becoming firmly ingrained within Canadian culture and identity (Zarum 2019). Being the principal medium through which Canadians watch one of the country’s two national sports, HNIC is perceived fondly by much of the country, but has come under scrutiny in recent years from both sides of the political spectrum. As Canada continues to become more diverse and multicultural, many scholars have called upon HNIC to improve diversity on-screen and in production. Following the program’s multi-billion-dollar takeover by Rogers from the CBC, HNIC has heeded the call, launching the spinoff program “Hockey Night in Canada Punjabi” to cater to the growing Punjabi-Canadian population, as well as hiring female and Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) analysts. Rogers’ most controversial decision, however, was to fire intensely polarizing commentator Don Cherry after he received criticism for xenophobic comments. The firing enraged older, more conservative viewers who appreciated his “tell it like it is” style, whereas the decision was largely accepted in younger, more urban areas (Pardy 2021). The Don Cherry controversy encapsulates the question that will define the future of HNIC: How can HNIC improve viewership amongst the growing demographic of young and diverse Canadians when many potential strategies are opposed by their older, more conservative base? This paper will explore the controversies and contradictions that have implications surrounding the future of HNIC, then propose suggestions to ensure that HNIC remains a key aspect of Canadian media and culture.

The first section will analyze the facts surrounding the history of HNIC, as well as its relevance to Canadian media and culture. The second section will study the implications of the Don Cherry firing, a case study that aptly summarizes the culture war facing HNIC. The third section will examine HNIC’s efforts to diversify its content and the pushback these attempts have elicited. The last section will make suggestions to protect the program’s place in Canadian culture by ensuring a sustainable future.

### **Flooding the Rink: Analyzing the History and Facts of HNIC**

HNIC debuted on radio in 1931 and expanded to television in 1952, eventually growing to become Canada’s highest-rated television series (Zarum 2019). The ratings of HNIC were initially bolstered by the popularity of broadcaster Foster Hewitt, known for coining everyday hockey phrases such as “he shoots, he scores!” (Frayne 1950). From the 1960s to the 1990s, HNIC regularly garnered over two million viewers every Saturday, aided by the success of

Canadian teams and star Canadian players such as Wayne Gretzky. However, ratings have slipped in recent decades, owing to the lack of success by Canadian teams in the NHL Playoffs. In recent years, average viewership has hovered around 1.3 million viewers per episode despite Canada's population having grown significantly since the series' peak viewership (Zarum 2019). HNIC was long the property of Canada's public broadcaster, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), with the series being described as their "most prized institution, and most significant revenue generator" (Cwynar 2017, 136). However, the CBC lost the rights to HNIC in 2013 when the NHL struck a 12-year, \$5.23 billion contract with Rogers, leading to production of HNIC shifting to Rogers' sports channel Sportsnet (Cwynar 2017, 135). While the CBC retained the right to simulcast HNIC, the deal significantly weakened the series' monetization potential for the public broadcaster (Cwynar 2017). Furthermore, the move to Rogers marked the beginning of a culture shift that has significant implications for the future of HNIC.

One of Rogers' first moves as producer of HNIC was an attempt to boost ratings by replacing long-time host Ron MacLean with the younger George Stroumboulopoulos in 2014. The decision backfired as ratings fell further following Stroumboulopoulos' appointment, leading to MacLean's reinstatement as host two years later (Feschuk 2016). Rogers' walking back of the MacLean decision was the beginning of an impossible problem for the telecommunications conglomerate: They had to figure out how to attract younger viewers to ensure the future sustainability of HNIC without alienating the older viewers who still constituted the largest viewership. While the MacLean decision marked the beginning of this struggle, it was the Don Cherry dilemma that truly brought the issue into the national dialogue.

### **The Don Dilemma: The Firing of Don Cherry and its Repercussions for HNIC**

On November 11, 2019, Rogers fired Don Cherry from his position as a commentator on HNIC (Zarum 2019). The firestorm that ensued was unlike any other seen in the history of Canadian media. A former NHL player and coach, Cherry was known for his eccentric suits, brash remarks, and his defence of fighting in hockey. Cherry was immensely popular amongst the older generation of hockey fans who appreciated the sport's hard-nosed style, the presence of fighting, and its association with Canadian national pride. However, Cherry was perceived differently by younger and minority groups who viewed his rhetoric as damaging to the physical health of players and oftentimes xenophobic. Cherry was fired "after a xenophobic diatribe that immigrants in downtown Toronto (one of Canada's most diverse areas) were not wearing poppies," but this comment was merely the final straw in a long history of offensive comments (Pardy 2021, 105). Previously, Cherry had made offensive comments towards players from French Canadian, Indigenous, and European backgrounds, arguing that their style of play was insufficiently tough when compared to the "style of masculine play focusing on brute physical force" he claimed was embodied by English Canadian players (Allain 2015, 116). Cherry also has a history of politically insensitive comments linked to the rise of populism in Canada, such as when he called cyclists "pinkos" at Rob Ford's mayoral swearing-in ceremony in 2010 (Silver

et al. 2019, 11-12). The polarization created by Cherry's firing had significant repercussions for Canadian media and culture.

The polarization can be categorized into two spheres: masculinity and nationalism. Cherry's rhetoric celebrated traditional conceptions of masculinity, advocating for hockey to be played with intense physicality and fighting (Allain 2015). Older fans were supportive of this perspective, viewing the comments through a nostalgic lens back to times when fighting was more prevalent in the NHL and believing that the modern game has become "soft" (115). Conversely, younger fans believed that Cherry's comments were dangerous as they advocated for young men to put themselves in dangerous situations, particularly given recent evidence linking fighting in hockey to long-term brain injuries (Allain 2015). Similarly, Cherry's firing polarized the discussion around Canadian nationalism. While the importance of hockey to Canadian identity is not disputed, Cherry's conception of the sport has been described as "telling a story about the centrality of straight, white men within Canadian national identity construction," and "Indigenous people and racialized minorities are subject to erasure by these constructions" (127). The lack of diverse representation in Cherry's commentary is problematic considering Canada's strong multiculturalism, but his comments continue to be defended by those on the populist right. However, the roots of the Don Cherry dilemma run far deeper than the man himself, extending into other aspects of HNIC.

### **The Play is Offside: Pushback to HNIC's Attempts to Gain New Fans**

Following Cherry's firing, Rogers has made significant strides to make HNIC more inclusive and representative of the younger, more diverse demographic that it is seeking to attract. This progress has included hiring female and BIPOC commentators such as Jennifer Botterill, Anthony Stewart, and Harnarayan Singh, as well as expanding spinoff show "Hockey Night in Canada Punjabi" for the Punjabi Canadian community. These decisions have increased popularity amongst diverse viewers, improving viewing figures from minority communities and receiving praise for giving a platform to female and BIPOC commentators (Zarum 2019). However, as with the Don Cherry dilemma, these progressive initiatives have become polarized along partisan lines.

For instance, attitudes from non-Punjabi viewers towards "Hockey Night in Canada Punjabi" collected from social media have ranged from dismissive, to disbelief, to explicitly racist, with laughter at the program and its presenters being one of the most common reactions. Stzo (2016, 215) determines that Twitter users' refusal to accept HNIC Punjabi as a legitimate piece of hockey programming stems from a rejection of the multicultural ideals being pursued by HNIC, concluding that "laughter is not a positive reaction to multiculturalism." Comments with racist undertones or explicit racism perpetuate pre-existing discriminatory attitudes that exist in hockey. Since hockey in Canada has historically been played and observed predominantly by white Canadians, this has posed challenges to minorities in the hockey community, particularly considering that hockey "is invoked as a way to determine identity and social stratification" in

Canada (Bains and Szto 2020, 182). This reality echoes the findings of Harold Innis in “The Bias of Communication” (1951/2008). Innis (2008, 130) concludes that “[i]n nations without cultural maturity such drastic changes become unthinkable and the statute books become cluttered with constitutional amendments and legislation,” in reference to the cultural struggles of young nations. As a comparatively young nation that does not have a state religion, hockey has become a major aspect of Canadian culture. Rogers’ efforts to improve multiculturalism and diversity in the Canadian cultural staple of HNIC marks a “drastic change” in line with the findings of Innis (130), leading to protectionist and nationalist responses. Therefore, HNIC must find innovative methods to continue the diversification that is necessary to grow the program without evoking the protectionist and nationalist rhetoric that harms the program.

### **How to Stay out of the Penalty Box: Suggestions for a More Sustainable HNIC**

As the contradictions between the desires of older and younger viewers continue to grow, the threat to HNIC is becoming existential. If the program’s producers cannot figure out how to satisfy both demographics, “both the CBC and publicly accessible hockey broadcasting in Canada risk becoming relics of national media history” (Phillips 2018, 217). While an existential threat to one of Canadian media’s most valuable assets is a major concern for the future of Canadian culture, this threat also presents an opportunity to find novel solutions to save HNIC. A potential solution is to pursue increased utilization of digital platforms in the distribution of HNIC.

Historically, HNIC has been broadcast solely through traditional media: radio and television. However, the advent of new media presents an opportunity for HNIC to satisfy both demographics that they need to attract and retain. As younger Canadians are turning away from cable television and consuming most of their information through social media, HNIC must better integrate platforms such as Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram into their broadcasts. The benefits of doing so would be twofold: HNIC would have an improved reach amongst the younger demographic, and they would be better able to direct their television programming towards the older demographic. Therefore, HNIC would appeal to both groups without alienating either. This proposed digital expansion is supported by communications studies literature, with Phillips (2018, 217) concluding that investment in digital streaming might help the CBC “retain at least some of its relevancy as a public sports broadcaster.”

However, while this approach will lead to a degree of satisfaction for both demographics, it does not address the root cultural problems of toxic masculinity, nationalist ideals, and racism from a portion of viewers, as described by Allain (2015) and Szto (2016). Therefore, the future of HNIC will be heavily influenced by the political directions and discourse of Canada, either being saved if the country becomes more accepting of progress or condemned if the discourse becomes more divisive.



## The Final Buzzer: Concluding Remarks

HNIC has a rich and storied history that has seen it become firmly embedded within Canadian culture. However, polarization in discourse surrounding the program that was exacerbated by the firing of Don Cherry and efforts to improve diversity is threatening to make it a relic instead of a staple of Canadian media. Therefore, HNIC's future will be determined by the ability of the show's producers to modernize the show without alienating many potential viewers.

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## *The Loyalists – Similar, but Different*

### **Max Ray-Ellis**

In 1783, Great Britain signed the Treaty of Paris with the United States of America, thus officially ending the American Revolutionary War and recognizing the independence of the newly established nation (Statistics Canada 2015). This held significance not only for Great Britain and the United States but also for the remaining colonies of British North America that would eventually form the Dominion of Canada. Tens of thousands of residents in the Thirteen Colonies that declared independence were Loyalists and did not wish to end ties with Great Britain. Fearing harm to themselves or their families, many of these Loyalists migrated out of the United States. Many went to British North America where they significantly altered the landscape of the colonies (Allen 210, 333). The Loyalists came in waves; some arrived as early as 1776, while other “late Loyalists” joined them in the 1790s (Statistics Canada 2015; Garcia 2017, 591). In the years between the American Revolution and the War of 1812, migrations from and perceptions of the United States shaped the cultural and political development of British North America. While the Loyalists shared undeniable similarities with Americans, it was their differences that helped them shape new, separate societies north of the border.

This paper will articulate that, in the face of exile from the United States, the Loyalists found pride in their British identity. They shared similarities with Americans regarding religion and societal structure, but the counterpoint to that similarity is outlined by their treatment of ethnic minority groups and other Christian denominations. While the Americans pursued an all-encompassing nationalist American identity, the Loyalists allowed minority groups to retain their unique identities and ways of life. Nonetheless, the Loyalists’ racist treatment of Black people will also be highlighted. This racist treatment reflects not only American racism but British racism as well. The institutions the Loyalists built resembled those of the United States, as did the Loyalist desire to be involved in governance. However, the different ways in which the Loyalists pursued their desires will be detailed. Unlike American Patriots, they never questioned their place in the British Empire or debated breaking their loyalty. Later arrivals of American emigrants shared similar skills and abilities as the first waves of Loyalists, but this reinforced the Loyalists’ beliefs that they were different from their neighbours to the south. Last, while Britain provided incentives for the Loyalists to remain loyal, it was the subconscious effect of the American Revolution that left a bitter perception of the United States for them and drew them towards their British identity. Throughout the paper, every similarity to Americans will be countered by a more notable, conscious difference that the Loyalists exhibited. The Loyalists’ pursuit of a different, better society and their continued belief in their differences, no matter how small, were what allowed them to continue their separate existence in British North America.

To begin, the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1783 was followed by the largest wave of Loyalist emigration from the United States, as 30,000 to 40,000 Loyalists arrived in Quebec, Nova Scotia, and St. John’s Island (Statistics Canada 2015). Prior to this significant wave, there

were several small-scale migrations, beginning with the one led by British troops as they evacuated Boston, Massachusetts, in 1776. The troops led the first Loyalist emigrants to settle in Nova Scotia (Statistics Canada 2015). Similar events occurred in 1777, when the American victory at the Battle of Saratoga precipitated Loyalist migration to the Province of Quebec, and in 1782, when 300 Loyalists settled in the Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia (Statistics Canada 2015; Brown 1977, 92). Within a decade after the signing of the 1783 treaty, the Loyalists' arrival had dramatically impacted British North America's colonies. Their arrival caused drastic population changes, and thus led to political reorganization. The Colony of Nova Scotia decreased in size as Cape Breton Island became its own colony, and the Loyalist-dominated Colony of New Brunswick was created in the west (Jasanoff 2011, 179). The Province of Quebec was also split in two; the French Canadian-dominated eastern region became Lower Canada, while the Loyalist-dominated western region by the Great Lakes became Upper Canada (202). Along with St. John's Island (renamed Prince Edward Island in 1798), these colonies constituted the new base of British imperial settler colonies on the North American mainland after American independence.

To the Loyalists, the American Revolutionary War was a civil war, as it pitted them against their neighbours and family members (Temperley 1979, 5). The Loyalists faced considerable dismay at the hands of Patriots in the United States, who labelled them as "traitors" during the war, regardless of whether they directly supported Britain or were family members of those who did. Some Loyalists even faced Patriot mob violence, including "tarring and feathering," during the Revolution; thus, their distaste was often based on a lived experience (Azzi 2015, 6). The war created a sense of distrust and spite that never truly wore off in the minds of those who left (Errington 2012, 6). Essentially exiled to the sparsely settled colonies of British North America, the Loyalists needed to find differences with the Americans to justify their migration and separate existence as a people. As a result, they wanted to make their new home colonies the "envy of the United States" or the "showcase for the continent" (Brown 1977, 95; Jasanoff 2011, 168; Bothwell 2015, 62). The British ideals of "order, hierarchy, and authority" were emphasized by Loyalists, as was their loyalty to the British crown (Azzi, 14). They even had a sense of dislike for the small anglophone British colonist population that existed in British North America, as they believed them to have been too friendly towards the Americans and their revolution (Brown, 97). In order to find separation from the Americans who had treated them so poorly, Loyalists turned to the image of their mother country, Great Britain, to differentiate themselves from their republican neighbours.

In spite of their distaste for their American neighbours, the fact of the matter is that most Loyalists retained certain societal practices that they had grown up with in the American colonies. Some elite members of Loyalist societies had hoped to establish a hereditary aristocracy that resembled that of English "high society," especially with regards to farming and agriculture (Brown 1977, 96). Such a system would see most farmers serve as tenants, operating on land owned by aristocrats (Azzi 2015, 15). These hopes did not come to fruition, as most

Loyalists were farmers who were already used to working on their own land, as they had in the Thirteen Colonies prior to the revolution (Brown, 96). Similar hopes for a dominant Church of England were also thwarted by the prevalence of numerous denominations, including Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Quakers, which were all transplanted from the United States (Brown, 96; MacKinnon 1988, 78; Jasanoff 2011, 201). Additionally, most Loyalists were known to speak with accents and vocabulary that resembled those of the United States more than Great Britain (Azzi, 14). Historian Wallace Brown determined that the Loyalists were “essentially good Americans” (Brown, 96). They were uprooted from their homes and pledged allegiance to Great Britain, but this did not remove the years, or generations, of upbringing in North America in the same culture that founded the United States.

Yet, while the Loyalists may have shared their denominational variety and agricultural roots with some of their American neighbours, there is a strong argument to be made that their overall acceptance of differences is a major factor that separates them from their American counterparts. The United States has often been cited as being a “melting pot” in which many different groups of people are homogenized into a singular American ideal (Brown 1977, 98). Canadian society, on the other hand, has been cited for possessing a “cultural mosaic,” which several historians believe originated with the arrival of the Loyalists (Bell 1970, 29; Brown, 96). David V. J. Bell believed that allowing different ethnic groups to form a “mosaic pattern” was a “central aspect” of what he termed the Loyalist “counter-revolution” at the same time as the United States created a new American nationalist identity (Bell, 24). Rather than pursue an all-encompassing identity in British North America, the Loyalists allowed different groups to flourish. This is partially evidenced by their decision to largely leave the existing French Canadian population alone. The separate culture, traditions, and language of French Canada likely would not have survived as strongly had they been under American rule (29). French Canadians became a minority in British North America after the Loyalists’ arrival, but they were not forced to assimilate and instead received more power due to the Constitutional Act of 1791, which provided representative government in Lower Canada after the Loyalists pushed for it (Brown, 98-99).

Additionally, the mosaic concept is supported by the fact that Loyalists were joined in their migration by minority groups from the United States that did not wish to compromise their values and cultures to remain in the new republic. These groups included Highland Scots, Huguenots, Pennsylvania Germans, Quakers, and German Palatinates, some of whom doubted their ability to maintain their unique identities within the nationalist United States. Hessian troops and British soldiers who were from entirely outside of North America also contributed to the mosaic of peoples that migrated along with the Loyalists to British North America (Azzi 2015, 12). Many of these peoples retained their separate languages after establishing their presence north of the border. This is something that was not encouraged in the United States. Author Elizabeth Jane Errington noted that if one were to have visited the towns and farms of

Loyalist-dominated Upper Canada in 1792, they would likely have heard Dutch, French, Gaelic, and German all spoken in addition to English (Errington 2012, 14).

Furthermore, Black Loyalists and Indigenous peoples like the Mohawks, who had fought alongside the Loyalists and British in the American Revolutionary War, also established their own communities in British North America (Brown 1977, 98). Unlike the white minority groups, these Indigenous peoples and Black people did not have the option to assimilate into the American nation due to their race and sought better treatment in British North America (98). In the United States, non-white people would always be seen as “others;” there was hope that British North America could provide them a chance at equality (Walker 2019, 12). Seeking support for his people, famed Mohawk leader and Loyalist ally Joseph Brant received an audience with King George III of Great Britain in 1785 (Paxton 2008, 57). While in England, he was granted a pension, and the Mohawk people were awarded full compensation for their losses during the American Revolutionary War, thus recognizing them as equal contributors (57). This came at a time when Native Americans in the United States were deemed “barbaric” and “obstacles” to American expansionism (Bell 1970, 29). The ability for minority groups to co-exist within Loyalist societies in British North America, whether part of a “mosaic” or not, is a key differentiator that separates Loyalists from their American counterparts.

However, while the Loyalists may have tolerated and accepted *some* ethnic minority groups, they nonetheless displayed their similarities to Americans through their treatment of Black people, including Black Loyalists. In November 1775, the British governor of Virginia offered freedom to “all indentured servants, negroes, or others” if they were willing to bear arms and join the British side in repelling the American Revolution (Walker 2019, 1). The offer of freedom to enslaved people led thousands of them to escape their forced servitude and join the British (1-3). Most of the Black people who participated in the British war effort were escaped enslaved people, but some were also free persons of colour, and a small minority were recruited soldiers. These people have become known as the Black Loyalists. It is important to note, however, that members of the white Loyalist population still possessed enslaved Black people of their own who were not offered freedom at this time (3). Pre-Loyalist Nova Scotia had 104 recorded enslaved people in the colony, but the Loyalists brought approximately 1,232 enslaved people into the colony with them (40). In Upper Canada, Loyalists argued with Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe, a decorated British military officer, over his plan to abolish slavery, which became a gradual process in the end (Jasanoff 2011, 208). While Black people fought alongside whites (and Indigenous peoples) in the American Revolution, many Loyalists retained deep racist attitudes towards Blacks that they held during their upbringing in the now United States. This is exemplified by the story of the Black Loyalists in Nova Scotia.

The “Company of Negroes,” who migrated alongside their fellow Loyalists in the wave of 1776 following the British evacuation of Boston, was the first recorded group of Black Loyalists to arrive in Nova Scotia (Walker 2019, 7). Upon their arrival in Halifax, several Loyalists suggested to the Council of Nova Scotia that the Blacks be traded to the Americans in

exchange for Loyalist prisoners of war, effectively deeming these Black Loyalists to be property even after they had bravely participated in the British war effort. This suggestion was rebuffed by the council, but it was only the beginning of the mistreatment of Black Loyalists in Nova Scotia, where they primarily settled (7). In 1783, Nova Scotia received its largest influx of Loyalist migrants, all of whom were promised land grants in return for their loyalty to the Crown. The Black Loyalists were given these same promises, but only a small fraction of them were actually given land. The lands they were granted also tended to be far away from existing settlements, with poor soil quality and smaller than promised (18). Black Loyalists faced many wrongs, such as wage inequity, race riots, the lack of the right to trial by jury, and segregation in churches (42-68). Eventually, 1,196 Black Loyalists left Nova Scotia for Africa to found a free Black settlement in Sierra Leone (128). Additionally, pro-slavery and anti-Black sentiments were not exclusive to the United States. The British Empire was still committed to maintaining slavery, and racist views persisted across its territories (2). Thus, the Black Loyalists struggled to gain equality and respect as a people in Nova Scotia. While Nova Scotia's racism echoed American racism, it also echoed the racism that could be found in Great Britain and across the entire Atlantic world at the time.

It is evident that Loyalists had to come to terms with a conflicting dual identity. They were from the American continent but were not Americans. They were loyal British subjects, but not truly British either. Nonetheless, they remained determined to ensure their differences exceeded their similarities. If one looked at the institutions that the Loyalists constructed upon their arrival, they appeared to be strikingly reminiscent of those in the northern United States. The Loyalist-dominated provinces of Upper Canada and New Brunswick developed community-based schools in the 1790s, which were inspired by those in the New England region. These quickly came to outnumber the proprietary schools that followed a model used in Great Britain (Azzi 2015, 14). The farmhouses built by the Loyalists also used a similar wood-frame construction to those found in New York and New England, and the famed Cape Cod house of Massachusetts was prevalent in Nova Scotia (15). It was natural for Loyalists who had been raised in the now United States to continue practices that they had undertaken prior to the Revolutionary War, but they were nonetheless aware of this fact. Elite members of Loyalist communities continuously compared and contrasted contemporary perceptions of both the United States and Great Britain to better understand their own identity (Burroughs 1991, 71-72). Both external societies were utilized as "yardsticks" to measure the development and standing of the Loyalist societies (71). Conforming with British traditions became a method of shunning American republicanism (72). The similarities shared with the Americans were evident, but highlighting and developing differences was key to retaining a separate identity in British North America.

A commonality shared by the Loyalists and the Americans was the societal desire to have a larger role in the governance of their colonies. In 1785, an election in Saint John, New Brunswick, proved to be highly controversial, and the ensuing protest became a riot where stones

were thrown, glass was broken, and fights took place before troops had to enter the town to break up the chaos (Jasanoff 2011, 187). Similarly to how American Patriots protested and demanded their rights as British subjects, the Loyalists in New Brunswick did the same, with the key difference being that they had not considered republicanism or broken their loyalty in the way the Americans had (185-186). American-style unrest also occurred in Upper Canada in 1787, and a Halifax by-election in Nova Scotia was disrupted due to Loyalist riots and murder in 1788 (Brown 1977, 97). While these events were reminiscent of disturbances during the American Revolution, none of them sought independence from Britain or union with the United States. Loyalists in Upper Canada later clashed with John Graves Simcoe over their desire to hold town meetings in a similar fashion to New England (Jasanoff, 208). The Loyalists used similar tactics as the Americans did to pursue some of their political desires, but they differed in the important sense that they never went as far as giving up their loyalty or status as British subjects.

It is important to re-emphasize that Loyalists came in waves. Officially, Upper Canada considered any migrant from the United States that arrived up until 1798 to be a Loyalist (Azzi 2015, 13). Essentially, anyone who had chosen to move to British North America over living in the United States during this time frame was viewed as being “loyal.” Since the border remained open until the War of 1812, there was a somewhat frequent exchange of people between the two entities. Some colonial leaders decided that the term “Loyalist” could even be applied to any American who “favoured reconciliation with Great Britain during conflicts that began with the Stamp Act and concluded with the War of 1812” (Garcia 2017, 594). Thus, people on the British side of the border were not viewing the United States and its people solely based on a distant memory; they were exposed to exchanges with their former homeland. There was a particular influx of people that migrated to Upper Canada after Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe made offers of land grants to prospective settlers in 1791. This group of new American migrants was termed “late Loyalists.” While most went to Upper Canada, others also went to the largely anglophone eastern townships of Lower Canada as well (591). The arrival of the late Loyalists led the existing Loyalist population to frequently examine the societal differences between their new homeland and the United States (Taylor 2007, 1-2).

There is also a certain irony in the reasoning as to why “late Loyalists” were enticed to migrate that also highlights similarities and differences between people on both sides of the border. There were legitimate fears of a new war between Britain and the United States in the 1790s, and colonial officials like John Graves Simcoe knew that new settlers were needed for the security and development of Upper Canada. Seeking British settlers would have been difficult as the St. Lawrence River was not easily navigable at the time, and French warships were present in the Atlantic Ocean (Taylor 2007, 4). On the other hand, American settlers, who were nearby, could travel much easier, and they would be much more capable of clearing forests and starting new farms in Upper Canada, as the government had desired (4-5). As a result, the colonial government was actively seeking (similar) American settlers to help build a society that could better defend itself from the Americans themselves. Freehold land tenure was thus mandated in



Upper Canada as a concession to both Loyalist and American interests (5). In the end, roughly 15,000 Americans moved to either Upper Canada or Lower Canada to become “late Loyalists” in the final decade of the eighteenth century (Garcia 2017, 595). It was the similarities that the Americans shared with the Loyalists that made them desirable settlers to colonial officials, but accepting the status of being a loyal imperial subject was a key difference they needed to adhere to.

In Upper Canada, well-educated Americans were specifically discouraged from becoming late Loyalists for fear that they could incite rebellion (Taylor 2007, 21). The late Loyalists would account for approximately two-thirds of the estimated population of 70,000 in Upper Canada in 1812. Nonetheless, a later study found that the late Loyalists were excluded from most positions of influence in Upper Canada and were largely kept to the “most-basic non-paying public offices” (19-21). Evidently, in the 1790s, Loyalists and Americans were similar enough for colonial officials to seek American immigration, but different enough for the same officials to prioritize and trust the established Loyalists far more than their new “late” counterparts.

As for Lower Canada, many were not so ecstatic at the thought of new groups of Americans entering their colony, nor were they so keen to embrace similarities with them. In Lower Canada, the existing Loyalist population used its political and legal connections to repeatedly hamper activities that late Loyalists were conducting, such as investing in land improvement (Garcia 2017, 598). The Loyalists truly saw themselves as separate from the late Loyalists. They largely viewed their late counterparts as land-hungry Americans who were only migrating to pursue favourable terms. Some Loyalists went as far as identifying as “royalists” to heighten their attachment to the British monarchy. They also used their power to effectively bar the late Loyalists from rising to positions of legal or political influence (602). In a colony where they had to compete with French Canadian interests, the Loyalists did not offer a helping hand to the anglophone late Loyalists. They saw enough perceived differences to actively disrupt their advancement. The Loyalists saw themselves as loyal British subjects, not Americans.

It is important to recognize that the British government was a proponent of maintaining and developing differences between Loyalists and Americans. The Thirteen Colonies had been valuable to the British Empire, and the loss of them in the American Revolutionary War was something Britain was not keen to see repeated with its remaining North American colonies. In Lower Canada, traveller Patrick Campbell noted how the Loyalists had cleared land ten or twelve miles back from the St. Lawrence River. This was partially enabled by the support of the British government, which had allowed them to conduct more clearing than the poorly funded French seigneurs of the previous century (Campbell 1793, 123-124). The irony of the aftermath of the American Revolution was that the Loyalists in British North America ended up paying little or no taxes, had their defence paid for by Britain, and saw two new colonies, Upper Canada and New Brunswick, created for their benefit (Jasanoff 2011, 207). Britain recognized the

Loyalists' desire to maintain a separate British identity in North America and acted upon it by making it financially advantageous to remain under British rule.

When the Loyalists arrived in British North America, they shared some similarities with the Americans living in the United States. Historian Maya Jasanoff stated that the Loyalists “shared more with their counterparts south of the border than they did with the British officials” (Jasanoff 2011, 206). Nonetheless, the slight differences they had were intentionally accentuated, as they needed to justify their exile and migration. The United States was a close and easy point of comparison. It was difficult for the Loyalists upon their arrival; they faced tough conditions, frequently unfulfilled promises from the colonial government, disputes with the existing inhabitants of the colonies, and a bitter distaste for their recent past (Bothwell 2015, 62). John Stuart, a missionary in Kingston, Upper Canada, once stated that, in order to cheer up the Loyalists, he would ask the question, “How happy are we, compared with the subjects of the distressed, and divided States?” (Jasanoff, 206). It was the idea of being not only different but better than the Americans that the Loyalists prided themselves on.

At first glance, the Loyalists shared similar views with the Americans on governance and public participation. They built similar homes, spoke with similar accents, and created similar institutions. Nonetheless, they differed in their manner of achieving their political goals, in their acceptance of some minority ethnic groups, and in their willingness to stay loyal to the British Crown. The anti-Black racism they displayed may have appeared American, but it was reflective of the racism found in Great Britain and the broader Atlantic world in this era. The differences the Loyalists had may appear small to some, but they were great enough to inspire them to retain a separate identity and build new societies. Additionally, they were consciously aware of their differences and remained insistent on retaining and accentuating them. Without these differences, the Loyalists may have seen their colonies fall into the hands of the United States, the nation that had cruelly mistreated them. Instead, these colonies blossomed into the foundation of the nation we know as Canada today, something that likely could not have been achieved without the Loyalists.

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## *Black Refugees' Narratives of Freedom, Education, Employment, Land and Resilience in Black Canadian History*

**Dacian Dawes**

**Abstract:** Benjamin Drew's *The Refugee: Narratives of Fugitive Slaves in Canada* delves into Black refugees' experience in nineteenth-century Canada, challenging the idealized perception of Canada as a refuge for freedom seekers. Drew's work presents an intimate account revealing unmet expectations in education, employment, and land ownership, despite Canada's portrayal as a haven of freedom. Testimonies like those of Alfred T. Jones and Mrs. Nancy Howard expose systemic racism in education and employment, highlighting segregated schools and economic exploitation. Through portraying hardship, Drew's collection also showcases instances of reliance, such as inclusive education highlighted by William Thompson and Aby B. Jones. Overall, *The Refugee* offers a nuanced understanding of Black Canadian history, urging a more inclusive discourse on systemic racism and historical justice.

**Keywords:** Black Canadian History, Black Refugees, Benjamin Drew, Racism, Freedom.

Benjamin Drew's *The Refugee: Narratives of Fugitive Slaves in Canada* serves as a vital academic source owing to its use of intimate accounts, diverse voices, and historical documentation. For example, Drew skillfully incorporates narratives like that of a Black refugee who affirms that they "like Canada [and] if the United States were as *free* as Canada, [they] would still prefer to live here" (Drew 2000, 320). Notably, the speaker's remark implies a conviction that Canada is a more "liberated" and "favourable" environment. However, the book, showcasing accounts from Black refugees like Robert Nelson, Aby B. Jones, and John Francis, reveals that this single narrative does not provide a comprehensive and authentic understanding of Upper Canada's history in the nineteenth century. Drew's overarching objective is to amplify diverse voices and present authentic experiences of the Black refugees, fostering empathy and providing a nuanced understanding of the challenges and triumphs faced by Black individuals pursuing freedom in Canada. This paper diverges from the prevailing narrative, as I will argue that the expectations of Black refugees were not met upon crossing into "freedom" in Canada, particularly in terms of education, employment, and land. Additionally, this paper will stand in opposition to the idealized view of Canada as an unequivocally free sanctuary, highlighting systemic repression and constraints imposed by the White population in Upper Canada that hindered the opportunities and capacities of the Black refugees.

Despite obtaining "freedom" in Canada, the Black refugees' educational expectations were not met due to persistent historical racism in the White population, which reinforced adverse attitudes and behaviours, hindering their educational opportunities. Benjamin Drew's

“Introduction” underscores this assertion by highlighting the discrimination faced by Black refugees in Canada, including Alfred T. Jones in London, Ontario, and its significant impact on their education and community. According to Jones, “the people of the old country [are] unaccustomed to coloured people, [and] have a strange idea of respecting us: a sort of ‘second-hand prejudice’” (Drew 2000, 152). Jones’ quotation exposes a nuanced form of prejudice faced by Black individuals in nineteenth-century Upper Canada. Jones asserts that the White population is unfamiliar with people of colour and possesses strange and ignorant views about how to respect and treat Black persons. However, Jones’ use of the term “second-hand prejudice” serves as a powerful metaphor for the arbitrary and unjust nature of the discriminatory views encountered by London’s Black community. Arguably, the White population in the old country have inherited these adverse views and misconceptions about Black persons from oppressive and colonial accounts rather than creating their own beliefs based on personal experiences and understandings. Therefore, Jones appears to suggest that prejudice against the Black population during this time is a taught bias reinforced by cultural conventions and preconceived beliefs rather than firsthand experiences.

This justification is congruent with that of historian Bruce R. Shepard, who argues that the responses and negative perceptions against Black immigrants originate in historical racism and cannot be explained solely by nativism (Shepard 1985, 15). Jones and Shepard both converge to underscore the pervasive nature of systemic racism in Canada. Their statements reveal a pattern where prejudiced attitudes endure through societal norms, stereotypes, and inherited beliefs. This collective analysis emphasizes the institutionalized nature of racial biases, demonstrating how rather than being isolated occurrences, discriminatory views and beliefs infiltrated cultural and societal structures that shaped the experiences and challenges endured by Black persons in nineteenth-century Canada. Additionally, these statements draw on ongoing themes of systemic racism and inherited beliefs in Canada, which have had significant and long-term negative effects for Black refugees. These prejudiced views have resulted in the limitation of opportunities, social marginalization, and educational barriers. As a result, the adverse impacts of the perpetuation of prejudice impede the educational opportunities for the Black refugees.

Similar to London, Ontario, Black persons’ opportunities in Windsor, Ontario, were also limited in various ways, including the development of segregated schools. Segregated schools can be considered as a manifestation of systemic racism, resulting in several impediments for Black students, such as inadequate resources, fewer educational opportunities, and disparities in quality teachers. Furthermore, the stories of Black refugees, including Robert Nelson, William L. Hubert, and Thomas Jones, reveal the discriminatory legacy of segregated schools and how racial prejudice and systemic inequalities contributed to academic challenges in Windsor. Hubert, for example, claims that “the school system is not so well organized as... sectarianism and prejudice interfere too much and the law allows too many separate schools” (Drew 2000, 368). In this quotation, Hubert highlights the inadequacies in the organization of the school system, blaming Canada’s educational

system's failures on excessive interference from sectarianism and prejudice. Notably, the school system's inadequacies and failures led to limited access to quality education and unequal resource distribution, affecting Black students' learning opportunities. Additionally, Hubert criticizes Canada's legislative structure for permitting the creation of numerous separate schools, which are subsidized by public funds, and emphasizes how this exacerbates educational disparities. Specifically, these educational disparities included limited integration, unequal access to opportunities, segregation and isolation, and the reinforcement of prejudice, all of which hinder the educational opportunities for the Black populace. Therefore, in agreement with historian Deirdre McCorkindale, the idea of segregated schools as the only source of education also offers potential hindrances for Black students (Johnson and Aladajebi 2010, 150). Namely, McCorkindale's perspective aligns with the understanding that segregated schools not only are a manifestation of systemic racism and symbols of historical injustices, but also perpetuate educational disparities and hinder the full development of Black students.

The legislative framework is a problem not only for Black refugees in Windsor, Ontario, but also in Chatham, Ontario, which is an hour away from Windsor. Chatham, like Windsor, had comparable educational disparities in that the system inhibits educational chances for both Black and economically disadvantaged individuals. Thomas Jones, for example, shares an account that his family was unable to send all their children "to school on account of the price... as... fifty cents pays [for a] quarter of school [for] each child, at the public school" in Chatham, Ontario (Drew 2000, 360). Jones' testimony vividly highlights the financial challenges that Black families in Chatham, Ontario, confronted while accessing education, as many families were unable to enrol all of their children in school owing to the excessive cost, which hindered Black pupils' educational opportunities. Notably, the specificity of "fifty cents" highlighting the price of a quarter of a year of education for each child emphasizes the financial hardship on families. Jones' account shows the intersectionality of race and economic status, emphasizing the challenges Black families encountered in affording education for their children in nineteenth-century Canada, shedding light on systemic inequalities that permeated access to education based on financial means. Thus, all of these testimonials shed light on the barriers that Black communities experience in terms of educational access, such as historical prejudice, the creation of segregated schools, and economic constraints that together limited Black refugees' educational opportunities. To elaborate, the systemic biases shaped educational structures by segregating resources and opportunities. The creation of separate schools exacerbated inequalities, while economic hardships hindered access. These intersecting factors restricted the capacities of Black refugees, perpetuating educational disparities and limiting their ability to pursue quality education, thereby hindering social mobility and reinforcing historical prejudices. Therefore, the expectations in terms of education of the Black refugees were not met when they crossed into "freedom" in Canada, but rather were limited owing to systemic injustices and historical prejudice. Additionally, the expectations for employment among Black refugees in Canada

were not met but were undermined by historical racism, as prevalent prejudiced attitudes and behaviours among the White population impeded refugees' access to substantial labour opportunities, thereby limiting their economic growth possibilities and perpetuating fundamental economic disparities.

Historical biases and stereotypes played a key role in isolating the Black population and limiting its mobility and employment opportunities. As a result, Black refugees had a more difficult time obtaining work and resorted to lower-paying positions such as servants and porters (Johnson and Aladajebi 2022, 197). In St. Catherines, Ontario, for example, a Black refugee named Mrs. Nancy Howard offers her testimony, highlighting the persistent impact of historical prejudice on Black refugees' possibilities for employment. Howard claims that when they came to Canada they found it, "harder to get work here, than... in Massachusetts" (Drew 2000, 51). Howard's statement captures the genuine employment obstacles that Black refugees encountered in Upper Canada throughout the nineteenth century, despite obtaining freedom in Canada. This is evident in Howard's comparison to Massachusetts suggesting that getting a job in the United States was easier than in Canada. Notably, this contradicts the idea that when refugees crossed into Canada, everything was "simple" and "free," which, as Howard points out, was untrue. Additionally, the choice of the word "harder" underscores the tangible and substantial impact of historical prejudices and economic barriers, revealing that the expectations of the Black refugees of greater opportunities in Canada were not met. Howard's assertion thereby reveals a consistent pattern of discrimination, portraying how deeply ingrained historical biases affected the economic prospects of Black individuals. Howard not only validates that prejudice was alive and well in Canada, but also reveals that these challenges persisted, despite legal equality policies (Furrow 2010, 357). To elaborate, while formal laws promoting equality existed, the population's inherited social and cultural attitudes continued to reflect stereotypes and resentments across Canada, establishing a disconnect between legal principles, the lived reality, and hardships of Black communities. Therefore, Howard's experience exemplifies the broader narrative of marginalized labour, which not only constrained the ability of the Black populace to obtain employment, but also limited their labour options to low-paying jobs in St. Catherines, Ontario. However, the challenges in employment faced by Black refugees were not exclusive to St. Catharines, but also evident in Windsor, Ontario. In both locations, historical prejudice cast a shadow over opportunities, negatively influencing the economic prospects for Black individuals in nineteenth-century Upper Canada.

This idea is also illuminated in the narrative shared by a Black refugee named Robert Nelson from Windsor, Ontario. Nelson's experience validates the argument that labour expectations were not met in Canada. Specifically, the refugees were vulnerable to systematically repressive behaviours and faced numerous constraints imposed by the White population in Upper Canada, which limited their options and ability to find employment. According to Robert Nelson, when coloured people worked for the White population, "they only received half [the] price, and cases have been known where, for ten pounds of pork, the



labourer received five” (Drew 2000, 371). Nelson’s statement exposes the economic exploitation and structural injustice endured by coloured labourers in nineteenth-century Canada. The assertion that they received only half the price, and in some cases, only half the value of their labour, vividly illustrates a deeply entrenched racial disparity in compensation. The allusion to a labourer receiving merely five pounds for ten pounds of pork starkly underscores the severity of economic exploitation. Notably, this quotation underscores the pervasive racial inequality embedded in economic transactions, reflecting a heinous practice where the value of labour was grossly diminished based on race. Nelson’s account serves as a powerful primary source exposing the economic hardships and exploitation faced by coloured individuals, shedding light on the persistent themes of systemic racism that pervaded economic interactions in Canada during that era. Overall, the inequalities in labour opportunities for Black refugees, as evidenced by testimonies like those of Mrs. Nancy Howard in St. Catherines and Robert Nelson in Windsor, underscore the unmet expectations in terms of employment and pursuing economic stability.

Historical prejudice similarly compromised the objectives of Black refugees in terms of land and housing, maintaining inequities in access and impeding their pursuit of securing and maintaining their land. The expectations of land for Black refugees upon obtaining “freedom” in Canada were not met, as they were confronted with the ongoing effects of historical racism. In Queen’s Bush, Ontario, for example, a Black refugee named John Francis recounts multiple experiences of how systemic prejudices among the White population impeded equitable and adequate access to land for the Black population in Canada. In one case, Francis claims that the land granted to Black persons “was not surveyed” (Drew 2000, 195). The absence of proper surveying implies a lack of organized land distribution, making it difficult for refugees to establish clear titles and boundaries. The difficulty in establishing clear titles in particular was a concern as various Black communities migrated to Canada because it is crucial when discussing the allocation and rights to land. For instance, owing to lack of documentation and inconsistent laws and regulations in the Maritimes, the Black population, such as the Black Loyalists, had a challenging time establishing their status and getting their lawfully promised resources (Whitfield 1986). James W. Walker claimed that, given the disparities and inefficiencies in Canada’s legal system, Black Loyalists were able to receive land, but it was typically in smaller quantities than promised and had some of the province’s poorest soil (Walker 2008, 49). Therefore, the Black population’s ability to achieve financial gains was substantially hindered given that they could not farm efficiently in these inadequate soils. These impediments hampered the Black population’s capacity to achieve the independence and self-sufficiency that they sought when they crossed into Canada. Additionally, the unsurveyed land reflects a systemic failure in fulfilling promises made to refugees, as it complicates the process of allocating land and contributes to the perpetuation of historical prejudices against marginalized Black communities in their pursuit of freedom and stability in geographical areas like Queen’s Bush, but also evident in Windsor, Ontario.

In Windsor, Ontario, Black refugees, including William L. Humbert, Robert Nelson, and David Grier, discuss the structural inequities surrounding land for Black communities: not only the difficulty to obtain adequate land, but also the fear of losing it. For instance, Grier talks about their experience of how they “have cleared land on lease for five or six years, then have to leave it, and go into the bush again” (Drew 2000, 373). In Grier’s account, the quotation encapsulates the cyclical struggle encountered by Black persons, particularly in clearing land. Grier’s experience shows the impermanent and unstable tenure of Black persons on Canadian land. The repeating cycle of acquiring and clearing the land and then being forced to abandon it, returning to the wilderness, exemplifies the difficulties in building stable communities. All of these narratives highlight ongoing themes surrounding the unstable nature of land tenure for Black persons, prolonging their vulnerability and dispossession, and the structural challenges they faced in gaining secure, adequate, long-term access to land in pursuit of economic security and independence.

Despite the prevalent adversities, it is critical to acknowledge that, among the difficulties encountered by many Black refugees in nineteenth-century Canada, there were examples of positive experiences in which individuals discovered possibilities for success, education, and community inclusion in their pursuit of freedom and stability. Positive experiences of Black refugees’ successes are apparent in various Canadian locations, notably London, Galt, and Toronto, where Black individuals found opportunities for work, education, and overall better living circumstances, challenging the prevalent adversities of the nineteenth century. A few Black refugees, including William Thompson, Aby B. Jones, and John A. Hunter, who settled in Galt, London, and Toronto, respectively, all agreed that the education conditions in Canada were positive since Black persons could attend school and receive an education. For example, William Thompson shares that “the coloured children can all go to school here in Galt, and are generally sent to school” (Drew 2000, 137). This statement indicates an inclusive educational atmosphere where Black children have access to education. Associate professors Wisdom Tettey and Korbla P. Puplampu state that “beyond [enslavement], [Black refugees] in Canada were free, educated, and skilled people earning a decent living” (Tettey and Puplampu 2005, 50). Both quotes underscore a more positive and inclusive environment for Black individuals, particularly that Black refugees were not only free, but could also access, participate in, and obtain education and economic possibilities in Canada. As a result, Thompson’s account offers a glimpse into the significance of local attitudes and policies in shaping a more inclusive and equitable environment for Black individuals seeking education in Galt, Ontario. Additionally, Aby B. Jones in London, Ontario, agrees with William Thompson that the education system in Canada is good. For instance, Aby B. Jones exclaims that “the coloured children and White children are educated together in this place [Canada]” (Drew 2000, 151). The observation of Aby B. Jones offers a positive aspect of education, highlighting the inclusive nature of Canadian schools during the period. The notion of being “educated together” reflects a more equitable approach to education, showing a departure from the segregation prevalent in other regions during the

same timeframe. Similarly, in Windsor, Ontario, some Black refugees experienced positive aspects of overall improved living conditions during the nineteenth century. Notably, Robert Nelson of Windsor, Ontario, provides his personal testimony in which he claims to have “owned a house and one hundred and one acres of land, [which] enabled [him] to support [himself] and [his] family” (370). Robert Nelson’s testimony underscores a positive narrative for some Black refugees. The mention of owning a house and extensive land signifies a remarkable achievement, providing economic stability for Nelson and his family. This primary source indicates that, despite the historical challenges, some individuals managed to attain property ownership, showing instances of economic success and self-sufficiency within the Black community. Nelson’s experience challenges the prevailing narrative of adversity, offering a glimpse into the capacity of Black refugees to establish prosperous and stable lives in nineteenth-century Canada.

In conclusion, despite the few cases of positive experiences by Black refugees in Upper Canada, it is evident from the other numerous narratives presented in Benjamin Drew’s *The Refugee: Narratives of Fugitive Slaves in Canada* that Black refugees’ expectations upon crossing into “freedom” in Canada were not met, particularly in terms of education, employment, and land. Benjamin Drew’s *The Refugee* is a seminal book in the study of Black Canadian history, providing an extensive collection of primary sources that reveal the multifaceted experiences of Black refugees in nineteenth-century Canada. The primary sources presented by Drew, including the stories of William Thompson, Alfred T. Jones, and Mrs. Nancy Howard, serve as a window into the authentic experiences of Black refugees, providing exclusive access to the voices of individuals who navigated the complexities of systemic repression and limitations imposed by the White population. In a broader discussion, these primary sources contribute vital perspectives to the ongoing debates on historical justice, systemic racism, and the legacy of enslavement in Canada while challenging the romanticized myths of Canada as a glorified refuge for enslaved persons in the nineteenth century. They underscore the importance of acknowledging the full spectrum of experiences within Black Canadian history, promoting a more inclusive and truthful narrative that reflects the diverse struggles and resilience of Black individuals in the quest for freedom.

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**Jaden Jacobs**

Reconciliation is a concept that has been utilized multiple times by the Canadian government in reference to ameliorating the relationship between the Canadian state and the Indigenous peoples of Canada. According to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRCC), reconciliation is described as an ongoing commitment and process to create and maintain a positive and respectful relationship with Indigenous peoples. The TRCC claims that reconciliation entails facilitating “real societal change” through various means. These means include apologies from the Canadian state and government, reparations, and “revitalizing” Indigenous legal traditions (TRCC 2015, 16). Additionally, within the TRCC, there are multiple instances in which the concept of “decolonization” is mentioned. More specifically, there are multiple times when the TRCC states that there is a “need to decolonize” the impacts of colonialism, such as the cultural genocide that took place during residential schools (247). Additionally, the TRCC calls on non-Indigenous people to “stay in the decolonizing struggle” to facilitate a better future for Indigenous peoples (323). However, can reconciliation truly be the path (or even *a* path) towards decolonization? Scholars (see Tuck and Yang) argue that reconciliation is not conducive towards the goals of decolonization, as it lacks transformative potential, treats decolonization as a synonym for indigenization and other forms of inclusion, and merely helps Canada’s image. While I agree with these foundational points, I aim to argue something further. I argue that reconciliation efforts in Canada are an *extension* of the colonial project, as they focus on easing settler guilt through moves to innocence, ensuring a colonial future, and diverting from actual decolonization efforts through performativity. This argument will be developed primarily by analyzing the TRCC’s 92nd call to action, specifically regarding the BC Hydro Site C Clean Energy Project.

Before proceeding, I will outline and define the key terms employed in this essay. Settler colonialism refers to the taking of Indigenous land by settlers with the entitlement and expectation of creating a new home for themselves (and for future generations) at the expense and detriment of Indigenous peoples (Tuck and Yang 2012, 5). While colonization entails many different elements to achieve its goal of claiming land (such as elements of discrimination, racism, and cultural elimination), the key element in colonization is the stealing of land. Thus, decolonization must primarily entail (and be defined as) settlers returning the land to Indigenous peoples (19). Additionally, indigenization refers to the inclusion of Indigenous epistemologies and “ways of being” into Eurocentric and non-Indigenous institutions and structures (Grafton and Melaçon 2020, 149). Last, the idea of “settler moves to innocence” relates to settlers reconciling with their feelings of guilt upon recognizing the harm that colonization has inflicted upon Indigenous peoples. As a result, settler moves to innocence relate to actions that aim to ease these feelings of guilt according to settlers’ conceptions of justice. These settler moves to innocence often entail superficial

changes that metaphorize decolonization and deflect attention away from their facilitation of these harmful conditions. This, in turn, centres settler guilt in the concept of decolonization rather than focusing on repairing the harm that colonization has inflicted upon Indigenous peoples through giving back their land (Tuck and Yang 2012, 10).

Reconciliation efforts focus on superficial and illusory rhetoric while neglecting the true demands of Indigenous peoples. This allows for Canada to maintain its “inclusive,” “multicultural,” and “polite” reputation while being performative and insubstantial in practice. Additionally, reconciliation reinforces settlers’ entitlement to the land through the lack of transformative change and allows for a false notion of multiculturalism to paint the picture of a progressive society that is entitled to Indigenous land. This is evidenced by scholar Rachel George, who explains how Canada prioritizes specific Indigenous rights more than others. More specifically, the rights that Canada prioritizes tend to benefit Canada more than Indigenous peoples, as they fail to challenge settler-colonial structures and institutions (George 2022, 106). George differentiates between “soft” rights and “hard” rights. “Soft” rights entail a focus on the incorporation of Indigenous cultures, languages, and teachings into broader Canadian society. In contrast, “hard” rights entail the recognition of Indigenous sovereignty and the Indigenous right to govern the land. Canada primarily focuses on the implementation of “soft” rights while disregarding the restoration of “hard” rights (104). The lack of commitment on behalf of the Canadian state and government to restore the hard rights of Indigenous peoples allows for Canada to maintain a positive reputation while, according to George, “missing the point entirely.” A key example of this relates to the 92nd call to action by the TRCC, and the BC Hydro Site C Clean Energy Project, where despite reconciliatory oratory, Canada actively ignored Indigenous peoples’ right to land and, namely, waters (106).

For reference, the TRCC heavily mentions the idea of “consultations” between the state and Indigenous peoples in an effort to improve their relationship. In particular, the 92nd call to action asserts that Canada should use the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as inspiration for their reconciliation efforts. Additionally, the 92nd call to action requires Canada to consult Indigenous peoples when a specific activity involves utilizing Indigenous lands and resources, and/or violates pre-existing treaties (TRCC 2015, 354).

This 92nd call to action merely works to ease settler guilt and continues to reinforce colonial ideologies and practices. While theoretically this call to action is beneficial because it claims to value the input, knowledge, and voices of Indigenous peoples and communities, these consultations primarily serve to entail a “move to innocence” from their guilt through an illusion of indigenization and progressivism. This image of accountability and inclusivity serves to reinforce settlers’ right to the land through the conception that their guilt renders them entitled and worthy of the stolen land (Tuck and Yang 2012, 3). This notion is demonstrated in various ways. First, it must be noted that the 92nd call to action does not mean that the Canadian government is not permitted to infringe on treaty rights or act in accordance with Indigenous protests (TRCC 2015, 349). Rather, the TRCC even states that

the Supreme Court of Canada has recognized that Canada can violate treaties or go against the desires of Indigenous peoples if “it can demonstrate that it is in the broader public interest to do so” (350). Even if we choose to view this call to action as beneficial since it takes Indigenous peoples into account, even its positive implications are limited. This is because the Canadian government has zero obligation to uphold the desires of Indigenous peoples since it prioritizes the “broader public interest” (the majority of which are settlers) and reinforces the idea that, ultimately, the Canadian government knows what is best for its citizens. This perpetuates a colonial narrative that makes the Canadian state the intellectual authority that holds the knowledge concerning what is best for itself, rather than focusing on truly repairing the harms of colonialism and focusing on decolonization even less. The TRCC and its calls to action push the idea of inclusivity and soft rights, as this eases settlers’ guilt by considering the ideas of Indigenous peoples while failing to deconstruct the colonial state. This heavily reinforces a colonial narrative, which is that, not only does Canada have a right to govern, but that Canada is utterly entitled to control all that occurs on Canadian soil. This means that, despite the positive appearance of consulting with Indigenous peoples prior to enacting an activity that will take place or extract resources from Indigenous land, this call to action only further reinforces the colonial project, reasserts a colonial authority and future, and continues to marginalize Indigenous peoples. Thus, this relates to decolonization centred around the colonizers’ ideas of what reparations should look like as opposed to focusing on true decolonial goals that Indigenous peoples advocate for, such as land back and recognition of Indigenous sovereignty.

The BC Hydro Site C Clean Energy Project and the violation of Treaty 8 demonstrate the failure of this “constructive” call to action. This case constitutes the implementation of a third dam on the Peace River, which ignited an abundance of Indigenous resistance towards the 10-billion-dollar project. This dam would entail the flooding of at least 5000 hectares of land by turning an 83 km stretch of the Peace River into a reservoir. Throughout the proposal of this dam, numerous Indigenous communities expressed that this project would constitute a significant loss for various Indigenous communities and would fundamentally change the relationship that Indigenous peoples have to the Peace River. Additionally, various Indigenous peoples expressed that this project would create a spiritual wound among Indigenous peoples given their connectivity to the land and waters. More profoundly, this project would violate Treaty 8, which guarantees Indigenous peoples access to this land (George 2022, 107). The Treaty 8 Tribal Association stated that there were better alternatives to this project, and that this project is ineffective both environmentally and economically (Kucic-Riker 2017, 41). Despite this context, John Horgan, the premier of British Columbia, announced that the project would proceed, and stated that Indigenous communities had been consulted but that “those challenges have passed” (George, 110).

This case strongly demonstrates the performativity of reconciliation, its facilitation of the colonial project, and, notably, reconciliation’s ensurance of a colonial future. Although it appears as though the Canadian government’s consultation with Indigenous communities prior

to allowing this project to move forward is a positive thing as it (theoretically) includes Indigenous feedback and voices, the case of the BC Hydro Site C Clean Energy Project reveals that this is inconsequential towards a decolonial project, which the TRCC claims to prioritize. Rather than taking the Indigenous protests and requests into account, Horgan reduced the necessity to consult with them as a “challenge” that stood in the way of what he believed was “best for its citizens.” This reveals that the reconciliation priority of including Indigenous voices is merely optical and serves the Canadian state’s interests by claiming to be inclusive and reparatory while discounting the value of Indigenous knowledge and treating it as a barrier to “Canadian success” (George 2022, 110). Additionally, this act of reconciliation facilitates the colonial project as it justifies the further extraction and stealing of Indigenous land. Through appearing to be consulting with Indigenous communities, the Canadian state and government can claim to have considered the opinions of Indigenous peoples while also discounting this knowledge through the claim that Indigenous peoples are deficient in their knowledge. While it can be argued that the inclusion and education of the perspectives of the Indigenous communities entail an essential groundwork for decolonization, I claim that this consciousness of Indigenous opinions is futile and serves performative gains if this knowledge is discarded and repudiated (111). Rather, this circumstance reveals that Canada continues to prioritize the settler-colonial nation over Indigenous sovereignty, claims, and rights to their land (110). Thus, through the performativity of the 92nd call to action, Canada ensures a colonial future by reasserting its entitlement to land, disregarding Indigenous voices, and continuing to steal land under the guise of it being “what is best for its citizens.”

Moreover, the TRCC and its calls to action distract from true decolonization measures by hyperemphasizing the importance of “spreading awareness” more than they highlight land-back measures and recognition of Indigenous sovereignty. This relates to both the previous statements regarding reconciliation facilitating a colonial future and focusing on settler moves to innocence. Both of these foci distract from the idea of decolonization by metaphorizing it to be synonymous with Indigenous inclusion and indigenization (Tuck and Yang 2012, 21). This is demonstrated through reconciliatory initiatives often relying on adaptations and reformations of colonial structures. This reliance on colonial structures has been argued to constitute a colonial act as it distracts from decolonial processes and entails the progression of colonial institutions (Madden 2019, 300). Thus, settlers feel satisfied with Canada’s liberal approaches to reconciling the relationship between Canada and Indigenous peoples by instilling this conflation between reconciliation and decolonization with government documents such as the TRCC. Since settlers become satisfied, the necessity to seek out and promote true decolonial activities appears futile, and thus reconciliation distracts from true decolonial projects. This is no mistake, since reconciliation is a top-down approach made for the settler gaze rather than with the intent of truly implementing Indigenous voices and desires into its framework (O’Neil 2014, 15). Thus, this satisfaction with the inadequate means of addressing the harms of colonization diverts attention away from land-back



decolonial projects and rights to self-determination, since reconciliation falsely appears to address these harms and maintain the status quo (Tuck and Yang, 21).

In conclusion, I argue that reconciliation efforts in Canada are an extension of the colonial project as they focus on easing settler guilt through moves to innocence, ensuring a colonial future and diverting from actual decolonization efforts through performativity. This was demonstrated through analyzing the 92nd TRCC call to action concerning the BC Hydro Site C Clean Energy Project. Despite the theoretical benefits of consulting with Indigenous peoples before proceeding with a project that requires Indigenous land, the demands and opinions of Indigenous peoples are often overruled despite adamant protest, as demonstrated through the BC Hydro Site C Clean Energy Project (TRCC 2015, 350). Additionally, the ability for Canada to overrule Indigenous knowledge and requests reinforces Canada's authority to govern its citizens and in turn continue to steal Indigenous land. Since colonization is primarily about land, decolonization must entail the return of stolen land to Indigenous peoples (Tuck and Yang 2012, 19). Thus, the implementation of the 92nd call to action facilitates the colonial project by enabling the Canadian state and government to continue to steal land while simultaneously framing itself as inclusive and compassionate towards Indigenous peoples and their desires. Despite the TRCC claiming to hold decolonization as a necessary task to restore the relationship between Indigenous peoples and Canada, it is evident that Canada cares more about its image, appealing to the comfort of settlers and easing settler guilt more than facilitating true decolonization. As such, I have asserted that reconciliation efforts, such as the 92nd call to action, distract attention away from decolonial projects by asserting that the restoration of soft rights, such as incorporating Indigenous knowledge and thoughts into mainstream discourses, is sufficient to rectify the harm done by Canada. By framing Canada in this positive light, Canada's inconsequential "changes" are praised by settlers as they paint a progressive image of Canada and its actions. Thus, even throughout an effort that is supposedly meant to focus on repairing the harms done by Canada and settlers towards Indigenous peoples, reconciliation efforts continue to centre on settlers, leaving Indigenous peoples on the periphery. This is done by focusing on the settlers' entitlement to land and the assurance of a settler future that is incorrectly deemed to be restorative.

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## *Levi's Legacy and the Legality of Lacrosse: How Deskaheh Levi General's 1923 Trip to Europe Has Shaped Canada's Border*

**Bennett Mitchell**

In his 1991 book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Benedict Anderson argues that nationalism is dependent upon “imagined... communion” between citizens (Anderson 1991, 6). Canada is a prime example of a country that understands the value of a shared national identity, going so far as to pass the National Sports of Canada Act in 1994. This act enshrined the long-standing association between Canadians and ice hockey in law, but also notably declared lacrosse as “the national summer sport of Canada.” Although less stereotypical than hockey, lacrosse has undoubtedly played a key role in the development of the Canadian identity. In many ways, lacrosse embodies the relationship between Indigenous and settler Canadians. In fact, although the game is an adaptation of the Indigenous sport *baggataway*, the name lacrosse—along with many of the modern rules—was created by French settlers (Robidoux 2002). The role of lacrosse in Indigenous-settler relations has been brought into the spotlight by the controversies surrounding the choice to include it in the 2028 Olympic Games. Although the Six Nations team, the Haudenosaunee Nationals, is ranked third in the world, its eligibility for the games has been questioned (*World Rankings* 2023). According to the International Olympic Committee (IOC), “only national Olympic committees recognized by the IOC can enter teams for the Olympic Games,” effectively barring the Nationals (Mather 2023).

This struggle for international recognition has been ongoing for the Haudenosaunee Nationals, who travel on the Haudenosaunee passport rather than a Canadian or American one, which “they consider to be a foreign nation’s passport” (Kaplan 2010). This choice is a direct assertion of sovereignty and carries on the legacy of Deskaheh Levi General, who created the Haudenosaunee passport in the midst of a struggle to gain recognition for his nation from the League of Nations. Levi General’s 1923 trip to Switzerland on the Haudenosaunee passport was a direct challenge to the Canadian government, which had attempted to limit his access to the world stage through the denial of a Canadian passport (Lightfoot 2021). Although he was refused the opportunity to speak in front of the League of Nations, Levi General’s trip has had lasting impacts on Haudenosaunee ideas of sovereignty and Indigenous relations to Canada’s borders. These impacts can be clearly seen in the Haudenosaunee Nationals’ campaign to compete in the 2028 Olympic Games as their own nations, and the unprecedented statement by Carla Qualtrough, Canada's sport minister, who expressed support for the Haudensaunee to “compete under their own flag” (Pells 2023). A full understanding of Levi General’s impact on Haudenosaunee sovereignty, and the significance of Qualtrough’s statement, can only be gained through an in-depth analysis of his 1923 trip to Switzerland, its historical and colonial contexts, and the impacts it has had through the creation of the Haudenosaunee passport.

## The Colonial Context

Levi General's 1923 trip was undertaken as part of his role as a chief on the hereditary council of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. As a chief, General was tasked with leading "the oldest participatory democracy on Earth" through a period of rapid change, especially in its relationship to the recently formed country of Canada. In fact, it was Canada's attempt to redefine this relationship in the early 1920s that prompted General to travel to Europe to seek aid from the League of Nations in ensuring his people's sovereignty. However, to fully understand the importance of Canada's role in Haudenosaunee sovereignty, it is imperative that it is understood in the context of both the Haudenosaunee Confederacy's pre-colonial identity and the various treaties undertaken between the Confederacy and European colonizers. According to Haudenosaunee tradition, their council "has been in place since time immemorial," and was founded by a prophet named the Peacemaker who brought warring communities together by teaching them "the laws of peace" (Confederacy's Creation). From its foundation and until the 1920s, the Confederacy was governed by a hereditary council made up of Hoyane or chiefs selected by the clan mother of each nation (*Clan Mothers – Onondaga Nation* 2023). Although this system had numerous checks and balances—clan mothers have the authority to remove chiefs who do not adequately "represent their clan"—the Canadian government deemed it undemocratic and, in 1923, began the process of unseating it in favour of an elected council (*Clan Mothers – Onondaga Nation* 2023, Smith 2023). This exercise of authority by the Canadian government effectively expanded its authority to encompass the land of the Haudenosaunee, blatantly disregarding the right to self governance granted to the Council in multiple treaties. In addition to this metaphorical expansion of borders, on July 6, 1922, the Canadian government "invaded [Haudenosaunee] country with an armed force," once again directly violating the Haudenosaunee's right to sovereignty (General 1922, 3). These violations of Haudenosaunee rights are what forced Deskaheh Levi General to travel to Europe in order to involve the European nations with whom the relevant treaties had been originally signed.

Canada's actions in the lead-up to General's trip were in direct violation of two distinct agreements: the Two Row Wampum, and the Haldimand Proclamation. The Two Row Wampum is one of the earliest and most influential treaties on record, recording an agreement made between the Haudenosaunee and the Dutch in 1613. The Wampum represents the understanding that Indigenous peoples and Europeans will live "side by side" in "peace and friendship" with neither overruling the "customs and... ways" of the other (Allard-Tremblay 2022). Notably, the terms of the Two Row Wampum are said to last "as long as the grass is green" or forever, meaning that the clear right to self governance it grants was still relevant during Canada's attacks on Haudenosaunee sovereignty in the 1920s (*Two Row Wampum – Gaswéñdah – Onondaga Nation* 2023).

In addition to the general right established under the Two Row Wampum, the 1784 Proclamation from the British Crown granted the Haudenosaunee "freehold land tenure" over

the tract of land given to them in the wake of the Revolutionary War—the Haldimand Tract. This freehold tenure of the tract is imperative to the Haudenosaunee’s understanding of themselves as “autonomous Crown allies rather than British subjects.” However, the Crown’s attempt to assert authority over the Haudenosaunee’s ability to sell and lease their land challenged this interpretation. Although the specific dispute over the ability to sell land was resolved in the late 1790s, the Crown continued to maintain a trustee relationship to the Haudenosaunee despite the clear rights to sovereignty they had been granted (Filice and Berczy 2016). The British North America Act transferred this role of trustee to the Canadian government, and it was in this role that the government began to attempt to “bring [Haudenosaunee] lands under administration of Canadian laws” (General 1922, 2). Both the Two Row Wampum and the Haldimand Proclamation establish a clear right to self governance for the Haudenosaunee people within the Haldimand Tract, meaning the Canadian government’s attempt to unseat the hereditary council and enforce Canadian laws within this territory were not only a violation of Haudenosaunee sovereignty but also a direct breach of established agreements. It was in defense of these binding agreements that Levi General chose to travel to Europe to call on the colonial powers with whom these agreements were signed—the Dutch and the British. This colonial context underscores the radical nature of the assertions of authorities that had come to define the Canadian-Haudenosaunee relationship. The challenges to Haudenosaunee sovereignty provide a clear basis for the significance of General’s trip to visit his former colonizers.

### **The Invocation of the Colonizers**

Levi General’s impact on Haudenosaunee sovereignty began with his response to these changing dynamics in the Canadian-Haudenosaunee relationship; an examination of both his overt invocations of European authority and his indirect challenges to Canadian authority will demonstrate his role in furthering the cause of sovereignty and limiting Canadian authority over the Haldimand Proclamation. In light of Canada’s infringement on Haudenosaunee sovereignty, General began a campaign for the intervention of the League of Nations in the budding conflict. On December 17, 1922, he sent a letter to the the queen of the Netherlands, asking her as a participant of the Two Row Wampum to advocate for the “[promised] friendship” and “home rule... as a separate people” that the Dutch had “faithfully observed” (General 1922, 1-2). In this letter, he directly invokes not only the Two Row Wampum, but also the promise of separatism guaranteed by Britain in the Haldimand Proclamation (2). These invocations clearly suggest that, although governance of the Great Lakes region had been given over to Canada, General still believed the European members of the League of Nations had a duty to their treaty partner. In the conclusion to his letter, General asks the queen to use her position as a “member of the League of Nations, to bring attention [to the] right of self- government assured” to the Haudenosaunee (4). Although the Dutch government did forward General’s letter to the League, it did so with the caveat that it

was “[refraining] from expressing any opinion in regard to the justice of the complaints made,” undercutting General’s assertion of colonial authority (Paneuys 1922, 1). The limited success of the initial campaign prompted General to travel to Switzerland with the goal of speaking directly to the League of Nations as a recognized leader of a sovereign nation. Given that his grievances were directed at the forced assimilation of his people into the general Canadian population, General refused to adopt the citizenship necessary to “apply for [a] Canadian” passport (Lightfoot 2021). In lieu of seeking “Canada’s permission to travel,” General and the rest of the hereditary council began issuing Haudenosaunee travel papers, “an early version of a passport,” undermining authority often imposed on Indigenous communities by the Canadian government through the restriction of migration (Lightfoot 2021). Although less overt than his appeal to the League of Nations, the creation of Haudenosaunee travel papers, which quickly evolved into a full fledged passport, has played an important role in the ongoing fight for Haudenosaunee sovereignty. In fact, the creation of the Haudenosaunee passport has come to define Levi General’s legacy. Despite being admitted to Switzerland, General was denied the chance to speak in front of the League, which rejected his request to speak on the grounds that “the Six Nations are not a state” as defined by the League, and were instead “subjects... within the Dominion of Canada” (*Statement Respecting the Six Nations Appeal to the League of Nations* 1923, 1). Although rejected by the colonial powers he had originally invoked, General’s trip, and specifically his creation of the Haudenosaunee passport, did succeed in challenging Canada’s authority over the Haudenosaunee and brought international attention to their plight. The legacy left by Levi General has had a long-lasting impact on how groups like the Haudenosaunee Nationals assert their sovereignty on both domestic and international fronts.

### **A Long-Lasting Legacy**

Although technically unsuccessful in his 1923 mission for the Haudenosaunee to be recognized as a sovereign state on an international level, the impacts of General Levi’s trip are evident and undeniable. These impacts can be seen not only in fights over domestic policies that impact Indigenous peoples, but also how the Haudenosaunee people are seen by the international community. One of the places General has been the most impactful is in the legal fight surrounding the Jay Treaty. Signed in 1794, the Jay Treaty affirmed the rights of Indigenous peoples to “freely pass and repass” the Canada-US border (Jay Treaty 1794, Article III). As both Canadian and American attempts to assimilate Indigenous peoples ramped up in the 1920s, attempts to stop Indigenous people who had not claimed either US or Canadian citizenship began in spite of their affirmed rights to pass. In the United States, the ability of the state to restrict Indigenous border passage was repudiated in the 1928 case *Diabo v. McCandless*, which reaffirmed that Indigenous peoples “cannot be deported” to Canada regardless of their citizenship status. Despite this clear American affirmation of the rights described in the Jay Treaty, Canada has continually denied them, affirming in a 1956 Supreme Court ruling that Indigenous peoples crossing the border were in fact subject to

things like tariffs and could not claim rights under the Jay Treaty as they are not a signatory (*Francis v. The Queen* 1956).

The Haudenosaunee passport created by Levi General has been a key tool used by Indigenous activists in their assertion of Jay Treaty rights. In 2011, Joyce King, a member of a Mohawk community that straddles the borders of Ontario, Quebec, and New York, had her Haudenosaunee passport confiscated by the Canadian government (Blackburn 2011). Although the Canadian government attempted to downplay the confiscation as an issue with the passport's listing in the "list of acceptable [forms of] identification," Ms. King used the situation to bring national attention to the issue of Haudenosaunee sovereignty. In an interview with the *National Post*, she suggested that the government's assertion that her passport was a "fantasy document" was akin to calling the Six Nations a "fantasy country," raising serious "questions about land rights" (Carlson 2011).

The rejection of Joyce King's passport mirrors the aforementioned issues surrounding the Haudenosaunee Nationals' choice to travel using the Haudenosaunee passport. In 2010, as the team made its way to the Federation of International Lacrosse (FIL) World Championships in Manchester England, it was informed that, despite several decades of European recognition, the Haudenosaunee passport would not be accepted due to its "lack [of] holograms and other technological features". Regardless of the fact that the team members were granted official permission to leave and reenter the United States on their tribal passports by then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Britain maintained that the team would not be allowed to enter the country without either Canadian or US passports. Although the team's decision to insist on its use of the tribal passport resulted in its forfeit of the tournament, the team saw it as an opportunity to "[fight] a battle that was bigger than lacrosse," bringing Haudenosaunee sovereignty into the forefront of world politics and causing an "international embarrassment" for the country that denied it entry (Kaplan 2010). These uses of the Haudenosaunee passport to bring attention to the sovereignty of the Six Nations are directly in line with Levi General's original use for it in 1923. In fact, in a media release about their withdrawal from the 2010 Lacrosse World Championships, the Haudenosaunee Nationals directly connect their actions to those of previous generations who had fought for Indigenous sovereignty, suggesting that their insistence on using tribal passports was a way of ensuring sovereignty for "the next seven generations" (Lyons 2010).

These clear impacts of Levi General's legacy are once again being brought to the forefront by the IOC's refusal to recognize the Haudenosaunee Nationals as an eligible team for the 2028 Olympic Games. However, the change in the official stance of the Canadian government, as seen through Carla Qualtrough's statement in support of the Haudenosaunee Nationals, signifies the payoff of the campaign started by General in 1923. Qualtrough's assertion that the Nationals should be able to "compete under their own flag" is a direct affirmation of the sovereignty of the Six Nations in an international context—a direct contrast not only to Canada's assertions of authority over the Haudenosaunee in the 1920s, but also its continued denial of the validity of the Haudenosaunee passport (Pells 2023). The clear

connection between the Nationals' assertions of sovereignty and General's creation of the Haudenosaunee passport make the impacts of his legacy undeniable. This new found international recognition would not be possible without his actions in the lead-up to his 1923 trip to Geneva. Evidently, although he was unsuccessful in achieving recognition for the Haudenosaunee as a nation state from the League of Nations, Deskaheh Levi General laid the foundation for generations of Indigenous activism, which has finally culminated in recognition of the Six Nations on an international level.

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**Olivia Lin**

Valencia slouched against the wall of an old building, watching the streets of Sector 2A as she brought a cigarette to her lips. She was a girl—not yet a woman—standing at just above five feet, with almond eyes and gangly limbs prominent beneath her finest clothing, threadbare at the hem but passable under the cover of the dark. It was a foggy evening, the misty veil suffocating the air with only the light of a few remaining lamps to provide illumination for the things unseen and unknown that darted in the shadows of alleyways. They scurried like mice, never pausing but not without sneaking a look here and there. Unlike the glittering promises of the Underground Cities, in this dilapidated little part of what was better known as Uptown, crime was no stranger to anyone. Here, the act of stealing bread from an Underground bakery wasn't any different from working a day at the steel mills. After all, they were both something that put food on the table, and no one, especially Valencia, would complain or be a snitch when food was so scarce. Already, her belly rumbled despite the sparse bits of toast and jam she had eaten earlier that day. She inhaled her cigarette, letting the smoke settle in her lungs before breathing out, her appetite satiated for the moment with nicotine and cold, hard spite.

“He’s late. So late.” Valencia mumbled under her breath. She tapped the cracked face of her watch, sitting a little too loosely on her skin-and-bones wrist, watching the clock hand turn round and round, seconds passing, minutes, until just then, a flicker of movement caught the corner of her eye. Turning her head slightly, she spotted a boy scuttling towards her. Though his cap was turned down to cover his face, she recognized his telltale black curls that couldn't quite stay hidden under the brim. “About time you got here, Aiden,” she said to him as she took another long drag. “Any longer and I would’ve left without you.”

“Sorry, it’s been a rough time getting through the streets without being ID-ed or chipped these days. Can’t exactly move where you want to go unless you wanna, y’know, get *bound*,” he grumbled back at her. “Everyone looks at everyone with suspicion now. The guards are on high alert now, no thanks to you.” Valencia glared at him but the smirk on her lips told another story. “You say that, yet you’re here. If it weren’t for me, then some of our neighbours over at Sector 2B would’ve been turned into Marionettes by now.”

“You’re such a bad influence, Val,” Aiden replied, rolling his eyes, but nevertheless he looped his arm into hers. It was only a week earlier that Valencia, along with a group of other like-minded individuals who called themselves the Daffodils, bombed one of the factories producing ImprisoMasks once the work day was over. And now Valencia, along with Aiden, were on their way to disrupt the unveiling of a new factory for ImprisoMasks. From a glance, ImprisoMasks were pale and uncannily smooth masks that wrapped around a person’s face. They served one purpose. It was the government’s response to the increasing lack of space and capital for prisons, especially as the world, racked by climate change, crashed and burned around them. They were essentially machines that trapped a person in their own body and mind, rendering them stuck in a prison of their own making. Marionettes, as most people called them,

were “deviants” who deserved to have their bodies put to work for breaking the laws—laws the elite set to their own drum and beat, unsynced from the woes of the ordinary living aboveground.

They were puppets that obeyed the orders of their masters. Nowadays, it was commonplace to see someone walking with an ImprisoMask wrapped around their face, their every feature obstructed by the reflective material. Some said that it was because people were afraid that if they looked into a Marionette’s eyes for too long, they would begin to remember that they too were flesh and blood humans. But even so, she recalled the whispers going around lately that, even if you didn’t commit any crimes, you could still get bound if the rich chums living below felt they needed more labour. Free labour, that is, provided by the Marionettes constrained in their chainless shackles.

“People think that those who look like us are dangerous. But brown, black, yellow, what does it all matter? I mean, they thought those native people were savages so they bound most of ‘em up, but who are they to talk when they’re basically turning a blind eye to silencing half of the nation? They want to feel safe, but they also don’t want to feel like those old timers who used to enslave others,” Valencia mused. “It’s funny if you really think about it. But, that’ll be a discussion for later tonight. For now, let’s get going. It’s time to crash a party.”

The duo moved swiftly through the streets. Through roads that were piled high with trash, between boarded up houses with narrowed eyes following them and across streets lined with rusted, discarded cars. At times, they ducked into dark alleyways when they caught a glimpse of a guard patrolling the streets, a baton swinging loosely in their hand. Beside Valencia, Aiden flinched when they saw another guard beat a woman into the ground, their face steely with conviction as they swung down while her arms curled protectively around a child crying into her bosom. The child’s high, shrill voice floated...

Up,

Up,

And up into the air, before dissipating as her mother’s battered hijab fell to the ground beside a man. A man—a thing: a corpse—with empty eyes, who already lay there silenced in an expanding pool of blood, with a voice stuck in a throat that would never speak again. It was already too late to save them. Bringing her gaze to a poster on the wall of a nearby shelter, Valencia grunted in disgust.

*A bright world. A bright future! Welcome to Sector 2A of Sanctuary SR45, where we provide you with a home away from the dangers of the Outside.*

Some sanctuary that Uptown was, she thought. A pretty lie packaged in promises of safety and community. While the rich were all cushy in their world underground, the rest of the population was trying to survive in this hellish imitation of a paradise on the surface. She ripped the poster off the wall and crumpled it in her hand, feeling only a small bit of satisfaction from the action. Then in the sky tinged red by the fires that still burned halfway

across the country, she finally spotted the towers of the new factory, the faint sounds of cheering and the voices of people who gathered to see its unveiling. There was a podium in front of the doors of the factory on which a man stood with the lights of cameras flashing around him.

“We’re just on time. You ready for this? No turning back,” she whispered to Aiden, who nodded back at her. “If not now, then when?” He said, and the duo split into the crowd, almost indistinguishable from the large mass that gathered to watch the man on the podium begin his speech.

“Welcome, everyone, to the unveiling of the new ImprisoMasks Factory, which revolutionized prison reform around the country. Look at how far humanity has progressed, despite the ravaged world that was bestowed upon us by our forefathers. No longer are prisoners stuffed into overcrowded prisons and wasting their lives away behind bars. No longer are prisons polluting our lands.” The man shouted, “Now they can serve their time in solitude while still contributing their work to society.”

He gestured with wide, sweeping movements to the imposing structure behind him, the sheen of the metal glinting brightly—menacingly—in the light of the full moon.

“There is no doubt that it is all thanks to our lovely scientists and engineers who designed the ImprisoMasks and the many workers, like some of you out there, who made them so that we could live our lives freely in these lands without fear of danger.”

“And ah, ah, ah, but of course, I cannot but also stress the *importance* that ImprisoMasks hold for both me, you, and those of you who find yourselves at the end of an ImprisoMask.”

“We recognize the value that your hard work brings!” *As if they were not valuable before?*

“Time spent in the ImprisoMask will feel like no time at all.” *But what about that unrecoverable time that could have been put to better use?*

“And better yet, you remain in the comforts of your own mind.” *And that is assuming that you don’t have your inner demons to battle...*

Around her, the faces of the elite were frozen in a mask of ignorant bliss, perhaps suspecting but unwilling to know the dangers of ImprisoMasks. She hummed pensively, turning the words over in her tongue and mind, tasting the bitterness of the words falling from his saccharine mouth. Change, Valencia pondered as she listened to the man on the podium drone on, does not come easily. Though the elites might know that what they’re doing is wrong, they don’t care, or at least they turn away from the suffering of the Marionettes.

“We should be proud! These ImprisoMasks represent the best of humane innovation on the worst of human society. So without further ado, let us welcome another push forward into the future!” The man on the podium bowed, turning to the side as a Marionette handed him a pair of large scissors. In the distance, the gongs of a distant clock tower chimed—twelve times

for midnight—and the man moved towards the front of the doors, aiming his scissors at the red ribbon tied neatly on their front.

What could ordinary people do as cogs trapped in such a system?

Three.

Chants erupted from the crowd, filled with people from the Underground City.

Two.

Cameras flashed and attention was focused solely on the man at the podium.

One.

A singular voice rose up from the crowd, just one among many, with words that carried a different weight to the mindless cheers, heavy with grief and the knowledge of what went unspoken—questions that always lingered on the edges of people's minds.

“But, why imprisonment? Why lock people away?” They spoke. “What if these contraptions are not all that is good in the world?”

And a cog grinds to a standstill from within the system.

The crowd murmured in confusion, trying to find the speaker but failing, momentarily stunned into silence as the scissors fell down, a loud snip echoing into the night. Then suddenly, paper rained down, showering the crowd with their gruesome and terrible images. The stark realities of the system were laid out in ink and parchment. Names, images of Marionettes with their ImprisoMasks ripped off in bloody chunks, of bodies broken like dolls, of abuse, violence, and entire families being carted off to be bound—men, women, children, the young and the elderly. All were reduced to bodies to be captured in front of the ImprisoMask. At first, there was confusion. Then a gasp rippled through the crowd and then swiftly, murmurs began rising into a cacophony of voices.

Valencia sucked in a breath, finding courage that keeps her voice clear, her words echoing amidst similar cries growing in volume.

“You took my neighbours!”

“You took my father.”

“You took my sisters.”

“You took everyone from me...”

“And me.”

“And me!”

Soon, it was not just Valencia, Aiden, or the Daffodils making a noise, but everyone everywhere as outcries rose all over the cities and towns.

Make it a problem they should care about, Valencia thought. Give them a voice, knowledge, and make it so that it is something they cannot ignore any longer. Remind them

that beneath the masks lay human beings with stories, connections, and memories, and that nothing, she repeated, nothing, should strip someone of that. Not those masks, not those ideas about advancing humanity, and certainly not when it comes at the cost of all the marginalized people of society.

Cogs and Marionettes no longer. Only humans.

“We need change,” she heard Aiden cry out from somewhere in the crowd, his words carrying in the wind. “This cannot go on, this cruel treatment of people. Where are our rights and humanity in this new world order? Think of the innocent people who get caught up in this system of punishment and exploitation! They could be someone you know, or even you if you make one wrong step!” He continued his speech, even as he fought off guards. Similarly, Valencia was having her own struggle with guards as she continued shouting. But by then, it was too late. Not too late for Valencia and Aiden of course, but it was for the man on the podium and many others like him because their words were having an effect on the crowd. They were beginning to think. And reflect. And acknowledge. Though they may wish that the images they saw before them were mere illusions, not all wishes can come true. And that was sadly the truth for the Marionettes, and for them, as bystanders to this whole mess.

“The absolute audacity! Bring those misfits down below and we’ll get them fitted, then sent off to a work camp,” the man from the podium grumbled, wiping his forehead with a handkerchief. “Those Uptown mutts can’t even hold their mouths shut.” Valencia snarled at him in response, the cut on her forehead dripping blood down her face and staining her teeth crimson. “This won’t be the end of it!” She declared.

“We’ve only laid down the path.”

And she was right, for as a baton fell to the ground beside her, the seeds of doubt had been sown into the hearts of everyone present. Some would grow, some would not. But it was there. It was a start.

In the months that passed after that night, change could be found in the whispers between people, their heads no longer held down, and the protests that erupted since the hypocrisy of ImprisoMasks had been pushed to the forefront.

Change is slow. But it happens. Like a flower that breaks through the winter frost to rise into the spring, it is a gradual process that eventually comes to fruition. So as a woman—no longer a girl—walks through a bustling city street, a young child stops her with a flower in hand.

“A daffodil for change?”

**Olivia Lin**

What if prisons could be reduced to the size of an individual person? What if the way that we imprisoned people were to change? These “what if” questions are explored in “A Daffodil for Change,” a self-written short story that imagines how present challenges such as prison reform and sustainability faced by the criminal justice system might manifest in a new form of imprisonment. The story uses word play, comparisons, and an evocative narrative style in order to display the multitude of perspectives hidden within the story, and to convey an underlying message that intends to make readers acknowledge the unjust and unequal impacts of the criminal justice system. It also bases itself on speculative design with the introduction of “ImprisoMasks” as a platform to generate discussions on how we should consider prisons and the implications they have on the notion of humanity—how we view human beings, how we should treat other humans, and what being human even entails. I situate this scenario within carceral spaces, and how prisons are represented and expanded through the use of carceral technologies like ankle monitors and surveillance systems, bringing them beyond the traditional boundaries of what we might recognize as a prison. Through this, it also extends what can already be found today—the nature of prisons, brutalization, racialization, dehumanization—and draws on carceral logics that may contribute to the continuation of mass incarceration into the future.

“A Daffodil for Change” focuses on a character, Valencia, as she and her friend Aiden go to disrupt the unveiling of a new factory producing ImprisoMasks, which are the new alternative to prisons. As masks that could be fitted over a convict’s face and used to exploit their unconscious—and usually marginalized—bodies through forced labour, the characters become a part of a group known as the Daffodils, who want to undermine the normalization of this harmful technology. They aimed to achieve their goal by educating and making aware the masses, who gathered to see the unveiling of the consequences of what such technologies did to their divided society. By the end, they have succeeded in starting the move towards change in society, which they note to be a gradual process and not something that can be done in the one night the story takes place.

The title itself, “A Daffodil for Change,” has two meanings as the meaning changes after the reader finishes the piece. On one hand, one might imagine a simple transaction when they read the title; an individual receives a flower in exchange for giving away loose coins they happen to find in their pocket. However, on the other hand, it symbolizes the social forces happening beneath the surface of this fictional world wherein the Daffodils, a group advocating against ImprisoMasks, strive for change in their society. It encourages readers to look beneath the surface of what they see, following the notion in which something that seems to be true is not actually the case when it is viewed from an alternative point of view. It is much like how the guard would have seen the family they beat as socially beneath them while others, loved ones, would have seen them as equal people. In the same scene where Valencia and Aiden witness this

guard, they are also described as having a “face steely with conviction,” and this word “conviction” has two sets of definitions (Lin 2024, 3). To the guard, he is full of conviction—a strong belief—that what he is doing is correct. Yet to the family members, they are facing a conviction—the state of being declared guilty—that is wrongfully placed onto them. Another example, “For breaking the laws—laws the elite set to their own drum and beat...” (2), evokes the idiom “to march to the beat of one’s own drum,” which often signifies an individual who does not conform to conventional society. Yet in this context, it is used to reflect conformity to society, much different from the first definition. These creative choices emphasize the value of new perspectives, which is an integral part of speculative design.

Speculative design is a form of design that opens new pathways for discussion, finds other ways of being, and explores new perspectives on wicked problems (Dunne and Raby 2013, 2). According to James Auger, speculative design uses fiction and imagines a number of aspects found in the future, such as what type of products, systems, and world would be present 50, 100, or even 200 years into the future (Mitrović and Šuran 2016, 7). The main feature of this story, *ImprisoMasks*, is a product of this design. They are described in the story to be “pale and uncannily smooth masks that [wrap] around a person’s face” and are “essentially machines that [trap] a person in their own body and mind, rendering them stuck in a prison of their own making” (Lin 2024, 2). Moreover, speculative design is situated within the broader spectrum of speculative practice, which can be characterized by speculation on potential futures or alternative presents. These speculations on the future can create scenarios that critically question new technologies and the impacts they have on society (Mitrović and Šuran, 10). “A Daffodil for Change” sits in a plausible future, bringing prison design into the realm of the speculative, which should make readers question carceral technologies and the way they can perhaps expand to completely take autonomy away from an individual. In their construction, they aim to dehumanize the prisoner and in doing so, they also strip prisoners of their humanity and rights, exposing them to exploitation by the state and various private parties. This manifested in the vulnerability of ordinary people against the elites of society, as they were subject to close surveillance and the discretion of the elite to put them into these prisons. Yet, these new technologies do not only exist only in an imagined future they also impact our present.

Therefore, it is important to think about the technologies and social relations that can emerge from the world today into our imagined future (Mitrović and Šuran 2016, 11). Already we can see that, according to James Gacek, the “extensive nature of surveillance, punishment, and control within and beyond traditional spaces of incarceration” is increasingly coming into contact with our lives (Gacek 2022, 3). Could we argue, for instance, that the panopticon is realized today through the creation of security cameras? On the other hand, electronic monitoring is one piece of carceral technology that exists within a network of surveillance that concerns itself with managing community sanctions and penalties (Gacek 2022, 4). *ImprisoMasks* are a representation of this idea and the fluidity between forms of confinement that can be state sanctioned, embodied, or imagined (5). *ImprisoMasks* are a mobile prison that emerged from the idea that certain people are inherently risky, became embodied through the



physical manifestation of a prison on the body, and are encouraged by the state for the accumulation of capital. They also exist in a continuum of technology that can remake race in a post-racial environment (Benjamin 2018, 17). This can be found in works such as Ruha Benjamin's "Ferguson is the Future" and Lundy Braun's analysis in "Breathing Race into the Machine." Benjamin writes a fictional story about Black victims of police brutality and "doubling," the act of resuscitation and organ renewal (8). Though committed in order to save victims from death, it covered the fact that these Black victims were used to fine-tune doubling techniques before being used to create an upper class that could live forever (13). On the other hand, Braun looks at a real-life analysis of how cultural notions of race became embedded in a race-neutral object, the spirometer, leading to difficulties for Black workers pursuing compensation (17). ImprisoMasks can be understood with the same logic as these pieces where they present a neutral face, but if they become the new standard for discrimination, and the victims of ImprisoMasks tend to be racialized people, then racism and the carceral system become one and the same as it was before. Blurring between reality and fiction, these connections should make it known that there may be a future like this, unless we create a different pathway to a future that does not expand carceral spaces.

Additionally, within the framework of speculative design, wicked problems are not simply problems that are wicked in the sense of "evil", but problems that are "highly resistant to resolution" (Australian Government 2007, 2) for a multitude of reasons. In this manner, it can be seen that issues such as prison reform, climate change, or racialization are wicked problems that are not easily solved by placing more racialized people in prison or reducing carbon footprints. Yet, solutions to these situations often do result in these more simplified solutions, as seen in the Canadian context where, even though Indigenous peoples represent 5% of the adult population, they make up 28% of all federally sentenced people, and Indigenous women represent an astonishing 50% of all federally incarcerated women (Public Safety Canada 2023). "A Daffodil for Change" makes it clear that these circumstances have continued into the future, and it acts as a warning sign for the present generation to address these issues. However, it is not easy to even give a clear definition to wicked problems because each group involved in these problems has different perspectives on how the problem should be viewed, handled, or solved. Therefore, wicked problems are complex with multiple causes or objectives within the broader spectrum of the issue, which can lead to unexpected consequences if a narrow approach is taken to solving it. Moreover, they are also unstable and time sensitive because the components involved in wicked problems are evolving as they are being examined (Australian Government 2007, 3-4). Consequently, there is no direct solution that can be achieved by the work of one person or group and as such, it requires the change in behaviour of a group of people or for all (Australian Government 2007, 1). This is a key component reflected in "A Daffodil for Change," as the key to begin solving the wicked problem was to change the attitude about prison reform in the minds of the masses present at the unveiling. Prison reform is a wicked problem, which faces many obstacles in the criminal justice system and different understandings as to what it should look like. As seen in the story, Aiden states that "[it]cannot go on, this cruel treatment of people.

Where are our human rights in this new world order? Think of the innocent people who get caught up in this system of punishment and exploitation!” On one hand, one might contemplate between rehabilitation and punishment, or the safety of the public as it is weighed against the rights of the convicted. It is indeed a multifaceted issue where it may benefit those who can capitalize on the labour of prisoners and the exploitation of their bodies but at the cost of depriving those very prisoners of their rights and humanity. It can thus be seen that traditional prisons do not make wicked problems simply go away, but instead work to hide marginalized people away from society for the business of what is known as “profitable punishment” (Gordon 1998).

These aspects are part of the logic behind ImprisoMasks, which purposely reflect the logic of the conventional prison as it arose out of the assumption that incarceration was more humane than capital and corporal punishments commonly practised at the time (Davis 2003, 40). They serve not only to encourage questions about the nature of prisons and critiques about the prison industrial complex in which they operate, but also show how they may be used to reproduce harmful practices from the past in the future. This potentially creates new forms of discrimination and oppression. In the future presented by “A Daffodil for Change,” ImprisoMasks were created to be a more humane alternative to the unkind conditions of a prison. As opposed to traditional prisons taking up important space in the social landscape, ImprisoMasks integrated prisons directly into the landscape. Though this degree of visibility may serve to give more recognition for the suffering or vulnerability of the incarcerated, it also normalized some of the problems associated with mass incarceration and, like modern prisons, they presented their own share of problems for a society divided by class, race, and capital. More critically, the story can be used to understand the logic of the prison industrial complex. According to Davis, it grew from how carceral infrastructures expanded to accommodate growing prison populations—the majority of which are racialized or impoverished people—and are composed of the government, media, and various related institutions that benefit from mass incarceration. (Davis, 84; Gordon 1998). This developed alongside the rise of capitalism and conditions that allowed for ideas to be led by a new elite ruling class (Davis, 43). These actors interact with private corporations that, through the privatization of prisons, have created “for-prison prisons” in which the incarcerated are viewed as cheap labor, and fall victim to corporate capitalism and profitable punishment. Through this process, the incarcerated become the subject of criminality as social problems attributed to crime and deviance are felt most often by the marginalized, who are then automatically assumed to be criminal due to the seemingly inherent connection between crime and race or class (Gordon 1998). In effect, the pseudo-nexus between crime and race in particular has resulted in the creation of a new “Jim Crow.” Colourblind laws that disproportionately impact people of colour have marked them to be criminal and, by extension, have brought back formerly prohibited forms of discrimination, such as employment discrimination or no voting rights (Alexander 2010, 2). A young Black man in the 21st century may experience as much discrimination as a young Black man during the Jim Crow era, but on the surface, it will only be for reasons associated with his criminal background (224). Thus, as

Michelle Alexander wrote, “We have not ended racial caste in America; we have merely redesigned it” (2).

Accordingly, Davis argues that mass incarceration was created by racism and capitalism instead of rising crime levels, shown at various levels throughout the short story. The political economy of prisons has become contingent on this crime-race nexus as racialized bodies grow vulnerable to profitable punishment. Prisons themselves become a source of capital for the state because they generate profits through fees that may be charged to the incarcerated and through the exploitation of cheap labour, because the prisoners are unpaid and work tirelessly under prison sentences. A business model is thus created where prison labourers are used for their low costs and fairly non-existent wages. Although profitable for private companies that manage prisons, prisons for the most part do not produce wealth as a whole for society (Gordon 1998). In an effort to alleviate the burden caused by prisons, incarceration fees are increasingly being charged to prisoners for the cost of their incarceration (Eisen 2015, 1). Some of the logic behind creating these types of fees have been justified by arguing that they help control incarceration budgets or are based on rehabilitation or deterrence practices (5). Yet is it really the case when the incarcerated can be some of the most vulnerable members of society? Furthermore, the notion of state-sanctioned labour is not new. For instance, the 2010 Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition in Britain established a set of criminal justice and welfare reforms that emphasized the importance of prisons as “places of hard work and industry, instead of enforced idleness” (Burnett 2018, 284). A Green Paper associated with this reform, “Breaking the Cycle: Effective Punishment, Rehabilitation and Sentencing of Offenders,” indicated that it would involve unpaid work that would ultimately benefit the incarcerated. In combination with other official records, it can be noted that, in this context, work has a practical function in that it prepares inmates with the skills that they would need for the traditional workplace and for reintegration into society (290). Yet, under this mask of reform and improvement, these practices can be more punitive or hide vulnerabilities that lie beneath the surface. State-sanctioned labour can be understood as a form of “punitive reformation” where it is used not just for its economic value, but because this model provides regulation and social control over the incarcerated. As seen in Dario Melossi and Pavarini Massimo’s investigation into the links between the prison and factory, punitive labour is used to produce and to also establish a will to produce (293). Similarly to how the ImprisoMask posed itself in relation to the incarcerated, it takes away from the greater dynamics at play where the real benefit is for the powerful individuals in society. After all, the prison labour force does not have many capabilities or public support when it comes to unionizing, organizing, or controlling its work environment (292). In the end, it seems to become another form of dehumanization where prison labourers are turned into generators of profit for the elites. Historically, there were also chain gangs consisting of racialized labourers—composed of those from the prison population, recognizable by physical chains connecting each person—who worked without pay to generate capital for the state. This comes from the notion of logistics, a component of the supply chain that is about optimizing the movement of goods, people, and information in order to generate

profits to their maximum potential. Within this practice, it means manipulating the movement of people at the most optimal time and place to gain the most benefits and, in the context of chain gangs, labour is secured from prisoners. This was notably seen after the American Civil War when infrastructure damaged by the war was rebuilt by prisoners in chain gangs. Following this, narratives of fugitivity in literature began to reflect fugitive slave narratives in the 1930s as the chains used on chain gangs, which were derived from chains used in slavery, showed the “ongoing instrumentality of incarcerated labor and Black masculine immobility to the building of the United States” (Zieger 2022, 43). These histories of slavery and incarceration use the same logic that views racialized people as Others or inferior, thereby serving to justify the treatment of these individuals. This notion of chains and chain gangs was evoked in the story by “... free labour, provided by the Marionettes constrained in their chainless shackles” (Lin 2024, 2). Addressing these histories is important in order to create a better future.

Narratives featuring chain gangs can also be found in pieces such as John L. Spivak’s “Hard Times on a Southern Chain Gang” (1932) as well as Elliot Burns’ “I Am a Fugitive from a Georgia Chain Gang!” and its subsequent film adaptation (1932). However, Spivak and Burns looked at the Black experience of chain gangs through White narration, which worked to either misrepresent it or erase the history of Black fugitivity. Even though some works were indeed written by Black authors such as Chester Homes and Toni Morrison and featured Black voices, they were often filtered through white texts (Zieger 2022, 46). It therefore becomes crucial to deconstruct narratives and reframe them in new ways because perspectives of power have traditionally been associated with white masculinity. Likewise, this also begins with dismantling racist structures and ideologies that have led to the mass and profitable incarceration of Black and Indigenous peoples in Canada and the United States. Hence, even the act of making ImprisoMasks as a sustainable solution to mass incarceration can arguably be connected to sustaining the penal complex by masking carceral practices as well as perpetuating and legitimizing the expansion of carceral spaces (Jewkes and Moran 2015, 452, 466). However, this story seeks to convey that trying to improve prisons through reforms may in fact make it more difficult to challenge issues as it can draw attention away from what really matters, namely, a fair and truly just criminal justice system (465).

In addition, this story is guided by another set of logics concerning the society-of-captives thesis as introduced by Arrigo and Milovanovic, and Arrigo, Bersot, and Sellers. Arrigo defines the society-of-captives as a society where difference—the act of doing humanness differently—is reduced or repressed in fear through mechanisms that manage human risk. Evidently, this is seen in the case of the Marionettes, whose difference is completely repressed by the mask that hides their differences and the fear of the consequences of being bound by an ImprisoMask. Therefore, the society-of-captives thesis is based on their investigation of a social pathology where the society of captives results in the captivity of society itself because a society guided by fear will only result in marginalization and the criminalization of difference (Arrigo 2013, 673). In other words, the prison industrial complex

becomes culturalized whereby captivity becomes a “conspicuously consumed commodity.” Actors within this thesis include the kept, their keepers, regulators, and watchers who are, respectively, the incarcerated, those who enforce incarceration, those who administer and inspect, and those who depend on or benefit from perpetuating incarceration. These actors culturally consume images, narratives, and practices that reduce or repress difference or the potential that difference has for innovation (674).

Quite simply, this logic creates the basic characters and settings for “A Daffodil for Change.” It bears witness to a type of violence that Arrigo calls “the power to harm, to deny another person their humanity,” which is achieved through systems of restraint or surveillance and beliefs that associate certain groups with certain ideas, such as “racialized people must be dangerous.” The treatment of racialized people as inherently dangerous—leading them to acquire ImprisoMasks in the story—finds much relevance in the present context where the criminal justice system focuses largely on looking for and catching potential criminals (Arrigo 2013, 676). The logic behind the fears found in the society-of-captives thesis is thus deeply concerned with security and insecurity. Those very feelings of fear and anxiety manifest in a sort of insecurity where racialized people are placed in prison when people begin to fear their existence. Everyone wants to feel secure—to be housed, fed, secure and, most critically, safe from crime. However, not everyone can experience insecurity in the same way because it is generally those who are impoverished or racialized who may feel it the most.

In a Massey lecture by Astra Taylor on the “Barons or Commoners?” she recognizes two forms of insecurity that plague society. First, “existential insecurities” are insecurities that result from human morality, the state of being fragile and vulnerable to injury or death. Second, “manufactured insecurity” results from capitalism in a society that encourages its residents to consume but provides no support in helping them to achieve that goal—essentially promoting exploitation and profit at the expense of the weak. Perhaps it was the insecurity of the elites in the short story that drove them to exploit the weaker Marionettes in an effort to obtain their own security. Though many institutions and systems underlying society, such as the criminal justice system, might try to make us more secure, they may work in ways contrary to expectation (Taylor 2023). For example, human rights may have been established as far back as 1215 when the Magna Carta was issued, but there are still many homeless people in prisons and Black individuals brutalized by the police today. The right to the security of the person may have resulted in legislation permitting abortions, decriminalizing medical assistance in dying, and protecting homeless encampments, but does it protect a person from the state, or provide them with consistent and reliable access to material security? What does this right to the security of the person truly entail and whom does it include? Should the incarcerated—dehumanized and demoted as they are in “A Daffodil for Change”—deserve to have the right to the security of the person? In light of the lack of these rights, action is required to receive what is due, and that is what happened at the end of the short story.

While manufactured insecurity might work against society by dividing classes or people, existential insecurity brings people together by the shared recognition of humanity and

it begins by understanding the ways in which insecurities can be used against us. It is by encouraging solidarity and collective action that we can begin to protect the present and future and move away from all that “A Daffodil for Change” represents (Taylor 2023). Ironically, in the end, it is insecurity that makes us human and lets us connect and foster change. By showcasing acts of resistance by collective action—reminiscent of actions by 13th century peasants that Taylor recalls—and humanizing the Marionettes in “A Daffodil for Change,” I reveal that we can break free from the logic that constrains people to these roles because even the marginalized, often themselves in the position of the kept, are not always weak and do possess the ability to fight against oppressive systems. By giving them a place in speculative fiction to create a future for themselves that is not under threat or fear of incarceration by an unjust system, it formalizes their position in society as people who do deserve to exist and provides a place for decolonization as it centres the voices of those who might usually remain unheard.

Ultimately, “A Daffodil for Change” is a story about humanity and the questions of humanity that lie at the heart of issues such as over-incarceration, prison reform, and criminalization. As stated by Andrew Feenberg, “the most important question to ask about modern societies is therefore what understanding of human life is embodied in the prevailing technical arrangements (Dunne and Raby 2013, 34). Thus, if to be human in this future setting means to be one without an ImprisoMask, and to be one without an ImprisoMask means to be a human with privilege, wealth, and a non-racialized status, then perhaps it should highlight the weaknesses found within our current setting. It would then be my hope that readers recognize this weakness, bring it with them into the future that awaits us, and create one in which being human encompasses all that makes us who we are.

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## *Queerness and Smart Technology at the Border*

### **Cameron Miranda-Radbord**

As robotic police dogs (Bowman 2021), bomb disposal devices capable of firing shotgun shells (Asma-Sadeque 2022), and automatic firearms that use artificial intelligence to decide when to fire (Min 2022) are deployed around the world, the innovations of the 21st century have quickly taken a dystopian turn. As Canadians, we consider ourselves resistant to the growing trend of technological oppression, especially compared to the United States. Indeed, in large part, the presence of digitized surveillance and law enforcement is scarce in the lives of most Canadians. Rather, this technology is confined to the edges of the country: at the land crossings, airports, and immigration tribunals. For vulnerable communities interacting with the border, this grid of algorithms and physical technology forms a cage, impeding the ability to travel out of and into Canada.

This essay will examine the effects of emerging technology on the 2SLGBTQ+ community, proving that the growth of the “smart border” through developments like artificial intelligence (A.I.) and biometrics poses a grave threat to the mobility of Queer travelers and immigrants, compounding the border’s function as a cis-heteronormative “social sorting” apparatus (Gidaris 2020).

Internationally, the use of A.I. at border crossings is a growing trend. Officials in Hong Kong and the European Union use the technology to assess travelers and immigrants, drawing on data gleaned from their personal documentation and, in the latter jurisdiction, social media accounts (Bircan and Korkmaz 2021). While meaningful examples of Canada using A.I. as part of our airport security apparatus do not yet exist, the possibility of increased application is eminently present. Palantir, a contractor that has played a major role in developing the United States Customs and Border Patrol’s A.I. capabilities, is actively lobbying to implement similar solutions north of the border, where its leadership has deep ties to the Trudeau government (Akhmetova and Harris 2021).

For Queer people, the use of A.I. in airport border crossings poses a serious obstacle to international mobility. In the status quo, border officials often demonstrate biases against 2SLGBTQ+ travelers when assessing their personal data. Notably, in 2017, a Vancouver man was prevented from entering the United States because of his profile on a gay dating app, something that the officer screening him connected to sex work. This information was saved in Customs’ computer system (Tejada 2017). Although the man was not an escort, he was prevented from entering the United States. Queer families also regularly encounter bias at the border when entering Canada. Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) officers often suspect parents who do not fit into heteronormative standards of abducting their children, demanding documentation not expected of traditional opposite-sex parents (Radbord 2022). If and when A.I. is utilized in border security, this bias against Queer people becomes more dangerous. A.I. depends on data and metrics that are generated by humans (Gill and Molnar 2018). If those humans have homophobic and transphobic biases, as the border officials in the previous



examples do, they are applied to every traveler who interacts with them (Umezaki 2020). If being with a same-sex couple is seen by the CBSA as a risk factor for child abduction, A.I. will subject every set of Queer parents to additional scrutiny, just as it will with gay men on dating apps. Moreover, whereas humans can be held accountable for biased decision making, computers cannot. Because of A.I.'s technical complexity, it is difficult for activists and governments to criticize and even for border agencies themselves to understand it (Heilweil 2020). Even if the CBSA has the best intentions with regard to the 2SLGBTQ+ community, it may not be able to tell if and how its A.I. might be biased against it. Whereas ingrained homophobic and transphobic beliefs are a clear cause of why Queer people face heightened inquiry at the hands of human agents, the perceived "objectivity" of technology blurs the causality of any anti-Queer decisions it might make.

Also posing a challenge to Queer travelers is the extensive implementation of biometric screening tools and identification requirements. Into the early 2010s, the Canadian and American governments both implemented more stringent biometric requirements on travelers entering their countries and boarding airplanes traveling across their border (Baker 2013). These included requirements for additional identification (Hale 2011) and new body scanning technologies in airports (Baker 2013). Both of these changes posed especially serious challenges to the mobility of transgender people.

Changing one's gender markers on a passport is often a significant bureaucratic challenge, even compared to changing information on a driver's license. Consequently, many trans people present differently than a border officer checking their passport's gender identifier would anticipate. While regulations requiring travelers to resemble the gender specified on their passport to gain admittance to Canada are no longer in force, this still subjects trans travelers to additional scrutiny. A trans man in the U.S. describes a CBSA officer's reaction when the officer saw his passport: "He... spent a long time just going through my computer file... He was just looking for something to nail me on I'm sure because I looked suspicious to him" (Baker 2013). In defying biometric identification, trans people pose a risk to the fundamental goal of the biometric system: the strict categorization of travelers and their bodies (Currah and Mulqueen 2011).

Another challenge trans people face when traveling across the border is the expanded use of full-body scanners. Rolled out in the 2010s, body scanners scan "men" and "women" differently (Clarkson 2019), labeling anything unexpected as a threat. For trans people, this often means their genitalia: a man's breasts or a woman's penis is identified as suspicious (Currah and Mulqueen 2011). Gender-affirming accessories, like chest binders and "packers" (penile prostheses), are often flagged as well. Choosing to undergo a pat-down instead of walking through scanners does not offer a reprieve, as the method used by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) in the United States often also picks up genitalia or lack thereof. Trans people who are marked as potential threats because of their bodies must often then explain their identities to border officials, facing long delays and traumatizing interrogation. Pat-downs and

secondary screening are often done in public, singling out trans people in front of other passengers.

Between increased questioning of transgender travelers stemming from pat-downs and body scans and the possibility of mechanized bias against Queer people through A.I., smart border technology used for airport security has the potential to both directly prevent 2SLGBTQ+ people from crossing the border (i.e., by algorithmically rejecting gay applicants for visas) and deter travelers from attempting to leave and re-enter Canada. Indeed, as a consequence of the implementation of full-body scanners similar to Canada's, many transgender travelers in the United States already avoid air travel (Currah and Mulqueen 2011).

The utilization of smart border technology at immigration poses other challenges for Queer people at the border. Canada's efforts to use A.I. in the context of immigration are much more extensive than in the context of border security. Canada is actively seeking to replace human immigration officers with A.I. and provide the remaining officers with A.I. tools for understanding data and case law, developing new technology to this end (Gill and Molnar 2018). The implications of this are dire for the 2SLGBTQ+ community.

Consider the example of family sponsorship. Before the implementation of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) in the early 2000s, members of opposite-gender couples could formally sponsor their partner's immigration application, but members of same-sex couples could not (Battista and Smith 2020). Instead, immigration officers would discretionarily approve the family sponsorship applications of same-sex partners on compassionate grounds. The law has since changed to include anyone in a "conjugal relationship" regardless of their gender. However, Queer people seeking to bring their partner to Canada still face heavy obstacles. The criteria for evaluating if a couple is in a conjugal partnership include factors like having children, sharing finances, and living together. For Queer couples in countries where homosexuality is illegal or discouraged, meeting these criteria is often impossible without risk of persecution. While judges often recognize this fact and are flexible in their decision making, examples of couples having their applications denied because of the cultural circumstances of their country of origin remain prevalent. The further development of smart border technology around immigration claims (i.e., assessing family sponsorship with A.I. or machine learning) eliminates the possibility of human flexibility, meaning couples would be judged purely on factors they cannot reasonably meet. Considering human discretion was the only reprieve for Queer couples seeking family sponsorship prior to the implementation of IRPA, this is highly problematic.

Furthermore, in the status quo, the growing amount of data created by social media is often used to deny refugee claims by invalidating Queer oppression and identity. A key concern in evaluating refugee claims on the grounds of homophobic or transphobic persecution is evaluating if claimants are truly gay (Battista and Smith 2020). To prove the authenticity of their sexualities, Queer claimants often show immigration tribunals evidence of dating accounts on apps like Grindr (*Gonzales v. Canada* 2018). As a result, the absence of data from dating apps or other evidence to suggest attempts to start Queer relationships has been used by tribunals to cast

doubt on immigrants' claims of homosexuality (*Kornienko v. Canada* 2012). Indeed, a Nigerian man's refugee claim was initially denied when the tribunal that heard his case mistakenly asserted that his Grindr account was fraudulent because he did not have Grindr XTRA, a paid, non-compulsory upgrade to the app (X (Re) 2020). Both cited cases were overturned by a judge. However, tribunals or, worse, algorithms expecting a surfeit of data "proving" a migrant's sexuality add length and complication to hearings that are often matters of life and death (X (Re) 2019). While it may be that their claims were truly unfounded, refugee claimants in other cases have been denied without appeal based on a failure to prove their sexuality (X (Re) 2020). In 2020, a man went as far as to pose for a photograph with a male lover in front of a rack of Queer pornographic magazines to prove he was gay. Because he did not present the tribunal with Facebook messages between him and his ex-lover, his claim was denied and he was presumably sent back to Pakistan. With A.I. making immigration decisions, examples like his will happen more often. Whereas humans can make measured judgements about a person's lifestyle and relationship history, computers can only make decisions with the data they are given (Gill and Molnar 2018).

From body scanners at the airport to denied refugee claims, the policies and practices of the Canadian smart border that impede the 2SLGBTQ+ community are a feature, not a bug. At the core of smart border technology is the labeling and distillation of people and bodies into terms the government can understand (Currah and Mulqueen 2011). At the point at which the government aims to minimize risk, anything that cannot be easily labeled or understood, in other words, anything non-normative, is determined to be risky. This includes Queerness; men who have breasts and prosthetic penises, parents whose families deviate from the nuclear model, refugees who live in separate homes from their same-gender partners, and more all mark, in the eyes of the state, dangerous deviations from what "ideal citizens" should be (Hodge et al. 2019). As such, smart border technology discourages Queerness and reinforces normative notions of gender and sexuality.

Because their genitalia often cause unwanted questioning and suspicion at airports when they encounter body scanners, many trans people change their appearance to appear less visibly Queer and more in line with expectations of their gender at birth. For example, transgender men who normally "pack" often choose to not wear prosthetic penises that affirm their gender identities to avoid hassle while traveling (Clarkson 2019). This practice of repressing a "risky" identity mirrors that of numerous other groups that face discrimination at the border, including Arab youth in Canada, who often shave their faces to appear less threatening before traveling (Finn et al. 2018). When trans men present as cisgender women to match their passport's gender identifier, smart border biometrics have succeeded in their goal of enabling categorization through enforcing normativity.

Where smart borders cannot altogether eliminate the practice of Queerness, they encourage homonormativity: participating in relationships that match heterosexual ones in every characteristic except for the genders of the participants, often involving marriage, children, and monogamy (Duggan 2019). This can be seen in immigration. Explicitly rejecting same-sex

partners from family sponsorship is no longer permissible (Battista and Smith 2020). However, immigration officials aided by A.I. can use vast data to evaluate how homonormative claimants are. People who do not present their sexuality in a manner coherent enough for the state to understand, including those who have multiple partners (X (Re) 2020), those whose sexuality is fluid and changes from an initial label (*Mizoji v. Canada* 2015), and those who live separately from their partners (*Liu v. Canada* 2011) are kept out. Their error is not in being Queer but in being Queer in a way the state does not expect; when we grant migrants access to our citizenship and, therefore, a piece of our national identity, we expect them to conform to a narrative we recognize (Hodge et. al. 2019). The assistance of A.I. in processing data can help us hold refugee claimants to this expectation (Gill and Molnar 2018).

For those who do make it into Canada as citizens or are born citizens, the state continues to impose itself on Queer relationships through borders, and especially smart borders. To travel without difficulty, Queer parents must present documentation validating their relationships in the eyes of the state (i.e., birth certificates, marriage certificates, or notarized letters from spouses) lest they be accused of abducting their children (Radbord 2022). In the United States, after the introduction of body scanners, the TSA recommended that transgender people bring a doctor's note confirming their gender identity to the airport with them (Currah and Mulqueen 2011). These requirements remove much of the deviancy a Queer identity might possess; any Queer people who travel across the border smoothly are already signed off on as legitimate by a state institution, in these cases, either the medical system or the legal system.

For Canadians who do not have sufficient documentation about their family or who present as transgender in ways that machines can detect, smart borders function as a disciplinary tool (Baker 2013). As a consequence of being not only Queer but Queer in a way that is "incoherent" to the state (Clarkson 2019), the mobility of many 2SLGBTQ+ people is impaired (Currah and Mulqueen 2011). Their defiance of the state's attempts to force them to conform to cis-heteronormative or at least homonormative standards makes them dangerous and, therefore, necessary to control and restrict.

For cis-heteronormative travelers who are "safe" in the eyes of the state, *1984* might be a book purchased at the duty-free after security. But for Queer and trans travelers, migrants, and refugee claimants, it can feel like a lived reality. As Canada's capabilities around A.I. and body scanning expand, so too does its capacity to discriminate against and discipline the 2SLGBTQ+ community. As Orwellian algorithms, scanners, and data processing become more prevalent, images of Queer people and others who are identified as risks to the state being searched, questioned, and turned back will become more common at airports and immigration hearings across the country.

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## CONTRIBUTORS

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**Dacian Dawes** (She/Her). Dacian is a third-year undergraduate student double-majoring in political science and Critical Studies in Equity and Solidarity, with a minor in African studies and a certificate in Black Canadian history. She aspires to further her education with a master's degree in public policy, recognizing its power to create meaningful change and striving to build a more just society for all individuals, especially marginalized individuals. Her rigorous academic journey, coupled with her lived experiences as a Black woman, has provided her with a profound and nuanced understanding of the systemic challenges faced by marginalized communities, particularly regarding race, colonialism, and social justice. Driven by her passion for equity and justice, Dacian authored a comprehensive research paper titled "Black Refugees' Narratives of Freedom, Education, Employment, Land, and Resilience in Black Canadian History." This work delves deeply into the historical and contemporary experiences of Black refugees in Canada, highlighting their resilience and contributions while addressing the complex intersections of freedom, education, and employment within the Black Canadian community.

**Jaden Jacobs** is a recent UofT graduate who majored in Political Science, Criminology and Sociological Studies, and minored in Women and Gender Studies. Her research focuses on Canada's reconciliation efforts, and how these efforts tend to be performative, lack transformative potential, and reassert Canada's colonial authority over Indigenous peoples and land. To make this point, she raises the example of the Hydro Site C Dam in relation to the TRCC's ninety-second "call to action", and the project's violation of Treaty Eight. Jaden presented her findings at the Canadian Studies Conference held at the University of Toronto on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024. Following graduation, Jaden aspires to be a lawyer and use her education to raise and uplift the voices of individuals whose voices have been suppressed for far too long.

**Angus MacKellar** is specializing in peace, conflict, and justice and majoring in international relations at the University of Toronto. In the third year of his degree, he is on exchange at Sciences Po Paris, where he is pursuing studies in intelligence and security, his main research interests. Angus is an alumnus of the Margaret MacMillan Trinity One Program for which he wrote his paper in this journal, having received the Margaret MacMillan Scholarship for

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**Merveille Massamba** is a 2024 graduate of the University of Toronto with an honours bachelor of arts degree. She majored in Critical Studies in Equity and Solidarity and double minored in Canadian Studies and philosophy. Merveille has been involved in the University of Toronto community through her active participation in the Woodsworth Initiative Against Sexual Harm Club as vice president, the Canadian Studies Student Union as the Black Canadian Studies members' representative and secretary, and the Preventive Health Advocacy Association as secretary. Through her social sciences program, Merveille has been equipped with a diverse set of analytical tools and perspectives to approach various topics such as colonialism, intersectionality, systemic inequality, and more, with a critical lens while essay writing. These tools have been instrumental in shaping her paper "Reimagining Futures: Indigenous and Afro-Diasporic Speculative Fiction in Challenging Colonial Structures," which was written for her Canadian Studies class, "Re-Imagining Canada: Creative Visions of Our Past, Present, and Futures." Merveille looks forward to contributing to discussions on equity and social justice while pursuing further education.

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**Max Ray-Ellis** completed a bachelor of arts (honours) at the University of Toronto, graduating with high distinction from University College in the spring of 2024. During his undergraduate degree, he majored in Diaspora and Transnational Studies and minored in both Canadian Studies and history. He was the recipient of the University College Program Award for Canadian Studies in his fourth and final year. In his upper years of study, he wrote several research papers that examined the Loyalists' migration to British North America and their subsequent settlement and



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**Nicole Smyth** is a recent graduate of the University of Toronto St. George Campus. She received a bachelor of arts degree with a major in history and a double minor in Religion and Art History. Nicole has a passion for Canadian history and focuses on both immigration and labour. While studying at the university, she had the opportunity to take additional courses in the Canadian Studies department and presented her paper at one of its conferences. She has written about migrant labour programs and labour organizing efforts such as the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program, the Live-In Caregivers Program, and the Canadian Farmworkers Union.

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**Isebela DeSousa** is a fourth-year student at Trinity College, University of Toronto, double-majoring in European Affairs and History with a focus on law and history. Over the course of her undergraduate studies, she has explored in depth the histories of the Americas and Europe, with particular interests in early modern criminal justice systems and the political violence and human rights issues in Latin America. In her fourth year, she has written extensively on the challenges and failure of consociationalism in Cyprus, a topic she intends to pursue further in her future master's program. Alongside her academics, Isebela has served as an editor and analyst for the Messages in the Media undergraduate journal, an analyst for the G20 Research Group, an associate editor for the Future of History undergraduate journal, and as a staff writer for the Trinity Times student newspaper. Alongside her seminar presentation and research essay titled “The Future of Cyprus: Fifty Years Post-Partition,” Isebela’s favourite work has been a report on Eliza Schuyler Hamilton’s lost letters, an essay on Italian unification titled “The Long Road From Piedmont to Palermo,” and an essay on early modern Lisbon titled “All Souls Lost on All Saints’ Day: The Natural Disaster That Transformed Lisbon.” In her free time, Isebela reads voraciously and runs her YouTube channel documenting her travels and life at the University of Toronto.

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**Jasmyn Reardon-Manek** is a third-year undergraduate student at the University of Toronto, currently majoring in political science and Canadian Studies. Jasmyn's research centres on Canada's current political topics, including decreased voter turnout within Ontario, efforts towards reconciliation with Indigenous groups, brokerage party politics, and the country's role in globalization and the effects it has on the global south and various western nations. Jasmyn has a strong passion for writing and achieving excellence in her work, hoping it will inspire and eventually create change within the academic community and Canada. Jasmyn appreciates new ideas with the intention to both improve Canada's socio-political state and suggest how it can be expanded on by others. Being a university student has taught her that collaboration is crucial in shaping a political society, especially one that benefits all involved. Currently, she is a proud volunteer for the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario and a member of U of T's Canadian Politics Club. Jasmyn is most excited to see how her knowledge of Canada's political structure and health expands throughout the coming years during her active participation and education at the University of Toronto.

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