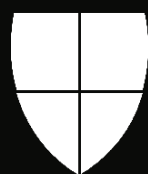


THE
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Volume 11 Issue 1
Spring 2021



ST. LAWRENCE
UNIVERSITY

THE
UNDERGROUND

A Peer-Reviewed Academic Journal
of
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ST. LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY
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EDITORIAL POLICY

THE UNDERGROUND is a peer-reviewed academic journal that publishes researched based student work in both written and multimedia format. The goal of this journal is to provide an outlet which allows St. Lawrence students to share the results of their work with the rest of the academic community. All submissions must be original. The journal is published online and in print once a semester. Each submission will undergo a rigorous editorial process based on a series of blind peer reviews. Submissions may be subject to a series of revisions. All work must be submitted in an electronic copy. Students may submit multiple works per semester. Submissions may include, but are not limited to, written pieces (i.e. plays, research papers, creative pieces, etc.) and visual art (i.e. photography, video of performances, etc). Submissions must be sent in by the time determined and announced by the editorial board each semester to Juraj Kittler at jkittler@stlawu.edu.



ON THE COVER:

Forbidden Crowns by Kalila Calame '20,
Photography

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader,

Thank you for taking the time to appreciate the amazing student work that has been selected for this edition of The Underground Research Journal. First and foremost, I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to all of the people who have made this edition possible. To the authors who submitted to this edition as well as the editorial board, I thank you for your thorough work.

Particularly, I would like to thank the Managing Editors, Frank Wotton '23, Skylar Bergeron '22, Tina Luchetta '22, Mike Gagliardi '21, Christian Hovey '21, Rebecca Maric '21 and Molli Morris '21, for taking the time to work closely with me on the edition.

Special thanks also goes to Digital Editor Tali Makovsky '21 for her work designing and editing the journal as a whole. Without her artistic and technical ability, this journal would not look or be the same.

Finally, I would like to extend my final thank you to Dr. Neil Forkey, our faculty advisor. Despite stepping in for only one semester prior, Neil has been a fantastic leader, and without his help and passion, I would have been lost.

The artwork on the cover is a part of Kalila Calame's Forbidden Crowns, which seeks to empower students to embrace their blackness in predominantly white spaces. Sarath Novas's art piece, The First touch, El Primer Toque, الطّالقة الأولى, первое прикосновение, Den Første Berøring is dedicated to telling the stories of sexual assault survivors.

Our first written piece, "Mt. Kilimanjaro: Deforestation on The Mountain of the Moon and the Impacts on the Surrounding Communities," belongs to Mikayla Lathrop, whose personal experience studying abroad in Kenya was the inspiration for this in-depth analysis of the historical and ecological changes occurring on and in the surrounding areas of Mount Kilimanjaro.

Next comes Brenda Rubio's piece, "Concrete Outdoors: Prisoners' Right to Wilderness," in which she simultaneously analyzes the impacts of social injustice in the environment and incarceration. In their combination, Brenda envisions a future approach to incarceration that protects prisoners' rights to connect with the environment.

After that is Hannah Rutkowski's essay, "Fat & Feeling Fine: Pathologizing Fat and Disability as Means of Shame," which weaves personal and analytical approaches to deconstruct fatphobia and ableism as it exists throughout the medical community and society at large.

Finally, Ayla Schnier's piece, "An Overdue Reckoning: Reparations for Slavery in the United States," elucidates the history and discourse pertaining to reparations, before arguing that first steps towards reparations must begin in earnest, starting with the passage of House Resolution 40.

It has been a difficult year for our community for numerous reasons. I commend each and every student for their continued dedication to research and education in these times.

Warmest Regards,

Hunter Litterio '21

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Mt. Kilimanjaro: Deforestation on The Mountain of the Moon and the Impacts on the Surrounding Communities

Mikayla Lathrop '21

This is an analysis of how two communities living at the foothills of Mt. Kilimanjaro have been affected by deforestation on the mountain and how they have evolved to cope with the resultant changes in the climate. The paper traces the lives of the Chagga and Maasai communities over the past 130 years. The Chagga are agriculturalists while the Maasai are pastoralists. Through this research it has been determined that the Chagga and Maasai have altered their occupations, diets, and education systems as a result of a reduction in vegetation in the area. Local water cycles seek trees as administrators of evapotranspiration. This process allows for groundwater to vaporize, creating clouds, enhancing precipitation, and cooling the environment. The mass felling of trees causes erosion, variable water distribution, and retreating glaciers. The Maasai and Chagga rely on consistent weather patterns from Mt. Kilimanjaro, and as this becomes endangered, so do their traditional lifestyles. The paper includes a proposed management plan with the goal of restoring the mountain's climate, economy, and health of the local people. Information was gathered through peer reviewed texts, primary sources, and the author's experiences on and around the mountain. The proposed management plan is to augment reforestation by creating jobs that revolve around planting trees. The local economy, water distribution, and visitor experience on Mt. Kilimanjaro would see great benefit from this plan.

Keywords: Mt. Kilimanjaro, Maasai, Chagga, deforestation, deglaciation, evapotranspiration

The Mountain of the Moon, The Garden of Eden, The Rooftop of Africa, The Impossible Journey, and The White Mountain are all names for Africa's highest point. The mountain itself holds true to each of these denominations, and many more. The idea that it is the Garden of Eden stems from it being one of Tanzania's most precious landmarks. This is a mountain that millions of humans, animals and plants rely on for their basic nourishment, for example, the water supply. Some believe the mountain's name came from the Chagga community, and translates to the Impossible Journey. In the nineteenth century, explorers and missionaries were searching for the Mountain of the Moon, which they believed to be the source of the Nile (Bart 2006). They ended up standing in the shadow of the Rooftop of Africa. Eventually, their eyes fell on the beautifully snowcapped White Mountain. This latter name is believed to be

the Kiswahili meaning of Kilimanjaro. However, the true definition of Kilimanjaro is unknown to history. Meanwhile, the most terrifying unknown is how long the 'White' Mountain will remain white.

At 19,341 feet above sea level, Mt. Kilimanjaro is the highest point in Africa and the world's highest freestanding mountain. The volcano consists of "three main peaks...a number of smaller parasitic cones... [and] two concentric craters" (Unep-Wcmc 2017). Located in Tanzania, it is 300 km south of the equator and just over the Kenyan border (Rutten 2014). Tanzania claims the mountain, but Kenya claims the views (Maddox 1996). The famous Kenyan view of the mountain from Amboseli National Park features elephants, giraffes and Acacia trees in the foreground and the majestic snow-capped mountain in the background. The volcano enjoys five distinct vegetation zones: the

cultivation zone, the rainforest zone, the heather and moorland zone, the alpine zone, and the arctic zone. Each zone varies in vegetation, wildlife and climate, making it a phenomenon for scientific research. As a unique alpine landmark, the mountain plays a dominant role in both Tanzania and Kenyan history.

Deforestation has played an extremely important role in the mountain's history. Initially large logging operations were responsible for the destruction of forests. Logging of indigenous trees was deemed illegal in 1984. However, the reduction of trees has continued with honey gathering, illegal felling of trees for new building structures, firewood collection, grass burning for soil rejuvenation, and incursions by domestic livestock (Unep-Wcmc 2017). Honey gathering requires smoking out bees and, in the dry season, can often lead to fires, as does grass burning. Intensified fires, which impact erosion and water retention of the soil, can result in "significant reduction of water yields with serious regional implications, affecting sectors such as agriculture and livestock" (Agrawala 2003, 16). Thousands of people rely on these practices for a source of income. They are able to sell honey, wood, and use the renewed land for their crops. In a region with more people than jobs, there is sometimes no other choice but to use the resources at hand, even if it is against the law.

Deforestation can also result in deglaciation on Mt. Kilimanjaro. Evapotranspiration is the process by which groundwater is transferred through plants to the atmosphere as water vapor (Schlesinger 2014). This vapor builds up and creates clouds that cool the mountain. Precipitation occurs from the clouds, which then replenishes the groundwater, snow coverage, and rivers. Without trees and evapotranspiration, the mountain loses groundwater in the form of runoff which increases erosion and decreases water distribution. This will cause a reduction in snow and ice for the glaciers due to the dryer climate and lack of cloud coverage. Between 1962 and 2000, "Mt. Kilimanjaro lost approximately 55% of its glaciers" (Agrawala 2003, 30). Deglaciation will have an exponential impact because the glaciers will be reduced faster as dark-colored rocks begin to appear where there used to be snow. The dark rocks absorb heat faster than snow in keeping with the Albedo Effect. The document, *Development and Climate Change in Tanzania: Focus on Mount Kilimanjaro*, notes "there is a general consensus that the ice cap of Kilimanjaro will have disappeared by

the year 2020 for the first time in the surveyed period of 11,000 years" (Agrawala 2003, 38). When hiking the mountain in December of 2019, there were still glaciers; however, my guide, Mohammad Kinyua, continuously reminded us how much the glaciers have retreated since he first started hiking the mountain in the 1980's. Of the ice cover present in 1912, 85% has disappeared and 26% of that present in 2000 is now gone (Thompson 2009). This source is from a study done in 2009, and glaciers have continued to melt since. If the glaciers disappear, the current arctic zone would turn to an alpine desert zone, and take away the uniqueness of the mountain. The forests are essential in keeping the beauty and health of the mountain and surrounding environments intact.

There are millions of people whose livelihoods rely on the mountain's natural resources. This paper will focus on two major communities that reside at the base of Kilimanjaro, the Chagga and the Maasai. The Chagga are known as the mountain people and live on the Tanzanian side. They are traditionally agriculturalists but have been forced to change their ways due to outside influence from Europeans and climate change. Most of these alterations come from the reduction of available water and increased population. The Maasai live on the Kenyan side of the mountain and are traditionally pastoralists. They, too, have been forced to change their ways for the same reasons as the Chagga; European influence and climate change. Some Maasai realized that it was imperative to pick up agriculture in order to survive with the evolving climate. However, even this has presented its challenges in recent years, and they have been forced to stray even farther from their roots. The pastoralists community of the Maasai and the agriculturally focused community of the Chagga offer two different points of view of their environment which make interesting comparisons. These livelihoods are highly impacted by climate change as they rely heavily on the mountain's resources. Each group also lives on different sides of the mountain in different countries. Government, politics and laws impact each community differently. These communities have seen changes within their culture that can be traced back directly or indirectly to deforestation.

Deforestation on Mt. Kilimanjaro is forcing change and stress on millions of people. The rapid decline of trees is delocalizing the water system, melting glaciers, and creating uneven weather patterns. Varying distribution of water throughout

the year has also become the norm in this region, and people struggle with it on a daily basis. As the environment is changing around the world, it is important to recognize the people that are being impacted the most. In this case, it is the people that depend on Mt. Kilimanjaro's water cycle. This paper will analyze how the Chagga and Maasai communities have been forced to change along with their environment due to deforestation around the base of the mountain, and proposes a management plan in terms of combating this detrimental change.

Transitions of the Chagga Community

The Chagga are agriculturalists who rely on the mountain's water cycle to feed their people and the unsteadiness of it has forced them to change their cultural norms. Traditionally farmers, the community members have discovered a variety of occupations that would allow for a more secure lifestyle as they watch the climate change around them. In their region, they have seen mass migration, colonization, increases in population, reduction in consistent water flow, and losses of biodiversity. All of these transformations have had implications on their education, religion, and economy.

Ever since they made their home at the base of Kilimanjaro, roughly three hundred years ago, the Chagga have relied on it to support their gardens and lead them toward a life full of health and wealth. They are known for their intricate irrigation system, which is referred to as "mofongo" in Kichagga. It is made up of water channels "leading from the streams [from the mountain] to their gardens. The furrows ran for miles, went around ledges, under boulders, flowed over wooden troughs and spilled into other furrows" (Moore 2019, 46). A steady flow of water was crucial to survival of the Chagga who relied on their crops for food and money. There is a saying within the community "the closer to the mountain you are, the closer you are to the blessings" (Gumushan 2020). This comes from the fact that the land around the base is very fertile. With this healthy environment comes healthy people, as they had easy access to basic human necessities such as food, water, and shelter. Their gardens consisted of bananas, plantains, beans, sweet potatoes, yams, cassava, maize, sugar cane, and elusine (Moore 2019). When colonizers came in the late 1800's, the Chagga had already obtained metal and pottery, which is not native to their region.

This implies that they were very open and accepting to innovation, especially when it came to farming practices (Moore 2019). They were able to continuously grow their production through technology and, therefore, improve their well-being and economy.

Weather patterns play an essential role in Chagga beliefs. They used the elements of nature to identify the mood of the Gods each day (Gumushan 2020). If it was a clear day, the Gods were happy; if it was cloudy and the mountain was hidden, something was wrong. When there was rain, there was hope "for it leads to a good harvest, equating to earning money and healing the sick" (Gumushan 2020). People would go up the mountain to pray and offer harvest to make amends with the Gods. In the book *The heartbeat of indigenous Africa: a study of the Chagga educational system*, Sambull Mosha explains "stones and mountains, rivers and lakes, clouds and rain, the visible and invisible phenomena, are all alive in their intrinsic meanings and *raison d'être*, and in their active partnership to people and all that is" (Mosha 2000, 12). This insinuates that the environment, people, and Gods are all essential to life and all coincide with one another. The alterations in the natural environment have implications on their beliefs and being considering they are all interconnected.

The Germans were colonizing Tanzania in the late 1800's, early 1900's implementing some of their own beliefs and practices on natives. The Germans were particularly interested in Kilimanjaro. In 1890, Dr. Eugene Stock, the British General Secretary of the Church Missionary Society referred to the mountain as "the Switzerland of Africa...where [they] send [their] missionaries from the coast to recuperate when they get run down with fever" (Maddox 1996, 14). This idealized the mountain and made many people want to experience it. When creating the boundary between German and British land, Queen Victoria chose to give the mountain to her grandson, the German Emperor, as a gift (Swynnerton 1949). Upon independence, this would become the boundary between Kenya and Tanzania. People continued to move closer to the mountain in order to find health and good fortune. Like the Chagga, Europeans also relied on the furrows for water and tapped into rivers above the chiefdoms. This was problematic as they had access to the water before the locals did. It shows the little respect the colonizers had for the native community. Issues would arise with this as water distribution became more problematic.

In the early settlement days, Germans wanted to learn from the surrounding communities. Germans constantly shared their own opinions and practices with the community. The German colonizers influenced the structure of government, religion, and the education system. The idea of "chiefship lost its sacred aspect and became a subordinate entity in the secular colonial administrative machinery" (Moore 2019, 52). There are mixed views on whether this was beneficial, mostly dependent on if you are speaking to a Chagga or German. Regardless, it was a changed structure that the society fell into. The Europeans implemented classroom schooling, which focused on math, science, reading, religion, and writing. This disconnected education from learning morals and Chagga beliefs, which were traditionally taught together. The Europeans were successful in converting many local Tanzanians to their Christian practices. The change in the government, religion, and education system would come to be influential in deforestation throughout the 20th and 21st centuries because it created a disconnect between education and the environment.

In the 1900's the population of the Kilimanjaro region began to increase due to improved sanitation, the introduction of monogamy, and mass migration. In 1912 the population was 28,150; in 1974, an estimated 400,000 people lived in the Kilimanjaro District (Moore 2019). This increase in population began to put stress on the local resources, such as land, soil, water, and food. In Swynnerton's book, written in 1949, he says that the natives were significantly impacted during this population increase. He reasons that "the good land was rapidly occupied while the effects of cultivation and stock on the steep slopes soon reduce[d] fertility through soil erosion" (Swynnerton 1949, 117). Overcropping can degrade the quality of soil, which then leads to a reduction in crops. Not only was the land being overused, but the available water was being spread thinner. Before colonization, "the Chagga avoided settling on the lower slopes because of the lack of water, their vulnerability to attack, particularly from the Maasai, and the presence of malaria and tsetse fly" (Moore 2019, 32). As more people flocked to the mountain, they were forced to move further down the slope. This increase in population would continue to be an issue as the weather patterns around the mountain varied.

The late 1900s showed major signs of environmental change. The drought of 1972-

1973 created problems for mostly everyone in the Kilimanjaro District (Moore 2019). This created a lack of crops, an increase in malnutrition, loss of income to the lower class, and therefore, loss of security. When there were no droughts, there were excessive rains, both "prompted East African communities to change their patterns of cropping,...their selection of seeds and cultigens, [and] their management of vegetation" (Maddox 1996, 13). Luckily, the Chagga are accepting of innovation and were able to adjust. In the 1990's it was becoming more apparent that agriculture had its faults, and may not be a steady flow of income. This led to men traveling to cities to sell coffee and cows (Gumushan 2020). At the time, AIDS and HIV had become more prominent throughout cities, and many of them brought these diseases back to their communities. This had huge implications for the region as it "led to many deaths of parents, which meant more orphans or grandparents taking care of children " (Gumushan 2020). This spread could also be traced back to the Ugandan war, but there is no complete knowledge of its origins. Droughts, floods, and disease left the Chaggas facing many adversities.

Runoff from Mt. Kilimanjaro has a significant impact on the next generation of Chagga's for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, a lack of water can make for insufficient crop yields for the community. This can lead to economic deficiencies, which could prevent a child from continuing their education. Fewer crops also mean less food, and therefore malnutrition throughout the community. A lack of food can prevent children from effectively learning in school, as they are focusing on their hunger rather than the material in class. Food is fuel, and if a person does not receive enough it could cause a decrease in motivation. In Genuine Gumushan's story, one of the reasons he could not continue secondary school was because his "school [had] a critical water shortage" and therefore had to increase tuition (Gumushan 2020). Gumushan was lucky enough to be able to do his education on his own; however, some students are not as fortunate. A steady flow of water from Mt. Kilimanjaro is imperative in educating the Chagga youth.

Wet season and dry season create an unreliable water flow, which creates issues when powering schools and transportation. In the rainy season, there can be excessive flooding in the region which can lead to road closures and then a lull in production and education. I experienced this first hand

during my Independent Study at the base of Mt. Kenya. Although a completely different geographic location, they both experience major influxes between dry and wet seasons. For a few days, there was so much rain that the roads were impassable and those who lived in town were unable to make it into work, creating a lag in our research. On the flip side, in the dry season, the Kilimanjaro region can experience extreme droughts. In this time, primary water sources, such as the Pangani River, would see "not only increased energy demands for irrigation but more significantly adversely impact energy supply, given that [the mountain's water flow is a] significant contributor to Tanzania's hydroelectric generation" (Agrawala 2003, 17). This reduction in power could reduce the energy that is distributed to schools, factories, and other businesses. A lack of energy could negatively impact the education of students, as well as decrease the production of goods. A significant decrease in power could slow the overall economy of the region.

From pre-colonial times to now, Chaggas have shifted from solely agriculturalists to a variety of professions. This change has been caused by not only European influence, but also changes in their environment. In the Kilimanjaro region, "results show that maize yields were lower, a result of higher temperatures and decreased rainfall" (Agrawala 2003, 15). Maize is a significant portion of the crops that are being grown in the region, and for the yields to be decreasing is problematic for the community. In the early 2000s, the crops that were thriving were coffee, cotton, and bananas. The reduction in biodiversity is an issue because it causes everyone to sell the same products. A small farmer would then have difficulties bringing in a sufficient income for their family. On my trip from Arusha, Tanzania to the base of the mountain in December of 2019, we drove through a few large markets, where it seemed like everyone was selling bananas. This meant that bananas were extremely inexpensive, but other products were more expensive. This is how it works in any economy; however, the scale seemed to escalate in the market that we were traveling through. This reduction in biodiversity has created the desire and need to shift from a solely agriculturalist community to one of many professions.

As a group that relies on the land for their nutrients, economy, and culture, they cannot afford to see it continue to tumble toward degradation due to deforestation. They have also seen significant changes from colonization, which has carried

through in their culture to today. The Chagga have since watched as the natural world around them has shifted. Weather patterns have become inconsistent, droughts and floods have become more extreme, and the number of varying species has decreased. The deglaciation taking place on Mt. Kilimanjaro is a result of deforestation, and it is also creating changes throughout the environment that relies on it.

Transitions of the Maasai Community

The Maasai are traditionally pastoralists that have been faced with cultural challenges throughout the 20th and 21st centuries as the climate around them changed due to deforestation. Once colonizers made their way to Kenya, they encouraged Maasai pastoralists to switch to agriculture. As the climate around them became less stable, the feud over resources began between pastoralists and agriculturalists. Land, food, and water were also being sourced out to colonizers and tourists by the 20th century. The Maasai began to experiment in other fields outside of agriculture and pastoralism in order to find better sources of income. They needed to do this because erratic weather patterns were challenging their traditional lifestyle. This has resulted in an increase in education to the community; however, there has also been a significant loss of tradition and culture.

Before any outside influence of British colonizers, Maasai were known for herding cattle, goats, and sheep. This was their primary source of wealth, food, and culture. To the Maasai, "livestock [were] not just a source of protein, but [were] representative of income, savings, social status, and security" (Kombo 2015, 434). With more cattle came more wealth, higher social stature, and therefore greater security. Before the 1900s, Maasai children were educated in skills according to their culture and traditions. By the age of seventeen, boys would learn to be fighting men and join the army until they were twenty four, then marry shortly after. The Maasai are a mostly patriarchal society; however, on rare occasions, men and women would be considered partners. When a woman gave birth to a female, the child was "considered a disappointment, and [was] often termed contemptuously 'pans,' or 'empty, hollow vessels'" (Johnston 1886, 413). "The more boys a wife [bore], the more she [was] esteemed" (Johnston 1886, 413). Men would often have more than one wife, and therefore, attention was constantly being sought after.

Women would be married off by the age of twenty. The soon to be husband would pay the father of the bride cattle in order to marry his daughter. Cows were the key to the Maasai culture, which has since shifted due to climate change and colonization of the British.

Starting just before the turn of the 20th century, the British made their way into Kenya and began altering the Maasai culture. In the 1886 document, Henry Johnston, a British colonizer, refers to the Maasai "warrior [as] the result of the development of Man into a beautiful animal.... The physical perfection of these East African beef-eating, bloodthirsty warriors is of the prize fighter's or the rowing man's ideal, rather than the aesthetes" (Johnston 1886, 408). From this description, it is clear that colonizers did not see the Maasai as people but rather creatures, clearly lacking basic respect for them. Johnston's account gives the point of view of a first-time outsider looking in on the community and is undoubtedly swayed by strong biases. Unfortunately, most historical records from the early 1900s are written by colonizers and contain prejudice. To the Maasai, the British were not afraid to offer opinions and give advice to which they believed to be correct. The most significant impact the Europeans had was encouraging agriculture throughout the community. In Johnston's book, he says that the Maasai "must either turn their spears into spades and their swords into reaping hooks--or starve" (Johnston 1886, 407). This comment was made as the cattle disease raged throughout their community. The Maasai were known to steal cattle from their neighbors, including the Chagga. They were supposedly feared so much that their neighbors began to "subsist meekly on vegetables and fowls" (Johnston 1886, 407). Colonizers insisted on changing the ways of the Maasai, and although not all pastoralism was lost, the culture began to shift.

With the British came tourism, a huge turning point in the East African economy. Since the Maasai "rarely killed or [ate] any of the game around them", southern Kenya quickly became a "hunters paradise" (Johnston 1886, 424). Zebras, giraffe, buffalo, and antelope were of high priority in a hunter's eye. National parks and reserves were established, which gave way to a whole new economy. Paralleling big game hunting was hiking the House of God, Mt. Kilimanjaro. Hans Meyer was the first person to successfully reach the summit in 1889. Since then, "Kilimanjaro has become a popular hiking spot for tourists" (National Geographic Society

2019). This newfound love for hiking the mountain has played a part in the reduction of glaciers and the instability of the water cycle. Although the Maasai can benefit economically from tourism, it has shifted their culture and taken up highly valued resources.

Tourism began to prosper between 1930 and 1960, which paralleled the timing of logging. In *The Impacts of Land use Changes on Livelihood of the Maasai Community in Kajiado County, Kenya*, Kombo speaks to the point that due to "colonial land demarcation and the establishment of national parks and reserves in the 1930s...the expansion of agricultural practices in the region [were encouraged], resulting in competition between herding, cultivation, and tourism" (Kombo 2015, 435). Pastoralism and agriculture require a reliable environment, especially a steady flow of water. Both are taken away by mass logging. More resources needed to be extracted with the increase of people coming to marvel at the mountain. These resources subsequently came from the montane forests. Through an increase in transportation, land overuse, and excessive consumption, tourism takes away the natural resources from the pastoralists and agriculturalists.

After gaining independence in 1963, the new Kenyan government shifted its energy back to creating an environment that supported its people. The Land Act of 1968 was created in "an effort to mitigate conflict between [pastoralists, agriculturalists and the tourism industry], and encouraged fair allocation of natural resources between six group ranches" (Kombo 2015, 435). Although this idea is a good one, it was not adequately followed up on. This absence of leadership led to the tourism industry growing, the country becoming more westernized, and the Maasai's original lifestyle drifting further away. Fortunately, in 1984, Tanzania outlawed logging on Mt. Kilimanjaro; however, this did not stop people from excessively extracting the resources. Unfortunately, there were too many people living in a region that could not economically support them all.

After independence, the Maasai continued to stray further from their roots. They found many niches in the economy, including as security guards, agriculturalists, business, and hiking guides. People were starting to encapsulate the challenges that came along with pastoralism and realized it was not exactly feasible in the world that was changing around them. Of the pastoralists left, the lack of rain is killing their cows because there is a reduction in

available grass for them to feed on (Maasai Men from Amboseli 2019). A survey done in the late 90s found that on average Maasai households "lost 67 heads of cattle to drought-related mortality over 17 years" (Coppock 2004). That study was published almost twenty-years-ago, and since then, the weather pattern has become more sporadic, and water disparities have increased. This lifestyle relies heavily on consistent weather patterns, so that Maasai can live semi-nomadic lifestyles. The regions that the Maasai would travel between have recently seen more frequent massive floods during the rainy season and extensive droughts during the dry season. The lack of water throughout the dry season puts stress on the relationships of pastoralists and agriculturalists. Pastoralists need grazing land, and agriculturalists need farming land; however, fewer areas that suit the needs of both groups has caused tension to arise between them. This is an implication that results from people having to change from herding to cultivation due to the lack of resources around them.

Since 1912, the Maasai have been watching the once white-capped mountain's climate change, resulting in mini glaciers, snowfields, and bare rock. 85% of the ice cover that was there in 1912 has since disappeared (Thompson 2009). In Masailand, "the hydrology of the region is heavily influenced by Mt. Kilimanjaro in terms of both rainfall received and presence of groundwater" (Maddox 1996, 12). As trees continue to be harvested, this creates a smaller catchment for water in the rainforest zone on the mountain, reducing the stability of the water system. A study released in 2016 states that "Maasai pastoralists reported that the frequency of drought and dry spell has been increasing the last 15 years and the rains are becoming more erratic" (Bodadoye 2016, 123). The rain patterns that they used to be able to predict to the exact day are now so discombobulated that they have no idea when or for how long the rain will last. The Kenyan Government has identified ASALs, the area where the Maasai reside, as the most vulnerable areas to climate change (Bodadoye 2016). With these changes in their environment, the Maasai have been forced to change their lifestyles.

In the last two decades, Mt. Kilimanjaro has seen 26% of the remaining glaciers disappear (Thompson 2009). Tourism is still one cause of this, with increased transportation and consumption releasing greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere. This can also be a result of deforestation around the

base of the mountain. N. P. Kombo's paper studies the impacts that the evolving environment has had on the communities in Southern Kenya, focusing on the Maasai. Their findings show that "slightly over half (51%) of the respondents reported seeing a decrease in tree cover in recent years" (Kombo 2015, 437). As spoken about earlier in the paper, this reduction in tree coverage destabilizes the water system. The study also shows that 56% of people living in this region are agriculturalists, a huge transition from the 100% pastoralism in the pre-colonial era. This change is most likely due to "a decline in pastoral resources and the rising profitability of agriculture" (Kombo 2015, 438). Unfortunately, many of the necessary resources used for pastoralism are also used for agriculture. Agriculturalists rely on their harvest as a source of food, "meaning that bad harvests due to climate change and drought have significant impacts on both food security and ability to bring surplus food to the market" (Kombo 2015, 439). A reduction in income means fewer funds that they can use to provide clothing, education, and supplies for their families. The Maasai have seen a decrease in well-being due to the fact the mountain is unable to create a stable environment as it once had.

With the encouragement of outside influence, many Maasai will now go into the regular education system, which requires auxiliary funding. Additional expenses include books, non-traditional clothing, and school tuition. A pastoralist or agriculturalist's income may not be enough to support this lifestyle, causing more people to look elsewhere for funding. Education within the community has been empowering for women to take control of their lives and create a profession for themselves. Education has also allowed for a reduction in the birth rate (Maasai Women from Amboseli 2019). Even with the education of women, the population continues to grow throughout East Africa and basic human necessities are becoming scarcer. Therefore, a reduction in the birth rate is hugely significant for the livelihoods of the Maasai.

This inability to provide for a family can all stem back to the changes that are happening to the mountain. Without a stable water system, pastoralists and agriculturalists cannot count on reliable resources. If they continue to practice these professions, they may be left without food and money. These challenges have pushed many people out of their traditional lifestyle. With the change in

professions and economy, comes a loss of culture and forced deterrence from their societal norms because of the reduction in forest on Kilimanjaro.

Impact Statement and Proposed Management Plan

In preparation for this Impact Statement (IS), a variety of potential management plans for Mt. Kilimanjaro were analyzed. This analysis included the current management plan as well as two new ones. Each method has impacts on the mountain and its surrounding environment. These impacts were examined, and the most beneficial system moving forward is elaborated on. As forests around the world continue to decrease, glaciers are melting at an alarming rate. This includes the glaciers on Mt. Kilimanjaro.

The idea behind this Impact Statement is to establish the most environmentally conscientious plan to help citizens keep their lives intact. These actions are necessary because if nothing is done, the water cycle's unnatural state poses a threat to its surrounding environment. The critical issue is that there is an uneven distribution of water throughout the year. As Mt. Kilimanjaro's glaciers continue to melt, the surrounding environment is altered, which has a negative impact on the communities that rely on it. These concerns will be addressed throughout this Impact Statement.

Purpose and Need:

Deglaciation is often traced back to the increasing global temperature, however, the other main factor which is often disregarded is deforestation. Trees allow for ground water to evapotranspire which results in precipitation. By reducing the global acreage of forests, mankind is forcing the world into a deglaciation period. Mt. Kilimanjaro is at the forefront of this and is continuously seeing environmental degradation in its montane forests and glaciers.

Deforestation creates uneven water distribution through uncertain rain patterns and runoff. Mt. Kilimanjaro's annual weather pattern is broken up between two pronounced wet seasons: a short one from November to December and a longer one from March to May (Agrawala 2003). The saying 'when it rains, it pours' is very vivid in this region. The wet season sees a significant increase in precipitation and causes flooding. This rainwater "flows off quickly on the surface to the rivers, eroding the soil and

increasing the danger of floods on the foothills" (Agrawala 2003, 43). It is not unusual to see inundated roads, fields, or water bodies during the wet season.

Unfortunately, there is not a sufficient system in place to catch excess water during the rainy season, leading to an avoidable water shortage during the dry season (Agrawala 2003, 43). Kenya and Tanzania have struggled with water distribution during these times (Gumushan 2020). The dry season has become more extreme in recent years, increasing the danger associated with it, including starvation, lack of sanitation and dehydration. Climate change has also impacted the timing of when droughts occur, recently making it more variable. Farmers used to be sure when they could plant and harvest their crops. Today, they are not confident as the seasons have begun to deter from the regular timing (Maasai Men from Amboseli 2019). As deforestation continues, these problems will worsen, causing problems for locals.

A decrease in vegetation increases the erosion from the mountain all the way down to the plains. The trees absorb water through their roots then release it back into the atmosphere. This slows the flow and creates a local water cycle. The forests in the moorland, rainforest, and cultivation zones play an "important role in the protection of slopes against erosion by controlling the damaging effects of torrential rainfall and regulating the outflow patterns of watercourses" (Agrawala 2003, 43). If they did not exist, the rain would quickly runoff the mountain, creating large trenches along the way. When there is little to no runoff in the dry season, these trenches will be left without water. It is often roads that are being eroded, creating issues for transportation. Throughout our hike up the mountain, we saw many areas that were eroded due to excessive runoff.

A reduction in forests plays a considerable role in the glacial loss on Mt. Kilimanjaro. Transpiration is a major factor of local microclimate and rainfall (Schlesinger 2014). Transpiration allows for water, which was initially in the ground, to evaporate into the atmosphere and create clouds. Clouds cool off an area by blocking sunlight and, therefore, enable glaciers to stay intact. Deforestation reduces clouds that hover over the glaciers and transitively precipitation. Ice and snow reflect sunlight as they are lighter and are subject to the Albedo Effect. Rock, however, is the opposite and absorbs heat. When rock that is next to a glacier warms up, it increases the temperature of the rocks underneath and around it and melts

professions and economy, comes a loss of culture and forced deterrence from their societal norms because of the reduction in forest on Kilimanjaro.

Alternatives:

There were three management plans that were examined in this research process. Action plan A is to create jobs for planting trees around the base of the mountain. This plan would require funding from the mountain itself, as well as donations from tourists. Action plan B is to build three dams in the cultivation zone of the mountain, and build canals out to the local communities. This plan would require funding from the government as well as land to create the dams. Action plan C is to continue the current management strategy. The objectives of the current management plan are "to protect and maintain the Park's natural resources; to increase interpretation and visitor information; to encourage visitor use and development in a sustainable fashion; to improve park operations; and to strengthen the Park's relationship with local communities" (Unep-Wcmc 2017). The thought is there, however, the execution has been difficult with the lack of necessary funding from the government. The best management plan has been concluded to be Action plan A due to its overall positive impact on local water distribution, the economy, and the visitors' experience on the mountain.

Environmental Consequences:

Action Plan A: *Create jobs for planting trees*

Action plan A is to create jobs that involve planting trees in the cultivation, rainforest, and moorland zones on Mt. Kilimanjaro. This will allow for reforestation while helping the economy from multiple directions. Creating reforestation jobs involves funding from the mountain. The mountain's money is collected from tourists that come to view or hike the mountain. Most likely, the people who are using the mountain for recreation are wealthy enough to make the trek from very far away and could most likely support a slight increase in permits and entry fees. Funding could also be acquired through donations of people who have a connection with the mountain. There are organizations such as the Kilimanjaro Project and the Green Belt Movement that are already doing this. The mission of the Kilimanjaro Project is to plant thousands of trees on Mt. Kilimanjaro and across Tanzania in order to increase water movement throughout the local

ecosystems. The fact that there is already a system in place is great; however, they need to be doing this at a much larger scale and with the mountain's help.

Action plan A would positively impact water distribution throughout the Kilimanjaro region. Reforestation would allow for runoff and groundwater to evapotranspire. This would be beneficial due to the fact that half of the amount of rainwater re-evaporates back to the air by evapotranspiration (Schlesinger 2014). Rather than leaving the Kilimanjaro watershed and minimizing the function of the forest belt as a water filter reservoir, it would stay and create a healthier environment (Schlesinger 2014).

Creating jobs that plant trees would positively impact the economy by increasing incomes and health of the locals. This would be beneficial to the locals because there would be a new source of income. Funding would be coming from outside sources implying an increase in wealth for the community. Once the water cycle regulates, the environment would be better for the agriculturalist and the pastoralist, enabling more crops to be grown and biodiversity. A strong climate would also be a beneficial living area and therefore create healthier livestock.

Commercializing this unique profession would positively benefit the visitor's experience on the mountain. It is not enjoyable to see trees being burned or cut down. In addition, if people saw the effort of those planting the trees, they would be more inclined to donate to the movement. Planting trees would also enable a cooler environment, which would allow for the restoration of glaciers. The fact that there is snow at the top of the mountain is a tourist attraction in itself. Therefore, the loss of glaciers would be a loss in visitors, and a reduction of funds coming into the region.

Impact Statement Conclusion:

Action plan A is the proposed solution, creating jobs that cater to planting trees on a large scale. This will allow the forest to be restored, the water cycle to stabilize, and eventually, the glaciers to be replenished. Although it would be helpful, this does not require excessive government funding, but rather funding from the mountain and donors. As the well-being of the mountain is quickly degrading, it is imperative that this action plan be put in place as soon as possible, especially since it will take a number of years for visible results.

Conclusion

The Impact Statement section of this paper established the most environmentally sustainable plan for the communities surrounding Kilimanjaro. Implementing programs that create jobs for planting trees is necessary because if nothing is done, erosion, deglaciation, and deforestation will continue to harm water distribution, the economy, and the visitors' experience on the mountain. As the cultivation, rainforest, and moorland zones continue to be destroyed, the mountain moves closer to a threshold that once passed will not allow it to move back to its natural state. All of these concerns have been addressed throughout the Impact Statement.

Both the Chagga and the Maasai have had to change their lifestyles to survive in their evolving environment. Although this is happening to communities around the world, they have seen extreme impacts. Most of their changes have had to occur because of the lack of distribution of water. This has had an impact on their gardens, livestock, and health. The action plan mentioned above is necessary to revitalize their climate and enable them to keep living in the Kilimanjaro region.

As climates around the world change, it is imperative to recognize the communities that are seeing the most significant impacts. It is often westernized countries emitting substantial amounts of greenhouse gasses, cutting down forests, and polluting the earth with trash. These issues stem from one that is much greater, the lifestyle of a consumer. A consumer is continuously indulging in the next hottest item on the market in order to keep up with the society around them. Without the change in this mindset, regions around the world will continue to degrade. It is often the regions that the consumer does not see that are being impacted. If I had not been given the opportunity to travel abroad and hike Mt. Kilimanjaro, I would be blind to the effects my actions have had on the mountain. However, now it is my responsibility to share this knowledge so more people can understand how their actions affect the well-being of the planet and the nearly eight billion people that inhabit it.

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Concrete Outdoors: Prisoners' Right to Wilderness

Brenda Rubio '21

Mass incarceration and law enforcement in the United States has perpetrated systematic discrimination, authority abuse, and oppression to Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) at an alarming rate. At the same time, discrimination in the outdoors has prevented minorities to enjoy the benefits of nature exposure. As racial and ethnic disparity in imprisonment and outdoor recreation go hand in hand, this essay aims to explore the importance of prisoners' participation in National Park sites as an approach to dismantle racial and ethnic discrimination in the outdoors. The benefits from exposure to wilderness go from physical and mental health to fostering a sense of belonging to nature and to a community. Moreover, this essay will use the definitions of leisure and recreation to question whether is a right or a privilege to have outdoor experiences in prisons. Finally, the successful and positive results from prisoners' rehabilitation programs that include outdoor recreation prove that exposure to wilderness reduces the trauma of incarceration and discontinue the cycle of discrimination in the outdoors.

Keywords: Outdoor recreation, prisoners' recreation, diversity in National Parks, systemic racism. Black Lives Matter, labor conditions, Foucault, ideology, Althusser, Hall, Appadurai

The inscription over the north entrance of Yellowstone National Park quotes a phrase from the legislation that created it in 1872: "For the Benefit and Enjoyment of the People." The question for nearly 150 years is, which people are benefiting and enjoying it? When Native Americans and African Americans did not have a full right as citizens, they were limited to few experiences in the outdoors. Historically, systematic discrimination has pushed Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) outside the realm of nature and wilderness.

Simultaneously, the biased and unjust criminal justice system in the United States has perpetuated the mass incarceration of minority communities. Once someone is in jail or prison, rights and privileges can be counted with the fingers on their hands. Because of this, it has been long debated to what extent prisoners should have access to outdoor recreation. A related debate by environmentalists and health experts is whether access to nature and outdoor recreation is a human right. As this essay advocates for inclusive access and participation in National Parks, it, therefore, claims that the participation

of prisoners in National Park sites is essential to dismantle existing discrimination in the outdoors and to provide exposure of minority communities to the wilderness. This essay will explore the background of imprisonment in the U.S and discrimination in the National Parks in order to provide evidence of underrepresentation in the outdoors and to contextualize recommendations for the inclusivity of prisoners in the outdoors and their benefits.

Imprisonment in the United States

The history of mass incarceration and law enforcement in the U.S. has been stained with stories of discrimination, authority abuse, and oppression. The crime control-dynamic has become so institutionalized that discourses justifying surveillance, dominance, and injustice have become normalized. In 1998, the U.S. had one of the highest proportions of its population incarcerated with more than 1.7 million people either in prison or jail. Approximately, one in every 117 male adults was in prison (HRW, 2020). State agencies and

private companies have had weak contracts, insufficient monitoring, and tolerated prolonged substandard conditions for those incarcerated. Furthermore, collateral results of incarceration and a discriminatory justice system include restricted employment prospects, housing instability, family disruption, stigma, and disenfranchisement. These facts consequently, make social reintroduction and rehabilitation harder, if not impossible to achieve.

With a criminal justice system entrenched in systematic racism, non-white, non-affluent, and queer people have continued to be heavily surveilled and targeted by police. The chronicle of racial, ethnic, and gender discrimination in the U.S. is long and seemingly unending. Key for the scope of this paper is the social distribution of imprisonment and collateral consequences to those social groups. Research by the Sentencing Project states that African Americans are incarcerated in state prisons at a rate that is 5.1 times the imprisonment of whites, and in five states the disparity is even 10 to 1. Moreover, Latinos are imprisoned at a rate of 1.4 times the rate of whites (Nellis, 2016). Though the Bureau of Justice Statistics' reliability of data on ethnicity is not as strong as it is for race estimates, the Hispanic population in state prisons can be as high as 61% in New Mexico and 42% in Arizona and California (Nellis, 2016).

The persistent racial and ethnic disparities in state prisons are fixed in the structural disadvantages that impact BIPOC long before they encounter the criminal justice system. Existing positive developments in justice reform efforts do not stress enough attention to deep-rooted disparities that prevail inside and outside prisons. Unsustainable reforms can't dismantle the current system of mass incarceration, thus leading to unsuccessful reintegration of ex-convicts into society.

Discrimination in National Parks

Chronic racial and ethnic disparity in imprisonment and outdoor recreation go hand in hand. African American communities have continued to be surveilled and targeted by police even in "peaceful" and "calm" sites such as those easily found in nature. It has been well documented that racial and ethnic minority groups tend to visit national parks at a lower rate than whites. Various studies that explored potential reasons for under-representation in national parks determined three main hypotheses: (1) marginality,

which focuses on economic-related reasons for non-participation; (2) ethnicity, which purportedly focuses on cultural factors; (3) discrimination, which centers on the role of hostile behaviors on the part of whites and/or institutional discrimination (Stanfield, Manning, Budruk, & Floyd, 2005).

Altogether, the difference in per capita income, cultural norms, value systems, social practices, and the fear of discrimination prevails generationally. If any minority group continues to be substantially underrepresented at national parks, it will perpetuate an issue of social and environmental injustice that threatens the long-term support for the National Park System (NPS). In order to connect the disproportionate mass incarceration with the underrepresentation of communities to National Park sites and the general outdoors, the ways in which prisoners lack recreation and exposure to the outdoors will now be clarified.

Right or privilege?

Many prison professionals have found that a lack of recreation was partly to blame for riots, as inmates had no way to blow off steam and had too much idle time to plan them (Alexander, 2017). By the end of the last century, many prisons started offering a range of opportunities, but because prisoners' rights and privileges are cautiously defined by the language of the law, it is important to first define what constitutes recreation and leisure. Leisure is generally thought of as spare or free time during which one can do whatever they wish. Recreation can be defined as "the use of time for amusement, entertainment, participation, or creativity, and frequently takes place in one's leisure time" (Alexander, 2017). Most of the time, recreation activities bring joy and fun and are not partaken in out of necessity or for material rewards. An environmentalist would agree that outdoor recreation brings joy, pleasure, and both physical and mental benefits.

Currently, all correctional institutions provide access to recreational activities, which are usually called Leisure Times Services (LTS) and which take on many forms across the U.S. based on the prison population. Moreover, the National Correctional Recreation Association (NCRA) is committed to promoting professional programs and services that assist inmates in eliminating barriers to leisure, developing leisure skills and attitudes, and optimizing

leisure participation (Polson, 2002). However, the outdoor recreation experience for prisoners is not the same “outdoor” recreation experienced by the ordinary population. Exercise activities in an open playground could be considered outdoor recreation, even though they ultimately take place within the prison facilities. This is not the mainstream notion of going for a hike at a National Park or even visiting an urban park. If prisoners have the right and privilege to play basketball outside, why can't they be part of a program where they visit a natural landscape?

Exercise, through sports or tramping, reduces idle time and improves the quality of life by adding health benefits (DeLand, 2020). On the other hand, idle time can cause prisoners to suffer serious harm, a violation of their 8th Amendment rights, which protects convicted prisoners from the condition of confinement that amounts to cruel and unusual punishment. The amount of hours of exercise and outdoor recreation per week for prisoners has been debated for decades and even brought to court. For example, the Supreme Court in *Wilson* commented that outdoor exercise was not required when prisoners otherwise had access to a day room 18 hours per day (DeLand, 2020). Moreover, recreation space is often a vague calculation as there is no such thing as a “square-feet-per-prisoner” minimum. Nonetheless, one factor that will always remain unambiguous is that there should be space enough for exercise that provide adequate muscle and cardiovascular stimulation. Evidently, a walk in the woods provides such stimulation, and under this logic, recreation in natural spaces can fit into prisoners' rights. Still, exercise as a basic necessity of life is constitutionally required while recreation is unlikely to be so.

Limiting opportunities in the natural world adds to the trauma of incarceration and perpetuates the cycle of discrimination in the outdoors. Minority groups, which before being incarcerated did not visit National Parks often, might be less likely to do so after their reintegration release, because they still face the barriers already noted: marginality, ethnicity, and discrimination. On the other hand, inmates might be even more motivated in experiencing outdoor recreation activities and exploration of nature after their confinement. Whatever reasons ex-convicts have to get closer to nature, it should be facilitated directly by the National Park Service in conjunction with rehabilitation and reintegration programs.

Path towards inclusion

There is well-sustained data on discrimination in the Criminal Justice System and in the National Park Service; nevertheless, little research and initiative address the right of prisoners to benefit from outdoor recreation in natural landscapes. The best way to address a problem is to learn from effective solutions; the U.S. can learn from the success of the Outdoor Adventure Challenge programme (OACP) in New Zealand prisons (Mossman, 1998). The program consisted of two weeks of fitness training, skill development, and challenging experiences, followed by a five-day wilderness expedition. The results are overpowering and should motivate American policymakers to adopt similar methodologies.

Results show that only 29.9% of the OACP females were reconvicted while 61.2% of the OACP males were. This shows that on average the OACP participants had lower indicators of recidivism and reincarcerations with less serious offenses compared to those who did not participate. Moreover, the program appeared to foster an improved attitude towards the correctional system, and that several inmates preferred the experiential nature of OACP, compared to other traditional classroom-based programs. At the same time, this program succeeds to decrease race prejudices, as several inmates experienced improvements in relationships with inmates of other races. Measurement of social cohesion among inmates generally showed great gains as well. Moreover, participants clearly exhibited enhanced pro-social attitudes that reintroduction and rehabilitation programs in the U.S. lack. Improved self-control, interpersonal skills, and less racism are behaviors that both prisoners and society as a whole need to improve. As participants in this study expressed their desire to go back out into the wilderness areas on release, it demonstrates improvements in both short and long terms.

This paper concludes that racial profiling and systematic discrimination continue to imprison minorities at a higher rate than white and affluent citizens. Simultaneously, historic racial segregation and gender discrimination are preventing these groups to enjoy the uncountable benefits of outdoor recreation. The combination of these two discrimination conditions adds extra barriers to ex-convicts from minority groups to find solitude, peace, and well-being from nature.

Lastly, recommendations from the OACP and other relevant literature can provide holistic and interdisciplinary approaches to solutions that will bring beneficial results to prisoners. Primarily, the NPS needs to address underrepresentation in their parks as it violates the fundamental character of those sites (Krymkowski, Manning, & Valliere, 2014). Special efforts are needed to ensure equal access, such as including the provision of public transportation and development and marketing of outdoor recreation programs to minority groups and prisoners. Additionally, outdoor recreation opportunities should be designed in alignment with the values of minority groups, including types of facilities and programming, the establishment of parks honoring diverse cultures, and reinterpretation of existing parks in ways that are more culturally inclusive (Krymkowski, Manning, & Valliere, 2014). This should be paired with a similar approach to OACP, where prisoners from minority groups or diverse backgrounds feel integrated and familiarized with those experiences.

If park and outdoor recreation managers do not re-examine their agencies and programs for evidence of interpersonal and institutional discrimination, hiring practices and pricing policies will never succeed to address the problem of underrepresentation in national parks. The costs of successful programs as OACP must be included in the budget of the NPS along with rehabilitation and reintegration programs as part of a restorative justice principle. Prisoners' access to nature should not be a matter of right or privilege, it is rather the protection and promotion of a fundamental human right.

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Forbidden Crowns

Kalila Calame '20

Forbidden Crowns' purpose is to show that Black students shouldn't hide their uniqueness and succumb to the pressure of white spaces. This photo story resulted from conversing with a Black freshman at St. Lawrence University, who tried to make herself invisible and erase her Blackness on campus, and subsequent conversations with other Black students. Black students, compared to their white peers, disproportionately feel the need to assimilate or hide within themselves, in order to navigate these white spaces. This project was meant to show that their Blackness should be celebrated. I was inspired by three Black artists/photographers: Kwaku Alston, Dana Scruggs, and Mikael Owunna. The use of a body oil and gold glitter mixture represented the inner light and uniqueness of four St. Lawrence University students from various class years who were all able to establish a connection to the meaning behind the concept.

Keywords: Kwaku Alston, Dana Scruggs, Mikael Owunna, Diversity, Blackness
Body

The aim of my photo story, Forbidden Crowns, is to show that Black students shouldn't hide their uniqueness and succumb to the pressure of white spaces. This overall idea was the result of conversing with a Black freshman at St. Lawrence University, who tried to make herself invisible on campus. She expressed that she felt the need to assimilate, to try not to be too "ghetto" or too loud, and she frequently described this as "hiding." I then talked to some other Black students on campus, and they felt similarly. This is the outcome of going to a PWI, a predominantly white institution. At these institutions, students of color, specifically Black students, are accepted at a disproportionate rate compared to their white peers. As a result, these students feel the need to assimilate or hide within themselves, in order to navigate through these white spaces. I too can also relate to their experiences. Personally, I have had a similar experience in all-white spaces. Like many other students, I have always tried to make myself smaller and fit into an "acceptable" box to please the masses. Some may also describe this as internal and external code-switching. This photo story was meant to express how Black students feel in these spaces and show the light they appear to have lost.

Through the use of a body oil and gold

glitter mixture, I wanted to represent their light, their uniqueness, still being inside of them. I choose to specifically use gold because it would be a bright stark contrast against the various brown skin tones. I used single spotlight lighting with a black backdrop to show their natural shadows and to have the gold be the center of attention. Through this combination, I was able to make the gold mixture look as though it is encrusted in the skin, almost as though it is actually coming from within them.

For this piece, I took inspiration from three Black artists/photographers. The first artist I was influenced by was Kwaku Alston. His photography has been featured in The New York Times Magazine, Rolling Stone, etc., and various movie posters like Us (Alston). I specifically took notice of his Black Panther (2018) and The Lion King (2019) cast photos. The actors seemed to only be lit from the front yet enveloped in the complete background, giving the photo an intimate feel, which I wanted my photos to achieve.

The second artist I was influenced by was Dana Scruggs. She was the very first Black female photographer to shoot for ESPN's The Body Issue in its 10-year history and the first Black photographer to shoot the cover of Rolling Stone Magazine in its 50-

year history (Scruggs). Throughout her photography, she always seems to illuminate her Black model's natural highlights, even in the darkest of settings. I wanted to achieve a similar look in my photos and accentuate the model's prominent features.

The last artist I was influenced by was Mikael Owunna. His work has been featured in various publications like The New York Times, CNN, NPR, VICE, and The Guardian (Owunna). I was specifically inspired by his photo project, Infinite Essence. He described this project as "a quest to recast the black body as the cosmos and eternal," through the use of fluorescent paint and ultraviolet light (Owunna). I wanted to achieve a similar light reflection off the gold mixture used. This piece includes St. Lawrence University students from various class years: Titania McFarlane '23, Kaleb Davis '22, Sid Spencer '22, Nadirah Croft '21, and Evelin Gilbert '21. Throughout the actual shoot, they shared small personal anecdotes. They discussed various topics about their experience with self-identity, stereotypes, and embracing their Blackness in white spaces. They were all able to establish a connection to the meaning behind the concept. Everywhere you go, especially in our country, Blackness has always been seen in a negative light. It is either too dark, too distracting, too threatening, or too powerful. I want this story to convey that it is in fact beautiful and never deserves to be hidden. I hope in the future to continue this series and reimagine the negative connotations connected to Blackness.

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Fat & Feeling Fine: Pathologizing Fat and Disability as Means of Shame

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In this essay, I connect the ties between disabilities studies and fat studies as a means to better understand fatphobia's inception and perpetuation. Using my own experiences to navigate such connections, I argue that through compulsory able-bodiedness, the medicalization of both bodies with disability or fat and bodies deemed as unwanted set as public spectacle, the negative culture surrounding fat actively disables me in societal and discursive ways. To construct my body with fat as deviancy, I navigate how I wish to be seen as able-bodied around campus, a yearning that allows me to better understand how this deviancy of the norm is stigmatized. Once fat is seen as deviancy and "other," I look to how this imbeds itself in the virulent fatphobia within medical spaces, and how doctors are always seeking to fix bodies with fat, often in ableist and capitalistic ways. Finally, these innerworkings of society saturated with ableism and fatphobia culminate in a public culture that shame and ostracize deviant bodies. In being able to follow this process, I suggest ways to put an end to ableism/fatphobia, whether that be programs like HAES, medical textbook changes, or an acceptance of ugly.

Keywords:

Ableism: the discrimination against people with disabilities; with it, comes a long-standing belief that the able-body (the body without disability) is the socially acceptable one.

Body Mass Index (BMI): a measurement used to categorize someone as underweight/normal weight/overweight. It is found using height and weight, and while can be helpful in some situations in detecting the possibility of future health problems, it is not used to measure fatness or health.

Bodies as Spectacle: bodies that differ from the societal boundaries of acceptance (outside of the able and thin body, etc.) are subjected to become sites of unwanted attention. This unwanted attention can be used to shame, look down upon, or pity bodies with disability or fat, which can the contestation of space taken up by those bodies (the idea those who are deemed "other" should not be taking up the space that they do). It can be a very public form of ableism and fatphobia.

Fatphobia: discrimination against people with fat/continuation of negative stereotypes surrounding

people with fat

Medicalization: the way people are treated under medical situations— in disabilities studies, this takes form in the medical world feeling the need to cure bodies with traits that are deemed unwanted or undesirable when such intrusion may not be needed and could cause more harm. These actions and philosophies often perpetuate both ableist and fatphobic ideas.

I. Introduction: My Body as Experience

Being someone with fat, I fall outside of the standard "norm" within (white-centered) beauty standards that expect me to be thin and dainty as a woman, and when my body could not perform within the expectations of a thin body, it became another cause for shame and spectacle. I've begun to find that a lack of accessibility and a pervasive fatphobia within society and the medical world leaves me in a place where I knew I wasn't necessarily able-bodied (that I was in fact a deviancy of a normal body) but was never sure if I could consider myself disabled. However, I argue that there is much

overlap between feminist disability studies and fat studies, and that looking at the construction and construction of disability and ableism can be beneficial in looking at fat studies and my own body that is also deemed deviant and unwanted.

I had never thought of fatness as disability mainly because of the societal notion that me and my body were the ones at fault for it. Between beauty standards and doctor appointments, I've found that my fatness is actively used to disable me through a compulsory ableism that seeks to both ostracize and shame people with fat. I use "people with fat" for two reasons: to make it person-fronted, and something about "person who is fat" doesn't sit well with me, because a person is not their fat and fat is not a person. People are more than their fat, and I fear that "person who is fat" doesn't allow for that space. Then again, perhaps my decision is just a personal preference.

II. Ties Between Fat and Disability

My alarm was always set for 7:15am. I would head to Richardson, my campus's English building. At my own pace. The hallways would still be dark, and most professors were still not yet in the building. I would stare at the concrete steps that loomed over me. I learned quickly that these same steps would cause me throw myself atop a chair in the classroom and try to catch my breath with labored inhalations hoping that the person next to me wouldn't hear. It often felt shameful to be out of breath upon arrival. That my greetings always felt too fleeting and less genuine when I tried to say them between inhaled. To avoid this, I would get up extra early to be the first in the room, so that no one would be there to look at and judge me as I caught my breath. So I put on this performance, went out of my way to prevent coming into a classroom out of breath. It didn't change my ability to climb the stairs, nor the way the chair creaked under me when I first sat down. It just made it a more lonely experience – climbing the stairs and sitting down with no one around. In some ways, perhaps it compounded my shame. But shame feels unavoidable when your body is always gawked at or "othered."

The most glaring part about this recollection is the nature of my actions—they were performative of an accepted norm. I had submit my body to *compulsory*

able-bodiedness, a set of cultural beliefs theorized by queer/disability studies scholar Robert McRuer that sets the able body as normal and thus sets any bodies that fall outside of it as problematic and unwanted (372). The reason I went to my classroom so early was so that no one would know I fell outside of that compulsory able-bodiedness. Just as I felt about myself, people with fat are not meant to be seen, a consequence of the way that "the fat body is construed as transgressing the hegemonic notion of the body that acts as a set of rules of what a body should look like and what a body can do," which in turn causes "the life of a fat body [to] always [be] examined...based on what a "normal," "healthy" body is" (Bahra 194). This becomes a point of intersection between fat studies and disability studies: stigmatization and ostracization from privilege based on deviancy from a normal and healthy body.

When using a disability studies approach to fatness, both people with disabilities and people who are fat are "visibly marked as unable or unwilling to adapt [to an able-bodied world]," becoming a "differentness that [society] neither anticipated nor desired," (Huff 181). My need to catch my breath within the classroom was not desired, as it is representative of my own inability to adapt to the stairs. People are expected to be "white and thin [and able-bodied]...to gain access to the privilege of being human," making anyone who doesn't fit these categories become painted as inferior within society (Bahra 193). If I wanted to have the privilege to be considered similar to the rest of my peers, I would have to perform as thin and able-bodied. By applying a feminist disability studies lens to fat studies and my own experiences as a woman with fat, it "presses [my] critique further by challenging the premise that unusual embodiment is inherently inferior" meaning I will be better able to understand the construction and discourse of my fat through using disability studies' understanding of bodies and how the able body/thin body is constructed as normal.

Fatphobia and ableism are very similar in their need to stigmatize bodies on arbitrary measures of health and beauty. For this, I am connecting the able body as similar to the thin body— they are both the ideal within beauty standards and are deemed culturally acceptable. It is important to note that both forms of oppression often intersect with other identities (as aforementioned, whiteness is seen as the ideal in the same way the able body is ideal), in

that “ableism cuts across all our movements because ableism dictates how bodies should function against a mythical norm— an able-bodied standard of white supremacy, heterosexism, sexism, economic exploitation” (Mingus 11). While fatphobia affects me, the way that it affects BIPOC people and people with other moral/religious beliefs or different socioeconomic status varies due to the differing ways intersecting forms of racism, classism, and more, further implicate the way their bodies are viewed.

Through the expectation of bodies to behave as able-bodied and able bodies being expected to be thin, compulsory able-bodiedness can affect both people with disabilities and people with fat. With this connection made to both studies, I will move towards more ways that my fat disables and stigmatizes me: fatphobia in the medical world and the rhetoric surrounding fat.

III. The Medicalization of Fat

My doctor appointments often looked like this:

1. *Filling out a questionnaire. How many vegetables do you eat? How many desserts do you have a day? How often do you exercise?*

2. *Removing my shoes to be weighed. The scale was in the middle of the hallway. There were at least eight points of intersection, where patients in other rooms or nurses roaming around could look at me. I would look up to the ceiling to avoid seeing the number on the scale until the nurse told me it was time to step off.*

3. *A review of other vitals. I was deemed healthy, “with the exception of my weight, of course,” as a doctor would put it upon seeing my weight and BMI. I would nervously kick my legs while sitting upon the examination table.*

4. *“Do you want help with your weight?” Yes.*

5. *Bloodwork. “Help” became routine advice to “exercise and eat healthy.” I asked for help so often because I did think it was my fault. But surely the bloodwork did not lie, and that to some extent, it was me at fault. I had to diet and exercise, this was in my hands even though the doctor had offered to help and now had nothing to give.*

6. *I would go home with the sheet of paper that held the number of my weight on it. I would stress eat a snack and feel immediately guilty.*

People with fat become sites of spectacle. I often felt this at the doctor’s office, between the scale being so public and the astonishment that the rest of my body/lifestyle was healthy despite my weight. It made me feel like my body was shameful. Compulsory able-bodiedness is justified and perpetuated through this medical field, where the doctors we’re supposed to trust bring fatphobia into check-ups. The belief is that fat is directly correlated with disease and illness, though “body size may be correlated with some illnesses, it has never been shown to cause them,” (Mollow 110). The approach doctors often take are shame-invested, putting much of the blame on us, the patient, for being fat, scaring us into believing that every person with fat is guaranteed to gain illnesses or future conditions, and making us feel inferior compared to thin and able-bodied people.

Fatphobia begins in medical education. While “the research on ‘obesity’ and medical practice are tainted by social prejudice against fat people” it is medical textbooks that can confirm or create the prejudices before practice actually begins (Burgard 50). With textbook diagrams often being white and young males, this creates problems for people with different skin tones with failure to diagnose and aid them with skin conditions or health problems, and the same happens to people who are fat (Eveleth 17). It is not uncommon in diagrams to see that “male bodies are almost always muscular, while female bodies are drawn thin,” and if these textbooks are to contain the ideal patient, this further asserts the thin and able body as the socially accepted one (Eveleth 15). These same struggles come with disability, in which many people with disabilities face ableism in medical spaces as well as becoming the site of spectacles because of their assumed deviancy from the norm.

When this is the education that professionals get, many will assume that when a body does not look like the slim body in their textbooks (especially when they’re female), then that person is not healthy. It has come to the point where “the medical industrial complex has imbued fatness with negativity,” making many doctors wholly unable to separate healthiness with thinness (Bahra 196). The question of cure arises, where doctors rely on placing shame and conflating that shame with blame as means

to push for changing people with fat. Just as I was asked if I wanted help in losing weight (as if the only option for me was to change my body so that I'd fall into the ideal thin body), the only advice after sometimes painful blood testing was very much individual-centered—my body was the problem that I should want to change, and I had to change it alone.

The shaming and individual-centered approach in trying to fix fatness promotes “an abundance of popular theories [that] claim or imply that anyone can control her/his health with the right diet, exercise, attitudes, relationships, or religious beliefs; it follows from [the idea that] those who are unhealthy are doing something wrong,” which are absurd expectations that make us the problem, not the way people treat us (Wendell 29). It is a similar approach to that of addiction, which could be seen as a disability and is a shame-centered experience where the person with an addiction is expected to fix themselves while fighting social stigma that paint them inferior and undesired. In addition, intertwined with capitalism, many doctors continue to fix people with fat through dietary measures (similar to the way people with disabilities can be proposed to pursue the medical model of disability to cure themselves which can be costly) where “the medical profession’s belief in weight loss as a remedy for almost every imaginable illness or disability is in part the result of the financial power of the diet industry” (Mollow 109). Between constant advertising that portrays the thin body as desirable and the medicalization that tells you the same thing, part of the stigma surrounding us is purely economic.

My experience at the doctors are moments of anxiety and shame, becoming the most worrying consequence of fatphobia as it “leads to people not seeking medical attention when they need it” (Eveleth 15). By shaming patients and making us feel as though our health is predominately measured on their weight (which may be taken in a public space like me), many of us believe that they must change their own ways as opposed to ridding society of their fatphobic tendencies. Ableism and fatphobia are deeply rooted within the medical spheres, stigmatizing any form of bodily deviancy.

IV. Discursive Fatphobia and Profiting off It

The worst day of gym was weigh-in, having to find our own BMI and write them in ink on our attendance cards. Sometimes, they had us pair up and write down each other’s weights, as if me doing it independently would subtract a couple pounds and magically put me into a healthy BMI. If they figured that, they would already presume I was not meant to be in that grouping based on my looks alone. In these instances, I would make excuses to do it myself. I would usually not wait the entire time for the scale to give me a final number because I believed someone around me was trying to make out the numbers. I would step off the scale and secretly write the number down.

When I looked at the BMI chart it labeled me “morbidly obese.” But here’s the thing: I didn’t feel morbid. I still don’t feel morbid, despite being morbidly obese. I don’t feel close to death. I would soon pummel my classmates in dodgeball after all of us weighed in, I would go to my next class and live everyday just as my friends had. Why was I expected to be associated with death?

Along with the stigmatization of people with fat from the medical sphere, such beliefs can create influential rhetoric that justify and promote fatphobia and ableism outside of the doctor’s office. The ways that fat is rendered as a disabling and deathly trait continues to assert people with fat as inferior, undesired, and unhealthy. Through this day-to-day fatphobia that is intertwined with death, the spaces that we take up become contested and commodified; the thought becomes that we should not inhabit certain public spaces (such as airplane seats), or that because we take up space that’s deemed unwanted, companies can profit off of it. The morbidity conflated with our bodies is similar to people with disabilities in that they shouldn’t take up their space, and their futures are always painted as bleak and inferior (Kafer 2).

With my BMI labelling me as morbidly obese, “it is often misconstrued that my obesity will cause health problems, or even be the sole reason for my death.” This is very fatphobic, as “studies show that the correlation between health problems and BMI are typically at most $r=.3$ ” a statistical notion that cites a very weak correlation between health problems and

BMI measures (Burgard 44). It is important to note that in any statistic study dealing with correlation, these conclusions show just that— correlation, *not causation*. Therefore, it is a very socially constructed notion that all of us with high BMIs are doomed to life of sickness, disability (which is seen as one of the worst tragedies for a person due to ableist culture), and death. These ideas are created and kept in place rhetorically and stigmatized medically as means to set the thin and able body as the healthy and ideal norm, BMI arguably being a “pedagogical tool that [brings] forward the normative human template and its genres” (Bahra 196). Even people who are thin are susceptible to the faultiness of the BMI scale, where “the needs of lower-BMI people are often overlooked as well” meaning that no one except the socially acceptable body that is not too thin or not too fat is accepted, which is an unattainable ideal and can be a very unhealthy goal for people to pursue (Burgard 51). BMI then becomes a source of prejudice, “deeming any particular BMI pathological... a political rather than a scientific act,” (Burgard 43).

The way my gym class made us weigh in a public area put my body in a place where it became a spectacle and contested as it is unwanted. The space we take up in seats can be contested the most— airplane seats, theater seats, etc. These are spaces where “through stigmatizing rhetoric, the contested site becomes not the seat itself, but rather the body potentially occupying that seat” where people lack, similar to the social model of disability, the understanding that maybe seats should be made bigger to be accessible for anyone, instead of shaming and blaming the person in the seat (Huff 183). Much like disabilities studies, the body becomes the thing needing cure, not the social prejudices.

Yet again in the economic realm, discursively rendering people with fat as problem bodies justifies commodification. On one hand, we are economically nonvaluable, similar to people with disabilities and capitalism where “the most valued and rewarded workers and general members of society are those who create the greatest output” (Giles 5). If I am labelled as morbidly obese and my body is connoted with disease and death, I am less likely to be viewed as capitalistically viable, which can result in workplace prejudice. On another hand, we can be seen as valuable sources to expunge money from -- companies such as airlines using our bodies as means to charge more for our seating despite not upgrading, a form of stigma

that “can be exploited to shame minorities into compliance with dominant ideologies” (Huff 182).

The measures we use to identify health and who falls within the category of “healthy” are inherently biased in their ability to ostracize people who do not fit within the middle end of such a spectrum, which many do not. These practices justify fatphobia that extends into public and economic spaces. Discursively rendering my body as “morbidly obese” allows others to continue being fatphobic because my fat could be associated with disability such as illness that would further me from expected beauty standards or norms.

V. Conclusion: My Body, Not Yours

The socially deemed “deviancy” of my body extends to many spheres within my life. Fatphobia itself as well as ableism are often not understood or recognized as forms of oppression at all and are instead viewed as justifications to try to shame and advise other bodies under the façade of “health,” which is very subjective upon body type itself. Disabilities studies offer an extremely valuable body of knowledge and theories on the basis of bodies that fall outside of compulsory able-bodiedness. It comes as no surprise that fat studies, which looks at fatphobia and the construction of people with fat as another form of deviant bodies, is so similar and fits so well within the discourse of disability studies.

As my personal experiences illustrate, there needs to be a breakdown in the belief that fat is a direct representation of poor health, and we need to extend the social model of disability into fat studies to help people better understand that society must change, not the people it stigmatizes. Such a way to do this is through movements, such as the Health At Every Size (HAES) campaign, which pushes for a better understanding from both patients and medical professionals that the subjectivity of health means that healthy can look different on each person. The group “asserts that the medical pathologizing of the majority of the U.S. population harms people’s health by stigmatizing them and causing discrimination in insurance, jobs, social relationships, and medical care,” allowing HAES to influence many paths and spheres that are steeped in fatphobia (Burgard 45). They also seek to promote health not on the basis of numerical weight, but on individual feeling and self-acceptance, which would have the potential to create a portrayal of “healthy” as a wide range of body shapes

and sizes (Burgard 42). By deconstructing health as definable by weight, we can promote happier lifestyles that are not steeped in shame and driven for cure.

Another part of resisting dominant ideologies is acknowledging the internal fatphobia that I have. By “affirming my body,” I can “move away from being understood as a deficit in society,” and the shame that I find myself feeling can instead be filtered and used towards advocacy and activism using my own understanding that the construction of my body as deviancy is a form of oppression (Bahra 198). When I find myself upset with not fitting in beauty standards, I can remind myself of disability justice writer Mia Mingus’ push to embrace the ugly. I can try to unlearn our societal understanding of beauty so that I don’t “run” from ugliness, which would “stigmatize it” and “give more power [to] beauty” (26). By challenging my own internal fatphobia and ableism that pushes me to fulfill compulsory able-bodiedness, I can instead embrace my body for what it is and help others destabilize and unlearn their own fatphobia.

Challenging fatphobia is a daunting action, especially when it is so ingrained and unacknowledged in society. It has taken me a long time to better understand my own experience as someone with fat navigating a fatphobic world, but with more education and better understanding of how different spheres such as medical, social, and economic intersect to construct this oppression, I am able to take learnings from many different areas of study such as disability and apply them to those experiences. Disability studies has allowed me to open my eyes to the way that deviant bodies are othered and deemed undesired and shameful, which is how I was often made to feel about my own body. By applying such a lens to fat studies, I better recognize how the construction of health and normalcy create fatphobia, and how to approach deconstructing them.

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An Overdue Reckoning: Reparations for Slavery in the United States

Ayla Schnier '20

ABSTRACT: This essay argues that the US government owes reparations for slavery to African Americans, and therefore it should begin this process by passing the proposed H.R. 40 bill that would authorize the creation of a committee to study reparations. It first defines reparations as a form of restorative justice, lists the forms it can take, and situates reparations within international standards and precedents. Next, it contends that since the abolition of slavery in the US in 1865, the government has not taken sufficient steps to remedy the economic, health, and societal harms caused by the institution, rendering reparations necessary. The essay then analyzes the lack of willingness of the US government and public to consider reparations, and it suggests that a committee authorized by H.R. 40 could help create the shared, truth-based, historical narrative needed to generate broader support for reparations. Finally, it states that the reparations proposals developed by the committee should keep in mind differences of opinion between groups of African Americans and should clearly convey that reparations cannot fully erase the damages of slavery.

KEYWORDS: restorative justice, H.R. 40, national reconciliation, racial injustices, African Americans, Jim Crow

The institution of slavery in the United States, and subsequent efforts to uphold systems of white supremacy, have inflicted unquantifiable economic, social, and health-related harms upon African Americans. Although slavery and segregation are now illegal in the US, there are still vast racial inequalities between Black and white Americans, and many Black people believe that they should be given reparations for slavery. The US government should provide some form of reparations for slavery in accordance with international standards and the demands of Black communities, as the lack of prompt reparations after the formal abolition of slavery set the stage for racial inequalities which persist to this day. However, more research and dialogue are needed in order to establish what form(s) reparations should take, how to foster reconciliation between racial groups, and what limitations reparations may have. Therefore, as a starting point, Congress should pass H.R. 40, a bill that would establish a commission to study and develop reparation proposals for African Americans.

What Are Reparations?

Reparations are a form of restorative justice that seek to repair injustices done to victims, mend relationships between community members, and correct future behavior. The most traditional notion of reparations is cash payments to victims, but reparations may also provide services to victims to compensate for specific damages. They can also take commemorative forms that foster dialogue and memory, and they can consist of policies designed to prevent similar incidents from happening again [1]. The UN's 2005 guidelines on reparations state that reparations should be "prompt" and provide victims with "full and effective reparation" that is "proportional to the gravity of the violation" to accomplish all purposes mentioned above [2].

By granting reparations for slavery, the US would adhere to international human rights law, United Nations guidelines, and global precedents. Under Article IV of the UN's 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, slavery is a human rights abuse, and Tendayi Achiume, United Nations Special Rapporteur on racism, stated in 2019 that countries should provide reparations for colonialism and slavery [3]. Of course, the time for "prompt" reparations for slavery in the US has long passed, and the concept of international human rights law was not formalized until nearly a century after the abolition of slavery in the US. But late reparations are better than no reparations, and there are precedents of countries offering reparations for acts that were not considered international human rights violations when

they were committed. For example, Germany made payments to individual Holocaust victims and Israel, even though genocide was not strictly illegal until the Nuremberg trials in 1946 [4].

US Slavery's Legacy Warrants Reparations

During the 1860s, the decade in which slavery was abolished, slaveowners received monetary compensation while reparations for formerly enslaved people were soon taken away. In 1862, President Abraham Lincoln gave Union slaveholders \$300 (worth thousands of dollars today) for each enslaved person freed because he feared that slaveowners would not support abolition otherwise [5]. Three years later, reparation proposals for freed people were developed by twenty Black leaders in Savannah, Georgia. In particular, Garrison Frazier, a Baptist minister who was enslaved for sixty years before buying his freedom in 1857, stated that the best way for Black people to gain true freedom, meaning to finally “reap the fruits of their labor,” was to own land separate from white society. Union General William T. Sherman used the suggestions of these leaders to create Special Field Order No. 15, which promised to give each freed family up to 40 acres of land along the southeastern coast [6]. President Lincoln approved this order, but President Andrew Johnson overturned it, displacing the 40,000 freed people who had already resettled [7]. Furthermore, Reconstruction – which enabled Black people in the South to make some progress governing, building schools, maintaining prison systems, and creating charitable institutions – was abandoned in 1877 as federal troops withdrew from the South [8]. These reversals left Black people with little economic opportunity, as their only option for survival was to work for white people who generally sought to maintain their superior economic and social status and faced few legal barriers in doing so.

The subsequent government-backed systems of explicit racial discrimination that persisted until the 1960s continued to limit the opportunities available to Black Americans. These systems include Jim Crow laws that mandated segregation, redlining systems that prevented Black people from owning homes or living in certain neighborhoods, the exploitation of Black labor through sharecropping and convict leasing, and literacy tests and poll taxes that made it difficult for African Americans to vote [9]. Although *Brown v. Board of Education*, the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1968, and the Voting Rights Act made these systems illegal, they still did not retroactively compensate

Black people for any damages caused, as President Lincoln had intended to do with slavery. Enacting policy to prevent injustices like chattel slavery and Jim Crow from happening again can be considered a form of reparations, but ideally reparations would also attempt to repair injustices already done to victims.

While the abolition of slavery, segregation, and other twentieth-century systems of racial discrimination have placed Black people in a much better position in society, there are still substantial inequalities between Black and white people in the US that are connected to the legacy of slavery. Most notable is that, as of 2019, the median and mean wealth of Black families was just 15% of that of white families, despite Black workers' median annual earnings being 90% of those of white workers [10]. This indicates that the wealth gap is the result of past exploitation of Black labor. Due to redlining, Black families have less access to properly funded public schools and hospitals, as well as adequate grocery stores, but they are more likely to live near pollution sites and locations that are vulnerable to natural disasters, leading to poorer educational and health outcomes and fewer chances to get ahead [11]. To remedy some of these lasting harms, the U.S. should provide reparations to African Americans in whichever forms that, after thorough investigation, are deemed satisfactory by the reparations commission that would emerge from the passage of H.R. 40.

The Complexities of Reparations

The fact that H.R. 40 has been introduced to every Congress since 1989 but has never been voted on reveals that the US has a long way to go towards reconciling with the legacy of slavery [12]. Reconciliation involves material compensation for victims, but also a collective establishment of truth about past events and a restoration of trust and social relations between groups [13]. Currently, Americans do not share a truth-based narrative regarding the nature of slavery in the US. The topic is taught in public schools, but curricula vary by state, available textbooks, and individual teachers' comfort levels, leaving a majority of students misinformed about the brutality and generational impacts of slavery [14]. Efforts to correct dominant narratives surrounding slavery, such as the *New York Times Magazine's* 1619 Project, have been criticized by some for being too divisive and pessimistic [15]. This demonstrates that

reconciliation can be a deeply painful process, because it requires Americans to confront uncomfortable truths about their country's history and present [16]. Therefore, many are opposed to merely studying reparations for slavery, as H.R. 40 would enable [17].

However, reconciliation is a necessary process, and perhaps a formal investigation via H.R. 40 could help facilitate healing between racial groups. A June 2020 Reuters/Ipsos poll found that only 20% of respondents (and one in ten white respondents) support monetary reparations for slavery [18]. One reason that many do not support reparations is because no American alive today has been enslaved nor is responsible for slavery, and therefore it seems unfair to make payments to people of a certain race, especially those whose ancestors were not enslaved [19]. However, there is more widespread support for the ideas that the US needs to do more to ensure racial equality and that racial discrimination is the main reason African Americans can't get ahead [20].

Therefore, a formal commission whose findings educate Americans on the widespread impacts of slavery, the denial of reparations immediately after slavery was abolished, how racism stemming from slavery has affected all Black people regardless of ancestry, and the broad scope of what reparations can look like could convince more Americans to support reparations. Additionally, enacting separate policies that will better the lives of everyone in the US could help minimize resentment and create more support, as many non-Black people in the US also face legitimate hardships. Of course, some Americans will still deny the findings and be resentful no matter what the commission finds and proposes, but a formal reparations commission could help bridge divides and increase support for reparations.

In order to develop a just reparations proposal, the commission that would emerge from the passage of H.R. 40 must consult a wide variety of Black communities and weigh differences of opinion, as Sherman did in developing his proposal in 1865. Recent opinion polls have found that between 50 and 75% of Black respondents are in favor of monetary reparations for slavery. [21].

The political platform of Black Lives Matter supports monetary reparations, as does the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People [22]. Other organizations, such as the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America, are also in favor of non-monetary forms

of reparations [23]. Black thinkers such as Ta-Nehisi Coates and Cornel West disagree on the effectiveness of commemorative reparations [24]. There are also important debates concerning who should receive reparations and how much is owed [25].

While reparations can be useful in improving the material conditions of victims and fostering collective reconciliation, they can never completely make up for the harms caused by slavery [26]. Even if the full dollar amount of wealth stolen from Black people was repaid, reparations could never make up for the kidnapping of Africans from their homes, the families split up through slave trades, the brutal treatment of enslaved people, and the lives lost prematurely due to slavery and enduring racist institutions. There is a risk that if reparations are enacted, Americans (especially white Americans) will falsely believe that the harms of slavery have been fully remedied and that no further action is required. However, reparations cannot erase the past, nor can they fully prevent rollbacks of progress, and therefore honest discussions about slavery and racism should continue.

Conclusion

It is imperative that the US provide reparations for slavery to African Americans in order to partially compensate them for damages and allow Americans to truly reconcile with the legacy of slavery. The passage of H.R. 40, though currently unlikely to happen, will allow for further investigation of what is needed to repair the injustices done to Black Americans, and it could create a better national understanding of what slavery entailed. While reparations cannot adequately repair all harms, granting reparations will allow the U.S. to embrace international standards, heal from the past, and materially improve the lives of the people it has harmed.

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The First touch, El Primer Toque, اللّاءة سم ىل وائل , первое прикосновение, Den Første Berøring

Sarath Novas '23

The First touch, El Primer Toque, اللّاءة سم ىل وائل , первое прикосновение, Den Første Berøring documents the different ways in which survivors of sexual assault and/or rape have had their privacy violated. When asked “Where did they first touch you?” many responded with various areas of their bodies where they had been left with a permanent mark. I decided to photograph these areas to bring awareness to the fact that sexual assault and rape are not bound by gender, sexual orientation, or race. It doesn't matter how old you are, what you were wearing, or how you look; it can happen to anyone.

The title has been translated across several languages to represent the various cultures and backgrounds of the people photographed - this is because your place of origin does not matter; you are still susceptible to the same hardships. Because this is such an intimate topic, I wanted to protect anonymity for any person who wanted to remain unknown. Therefore, names have not been shown unless the survivor has chosen otherwise.

As a college student, party culture is extremely prevalent, which is usually associated with incidents of sexual assault. I wanted to create this project to start conversations on my college campus as to how sexual assault survivors have to live their lives after they have been taken advantage of. After getting so many requests from students who had survived these hardships, I decided to open up the project to include anyone that has been assaulted whether it be at college or anywhere else. When trying to portray how different everyone's experience is, I had a little trouble trying to figure out how I could make everyone feel comfortable while also making them want to participate. It was a lot of awkward questions, anxious waiting, and vulnerability, and it became something beautiful that didn't push anyone's boundaries, which is exactly what I was going for.

My goal is to alarm whoever sees these images. I wanted a mysterious and creepy vibe to

indicate that the people in the photographs are uncomfortable with what they have experienced. When you see a handprint on someone's body you immediately think, “what happened? What's wrong?” I want these images to provoke that. There is a permanent weight that everyone who participated in this project carries. They will forever remember where they were touched and how that made them feel. They will remember where it happened, what they were wearing, and asking why it had to be them.

This project was created with the survivors' comfortability in mind. I never did anything they didn't want me to do. I told them they could take a step back from the project if they wanted to, and they could remain anonymous if they wished. If they didn't feel comfortable taking portraits, they didn't have to, and if they didn't want to show skin, it wasn't mandatory. I had them write about their experiences as a way to reflect on how far they've come, and their words are partnered with their photos. I also had them hand write letters in red ink addressed to their abuser. This idea came to me sort of as a last-minute step. It was something I came up with to capture the intent of the color red. Red, in this modern-day and age, is very often used to portray sexual maturity and sexual desire.

Many of the survivors in this project were children when their innocence was taken from them. They are not sexually mature and my project reveals this sick and twisted reality. Talking about sexual assault is not a comfortable experience for anyone, but it is necessary for everyone. Don't shy away from topics that disturb you. Be willing to talk about things that make you uneasy because it is the only way that we will be able to move ahead. This project means a lot to me, and I hope these survivor's stories will leave a permanent mark on your mind and heart.



Dear _____,
I will never be able to find
the right words to say to you,
but I can genuinely say that I
hope you are doing okay. I hope
you fought whatever demons
that possessed you to hurt me,
and I hope you can lead a life
worth living. I am done craving
for revenge. I am no longer
focusing on you and what you
did to me. It is time I work on
me now. Good luck out there.
— Me

I'm not even sure what I'd say to you if I saw you right now. You did what you did. You took so much from me, and I didn't even realize I don't wish you any specific harm, life has a curious way of working itself out. But I will stop blaming myself for what you did to me. I am starting to move on from what happened and I refuse to allow what you did to me get in my way. I am learning to accept what happened. That experience has made me who I am today, right now. And I love myself. That is something that I am not going to let anyone else take away from me. For a moment, I thought I would never be able to cry, see again, to trust anyone, to love anyone, because of what you did to me. I have grown, and I have accepted what happened, and I forgive you. Nothing I do can change the past, but also, I don't want to carry this resentment as I move on with my life. It's not worth my time. I have grown to love my body, my personality, my soul. The right person will come into my life and see that, and appreciate it. Unlike you, who destroyed it. I forgive you, but I will not forget what happened that night, April 7th. Life will take care of the rest.

Sincerely,
Someone you probably don't remember,
Someone who won't forget.



Dear _____

When I was younger I used to look up to you but over the years I have learned you were 1 one of the worst things that have happened in my life. Before you assaulted me, I used to like you and I was happy but you took away my childhood and I have to live with this pain forever while you probably never think about it. This year I learned ~~something~~ that you did more to me than I originally thought and I really wish I could tell someone about it because it hurts me that you got to walk around free while I have to suffer. And I know you have hurt so many people and will continue to hurt people until someone speaks up about it. I used to want to end my life because you hurt me but I will not give you the power knowing you ruined someone's life. Whenever I am around you, I feel like you are going to hurt me again so I fled I have left and don't want you in my life. I finally stopped caring about if you like me or not, I don't owe you anything. You might be family by blood, but I cannot accept you as my family and I allow you to continue to hurt me.



Dear all of you who have sexually assaulted me
(and yes, I know now that's what it was),

You were a neighbor, an acquaintance, an ex-boyfriend,
or a stranger.

What you did to me still hurts. Whether it was years,
months, or weeks ago, I hate relating these instances
that seem so individual in my mind, but I can't
ignore a pattern. I have been made to feel like a
body my whole life. Just a body. Nothing behind it
or inside it. Only existing for your pleasure. Whether
you pretended to care about me or not, I know none
of you ever did. When I think about what you did
to me, it makes me feel worthless. And I know I'm not.
But if I'm not worthless, why did you treat me like I
was? Why were you allowed to grab my ass at a
birthday party for an 8-year-old? Why were you
allowed to kiss me for far longer than I wanted?
Why were you allowed to put your hands in places
I didn't consent to? Why was I forced into every single one
of my first sexual experiences? Why was I led to
believe I was helping you, for you to turn around and ask
me for my bra size? I don't understand how all of
you managed to trick me into thinking I was worth something
to you. That I mattered to you. You didn't just take my
trust, my dignity, my virginity, or my fun. You took my self-worth.
You took my ability to feel safe with my current boyfriend,
who I know would never hurt me. You took my soul. I didn't ask
you to take it, I didn't want you to take it, and you definitely
don't deserve it. I'm still grieving my losses, and I know these things
will probably happen to me again. But everytime it happens, I will
get stronger. I will remember you, every single time. I will
remember how much I hate you for taking a part of me I can

never get back. I hope you can feel my hate
whenever I remember. I hope you remember too.
You don't deserve to remember me or how my
body felt, but it's okay, because I know you
never knew me anyway, and you never will.



