

quaranzine

a feminist call for anything



AND HERE WE ARE.

spring/summer 2020

Dear FIGS members and friends,

Please consider submitting something for our FIGS zine which will come out this summer. It will be online and in print. We have received partial funding from the CAG to print this.

The idea behind the call is to push back against the culture of productivity, and to bring us some community during tough times.

**** Always, but particularly in light of current events (and thousands of years of violent racist history), we welcome submissions related to #BlackLivesMatter, #blacklivesmattercanada, racism in academia, and more.**

Keep in mind that you can literally **SUBMIT ANYTHING**, and it can be anonymous, so please do consider it if it interests you.

JUNE 21 is our new deadline.

Original bilingual call is pasted below.

Thanks,

Zoe, Chair of FIGS

A FEMINIST CALL FOR ANYTHING! YES, ANYTHING! in these trying times. May 1, 2020.

(la version française suit)

Hello dear FIGS members and friends! (please share this widely),

We hope you are as “well” as you can be in these tough times. HAPPY INT’L LABOUR DAY!

We would like to introduce an initiative \ meant to be fun, easy, collaborative, and NOT to add additional work or deadlines or pressure to your already busy lives dealing with COVID-19 isolation, ramped-up care work, increased stresses, financial challenges, a more precarious work environment, etc.

NOW OPEN: A CALL FOR ANYTHING YOU’D LIKE “PUBLISHED” WITH FIGS. This is in the spirit of resistance, solidarity, community, feminism, and in response to ridiculous pressures to remain “productive”. We will compile submissions into a feminist FIGS zine. YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE ANYTHING (in ANY LANGUAGE), in these COVID-19 times. Yes! You heard that right! This is NOT a conventional CFP, but rather the COMPLETE OPPOSITE OF THAT! Would you like to submit a napkin? Receipt? Photo of your eye bags? Drawing done with a kid? A thank you letter/poster/cartoon in appreciation of the marginalized workers keeping us afloat? A rant about trying to manage life and duties? A drawing? A video of you screaming? A meme about emergency remote teaching? YESSSS! ALL OF THAT is what we’re looking for! We strongly suggest SUBMITTING ANYTHING, 7 for kicks, give it a fancy academic title—why not?

This is solidarity-building CALL FOR ANYTHING. It’s open as of now, and will close (first round) at END OF MAY (midnight PDT, on the last day of May). If we have time/interest, we’ll contemplate running another one after that.

So, if the idea of participating in this brings you JOY, EXCITEMENT, and/or RELIEF, please consider contributing. If this concept bugs, frustrates, or irritates you, we understand, so please do not get involved. This is about offering you community, space, a feminist publication, an outlet—whatever you need this to be!!!! And of course you can co-author pieces with kids, cats, neighbours 6 feet away, whomever you like! We at FIGS (Feminist Intersectional Solidarity Group of the Canadian Association of Geographers) recognize that FRIG, INEQUALITIES CAN GET SUCKIER during these times of crisis and so, we offer you this chance to DO WHATEVER YOU WANT. We promise to distribute and promote the resulting zine, so remember that too (pseudonyms welcome).

We are also seeking a few people with INTEREST and TIME to help us pull the issue(s) together and bundle them/present them. So if you have related skillz and want to help out, please let me know. We already have a few volunteers who stepped forward so THANK YOU

**In solidarity with Black Lives Matter and global
resistance to white supremacy in all its forms.**

In these pages...

World on fire (cover art) - Linda Campbell @campbellgirlsays

Traduction (N.d.T.)

Nest - Nicole Schafenacker

Welcome - Editorial team

Discllaimer!

Feeling caught up - Zoë Meletis

Quaranzine themes - Editorial team

Feminist theory in the year that was - Srila Roy

I was a PhD once: Study in cruel optimism - Laurence Simard-Gagnon

Pandemic ponderings - Medora W. Barnes

The world in their own hands (abstract) - Océane I. Nyela

COVID clock - Calysta Meletis-McDowell

No grey here / Things to say in about toilet paper in a crisis - Linda Campbell @campbellgirlsays

COVID candle - Zoë Meletis

Letter from a concerned parent - Jessica Ouvrard

Covid dating: The story of 2 grad students - Tka Pinnock

Emotional tracking during COVID-19: A holter (heart) monitor case study - Nadha Hassen and Aameena Hassendeen

You were there/ When love lived alone/ Spread, but not read /A crowning glory / For flow it will - Jessica Singh

Plants - Ileana I. Diaz

Maggie - Val Napoleon

In the spotlight - Linda Campbell @campbellgirlsays

Racial inequalities: A new beginning - Fiona C. Edwards

untitled - Asmita Bhutani Vij

Alternative protection for people on the move - Collective at humanemobility.net with ThinkLink Graphics

Quarantine days - Collective poem by Recrear International

Golden iris - Nasya Razavi

Hudson on Pontoon Lake, NWT - Ashley Rudy

Why feminists scholars need dogs. Or cats. Or both - Annie Booth

Grayscale water - Natasha Pirani

How not to say grief - Cassandra Myers

Virus emotional roulette / #Equalparts - Linda Campbell @campbellgirlsays

Virtual solidarity & Utopian dreams - Navjotpal Kaur

Overthinking - Eleanor Stephenson

Nous avons le regret de vous annoncer que les personnes qui se tapent habituellement la traduction anglais-français se sont effondrées sous le poids de la continuité du monde avec peu de soutien et de reconnaissance en contexte de pandémie.

Le contenu original anglais ne pourra donc être présenté en français pour nos lectrices francophones qui, si elles sont encore parmi nous, sont parfaitement bilingues depuis leurs premiers pas à l'université. Tout ce qui mérite d'être connu et lu est évidemment intelligible en anglais, cependant nous nous excusons de notre manque d'inclusivité de façade.



Dear readers,

Thank you for joining us in our FIGS Quaranzine journey. Thanks if you are just joining us now, or if you've been one of our vocal elders for decades. Whatever brought you here, however you arrived, and wherever you're headed, we're glad you're here with us. We hope this little zine brings you some community, comfort, and light during these difficult times.

Why we got involved...

ZM: It started out as a joke response to all of the productivity pressures and signs and signals that we were getting that academia was trying to march along as usual during these difficult times. It ended up growing into a "CALL FOR ANYTHING," and a fun project to be involved with. Thank you greatly to all who even contemplated submitting, and thanks especially to this team!

AB: As a mom of 2, I wanted to escape all the calls to productivity in Academia during this pandemic! I found my nest here, editing this Zine. Thanks to each one of you who gave their time, energy and of course leaves, pets & doodles!

NSR: Working on this project felt like a healthier outlet for my nervous energy than doomscrolling for coronavirus content. Thanks to everyone for their contribution!

LSG: Les personnes qui se sentent comme de la marde à la fin de l'été, pis qui ont rien de beau à partager: je vous vois. Vous êtes valides. La vie est toffe et injuste. Solidarité.

ID: I wanted to help support our collective creativities! To the editors: thank you for genuinely being a wonderful group to collaborate with. We mesh so well together, team – it was truly a pleasure! To the contributors: many thanks for your submissions and sharing your art/hearts with us. To the readers: I hope that you connect with and enjoy the work you find in Quaranzine!

In feminist solidarity,
Quaranzine editors

Asmita Bhutani
Ileana I. Diaz (Illy)
Zoë A. Meletis
Nasya S. Razavi
Laurence Simard-Gagnon

?Hello! Sorry I'm adding you late; of course I was busy doing several things at once :)

I was wondering if it would be such a radical thought to imagine that everyone who is dedicated enough to spend years of their lives doing research should have access to a job that pays well-enough to live on without worries, that has realistic time expectations, and forgiving social benefits?

confirming: email received! sorry for the delay - been behind on email. i won't be able to make the next couple meetings due to work but feel free to keep me in the loop (sorry for being a bit non-responsive!!)

A communication failure occurred during the delivery of this message. Please try resending the message later. If the problem continues, contact your helpdesk.

Disclaimer: alas, with this zine we did not achieve to overthrow neoliberal capitalistic knowledge production and its multiple gendered, racialized, and ableist oppression, nor its denial of worth and participation, as we planned

I'd be happy to do it, but I'm swamped this week. Is it possible to get it to you sometime next week? (no submission resulted)

For me the COVID-19 is the breaking point of an always shaky trajectory in the academy - there is no way now that I can catch up and get back into the academic race. It'll be interesting to see who remains when this is over.

Dear person who sent the first FIGS zine submission- part of an awesome selfie project - we're sorry... you were too organized for us, and one of our computer file mazes ate your submission.... Please imagine your photo included; it was cool.



INEQUALITIES

We are neither in the storm nor with the same tools to save ourselves from sinking. Some of the longstanding inequalities in our societies are now spotlighted. The violence of this virus and that of racism and patriarchy go hand in hand. Do we really want to return to 'normal'?

"This pandemic is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next." - Arundhati Roy

EMOTIONAL LABOUR

Navigating to find our spaces, time and people, the crisis has placed increased demands of caring for self and others. What will it take to reimagine our current social, political, and economic structures to consider care as the foundation?

TIME

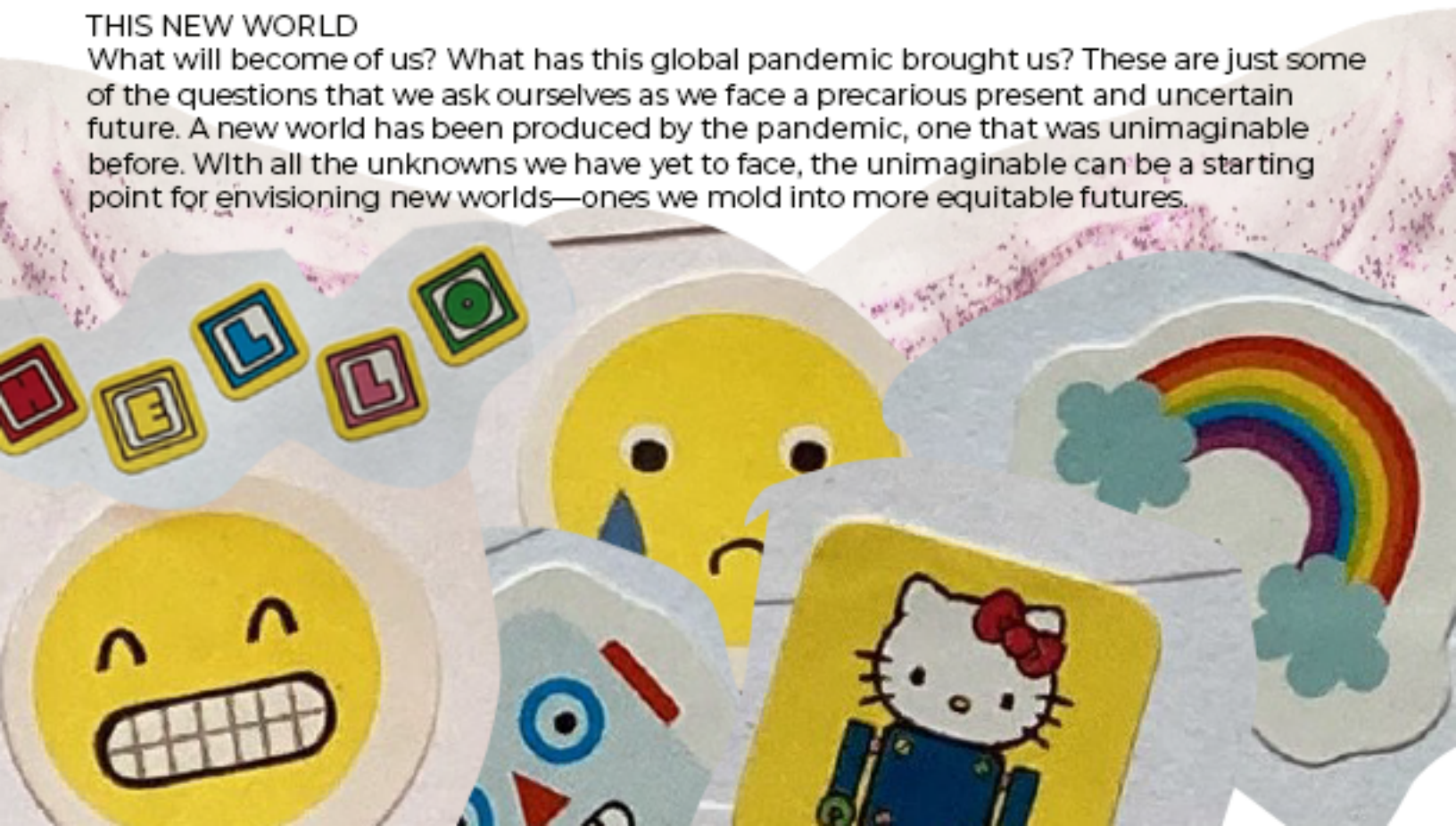
Time seems to have changed this year. Many of us don't know what day it is—the months pass quickly and slowly—whole seasons seem to have collapsed or been lost... Days and nights merge into each other and many routines are upset, while new ones emerge. Time is unstable and yet critical right now. We are all experiencing new versions of time and space (perhaps a key experience for geographers)....

COMMUNITY/MUTUAL AID

Suddenly, everything small and close like cupcakes, plants, and puppies, and everything big like solidarity, sacrifice, friendship, and trying to find peace in new realities has come to a head... how are we doing out there and what is getting us through?

THIS NEW WORLD

What will become of us? What has this global pandemic brought us? These are just some of the questions that we ask ourselves as we face a precarious present and uncertain future. A new world has been produced by the pandemic, one that was unimaginable before. With all the unknowns we have yet to face, the unimaginable can be a starting point for envisioning new worlds—ones we mold into more equitable futures.





Srila Roy

@ProfSrilaRoy

Feminist Theory syllabus in the year that was...

DISCLAIMER: The year is 2020, and everything is far from normal. We can pretend its business as usual, but we know it isn't. This course outline, although hugely adapted from what it would look like under 'normal' circumstances, is still a pretend one, a shadow outline of what it ought be to if we were not in pandemic times. The current crisis makes everything contingent, uncertain and insecure, and these are the feelings that we carry with us, within and outside of our pretend classroom. I write this, at the outset, because it is especially necessary for feminist work to be cognisant of the conditions under which it is produced and consumed. So, even as we all partake in the pretence (attempt?) to proceed as per 'business as usual', we are aware of the limits and costs of such an undertaking. We must thus proceed with caution and care, in our collective critical enterprise to build feminist knowledge.

Mars 2020

Publications

1. - dissertation précis GPC
3. - art. geog. imagination
2. - art. except. places
4. - art. France institutions

Postdoc ethics + plan ***

Storymap- traduire + publier +
monter web site

MOOC carto

FS

Avril 2020

Publications

- appliquer CEGERS
course
instructor UoF
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Juin 2020

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FS

Pandemic Ponderings by a Research Methods Teacher

Each semester when I teach Research Methods to undergraduates, I work hard to get them excited by a subject that many of them find boring and intimidating. I talk about the marketability of the skills I'm teaching (something many of them grasp) and I emphasize the importance of understanding how research works. How it's important for them to be able to be informed citizens—to be able to read popular news articles discussing scientific studies, and know whether the description of the study makes sense. It matters that they realize that science is a shared community, where scholars build upon to each other's studies and things are only "proven" through an accumulation of knowledge. While some students seem eager to know more about understanding the world around them, others appear to be just there for the grade and to fulfill a major requirement.

As the COVID-19 pandemic hit, our TVs and smart screens filled up with news about disease trajectory, public health principles and vaccine timing (e.g. flatten the curve, experimental treatments, first round clinical trials). Throughout, I have been thankful for my own knowledge, which allows me to understand and better sort through the dizzying array of information available. The uncertainty about so many things in our world has been one aspect making this time so difficult for many of us—or those of us lucky enough not to be experiencing the physical effects of coronavirus. I appreciate that that my education brings me more certainty that I understand that information that is available.

This semester I have thought a lot about my students. When the pandemic hit, I was on sabbatical. It was the first semester in five years, I was not teaching Research Methods. Were my past students able to apply and use what they learned? Did any think back to discussions of the importance of random sampling and double-blind studies? Did they feel prepared? Scared? . . . This fall, I will be teaching Methods again—perhaps using hybrid methods of partially online and partially in-person. Regardless of the teaching style, I think that it will be a little easier to make the case that research is always all around us, and understanding the research principles discussed in the news can only benefit all of us.

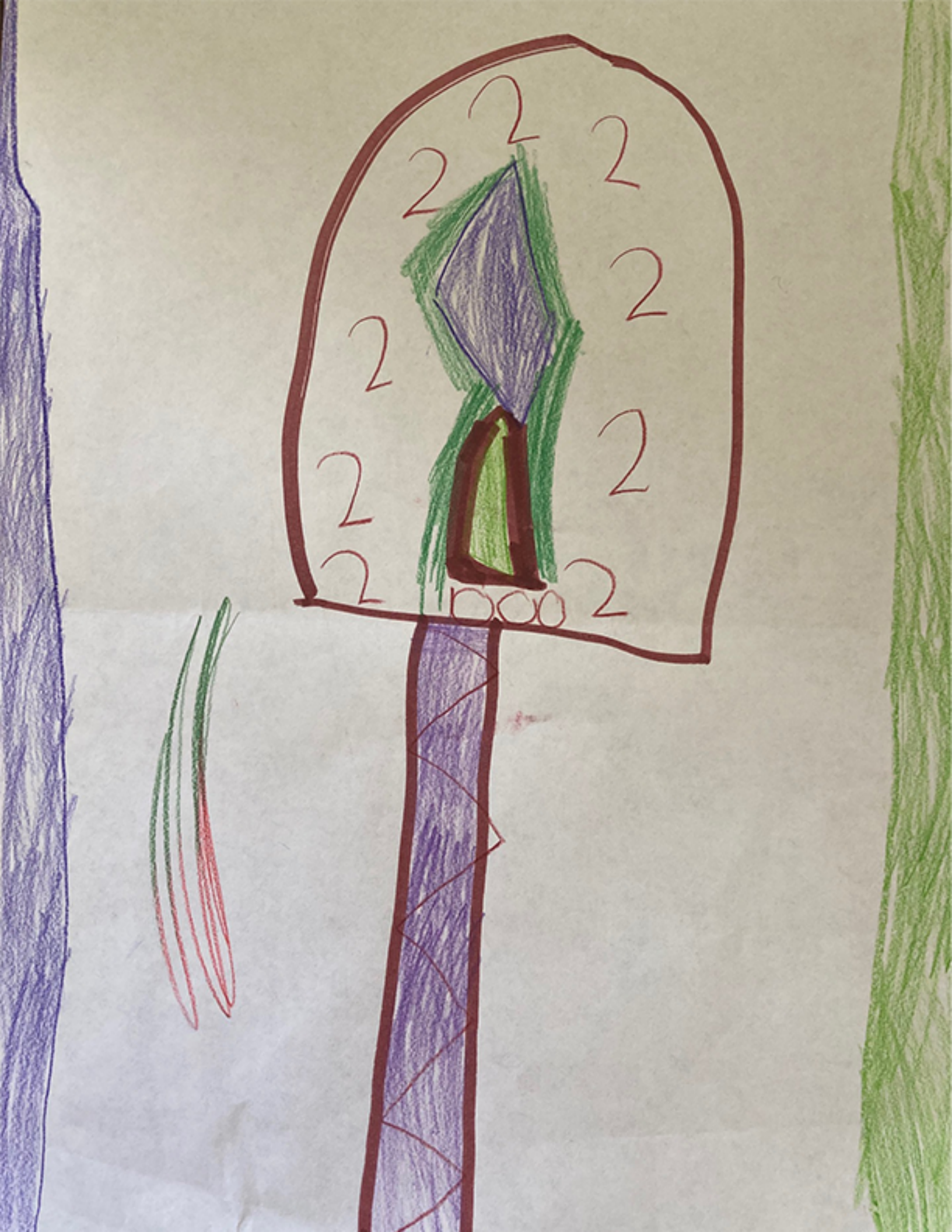
I saw the Aleph from every point and angle, and in the Aleph I saw the earth and in the earth the Aleph and in the Aleph the earth; I saw my own face and my own bowels; I saw your face; and I felt dizzy and wept, for my eyes had seen that secret and conjectured object whose name is common to all men but which no man has looked upon—the unimaginable universe. I felt infinite wonder, infinite pity.

—John Luis Borges, *The Aleph*

In *The Map is the Territory*, Siegart (2011) argues that maps are themselves cultural techniques. As such, by implying that the map is the territory, map-making is transformed into an act of meaning making. Maps not only help us situate ourselves ontologically they also work on the epistemological level. As such, making maps and reading maps, becomes tangled up with issues of nationalism, colonialism, culture, epistemology, and ontology. In this case, reading a map can become an act of subservience or resistance. Indeed, practices such as counter-mapping (Kidd, 2019) have been used to argue for indigenous self-governance and to reclaim colonized territory.

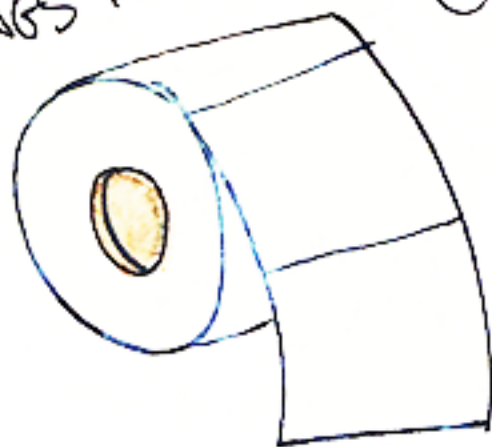
This paper will similarly reinterpret maps and the logics of map-making as ways to produce visual representation of diasporic identities, which often surpass the limits of westernized, colonial maps. The ubiquity of those maps will be questioned on both ontological and epistemological grounds by answering the following questions: *What 'mode of visibility' can emerge when Cartesian perspectivalism is disrupted, how can we think about geography critically and as Edward Soja implored, consider the active role of space in social theory (Soja, 1988), and how can we uncover and expose the relationship between geography and colonialism which has often been sanitized?* In other words, this paper will work through what maps are and how they function as sociotechnical visual representations of the world.

By further engaging with the work of Bernard Stiegler on transindividuation I will be able to further develop diasporic transindividuation as well as black cyborg subjectivity two terms I have coined in an unpublished paper (Nyela, 2019). In order to do so, this essay will attend to the liminal nature of diasporic identities and disrupt Cartesian perspectivalism. The text will be accompanied by visualizations of maps that actively reimagine time and space as they relate to diasporic identities. This critical inquiry into the making of maps will offer a window into a mode of visibility that is actively working against imperialist and capitalist ideals while questioning the legacy of vision as the least mediated sense.





THINGS TO SAY ABOUT TOILET PAPER (IN A CRISIS) 😊

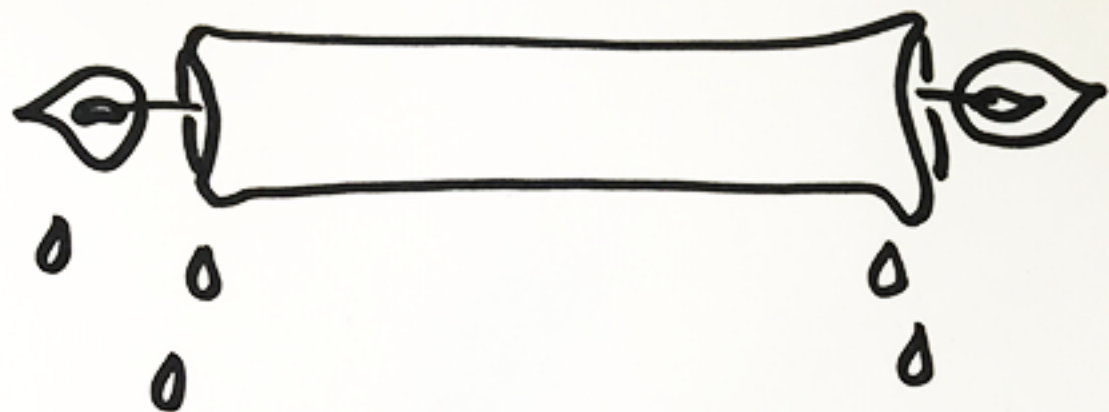


♥ PER PEE : 2 SQUARES TOTALLY
DOABLE (PROVIDING HAND WASHING
STATION AVAILABLE)

♥ PER POO : NO LIMITS APPLY

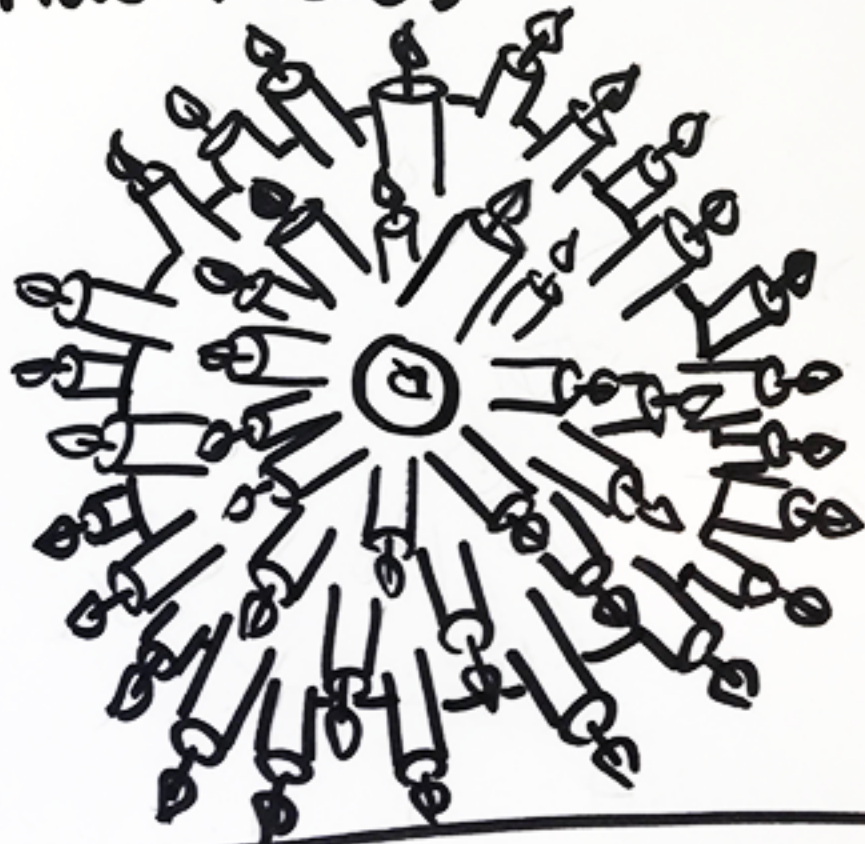
♥ TIP : GREAT MINDFULNESS TRAINING

Remember the 'good old days'?



2/20

And now there's this



Hello,

I'm a concerned parent from the Ottawa Centre riding. I have a daughter who will be entering grade 3 this year, and we are both immuno-compromised. Your half-baked plan to cherry-pick the guidelines provided by SickKids leaves me in an untenable position despite the fact that both my husband and I come from a place of privilege where we are both fully employed and make comfortable salaries, unlike many parents who do not have these options.

So here are my choices:

1. Send my daughter to school.

a) put us both at risk but maintain some socialization although still not the same as before because they are overcrowded but distanced. Not safe for kids, not safe for staff.

Positive: I get to work mostly normally (until the second wave hits us)

2. Virtual learning

a) need to reduce my work hours to oversee her schooling

b) both of our mental health diminishes and my stress and anxiety levels skyrocket as I face the prospect of continuing to do two things poorly.

3. Homeschool.

Not a feasible option as I cannot afford to stop working and it devalues my contribution to society. And damn it - I love my job. Under the homeschooling option, I've heard of some (wealthy) families coming together under school pods. This undermines the whole concept of access to free and equal public education and I cannot get behind these types of initiatives.

Your plan leaves my family between a rock and a hard place and sends Ontario women and other caretakers back to the 1950s. You truly don't care that this "plan" burdens women unduly. We will remember.

You still have time to change the plan. Make classrooms smaller, open up closed buildings, be creative, find the resources necessary to make the Sick Kids guidelines a reality and work for everybody. I should not have to choose between my career and staying alive.

Covid Dating:
The story of 2 grad students

Cast of Characters:

A* - boyfriend

T* - girlfriend

J* - prof they both know

Setting: One friday in June

Good morning my babe

Good morning

Why were you up at 2am?

Go back to bed

Keep me posted about dr today pleeeaaasee

Yea

Can I call you two an uber

Thanks but getting a ride

Fine

Bad son in law

Why is this becoming about you?

My mom has tons of friends. I just don't like asking people for things

It was a joke

Sorry was trying to make you laugh

I'm fine you know

Huh?

Are you being sarcastic?

No. I don't know if you want to make me laugh cause you think I'm not okay. So I'm saying I'm fine...I'm good.

Oh yes that is correct I was doing that

So it seems we are getting to know each other

Or I'm getting to know you

Or I'm getting to know you

Are you though?!

Clearly

I sent you an email about the Markham protest.

Yeah wasn't sure what it meant

We are going to Mississauga!!

Remember

You don't have a car. So how that gonna happen?

Also do you have extra masks?

I'm going to get a car today somehow!

I don't but have a bandana lol

I have a bandana. We need masks for a protest. I especially can't have people all up in my joint

Wear the bandana

I have a call with the white dude who sent me that email yesterday

What are your thoughts

I feel like he is jumping on bandwagon it also comes across like trying to be extractive data?

We need masks, A*. Let's not be those people okay. I'll go to the pharmacy nearby and see if they have any.

Okay

Speak to him first before you decide if he's jumping on a bandwagon

At least he's not a white man who thinks he should undertake this by himself. He at least recognizes that black students should be involved and has reached out.

What makes you feel he's a bandwagonist?

The comment about arranging a zoom call to get experiences of Black students

We are a strong couple

Acknowledge it

I'm rolling my eyes at you

And your fantasies

Just had a good call with J* by the way she told me plan would be for me to do PhD under F* at \$%!!

Hey fantasies are all we got during Covid

Are you at hospital

So J* is directing your entire academic journey

She's definitely your black mother

Again you should think about writing that chapter....you can write it on black other mothering and how it's helped you in your academic journey

Advising

Why you dropping heavy t*ness

Where are you?

At home. My mom is at the hospital.

Oh Nevermind you can't go in

Exactly. And we live like 15 mins away

Advising? No J* is other mothering you. It's a thing. And you should write about Okay I will

So I guess you've decided \$%!! is it

Nope haven't decided on anything yet

My future spouse needs to have a say

Yes my fantasies

Leave them alone

If you had a good future spouse she would tell you to do what you think is best for you academically and professionally. That \$%!! is an excellent school and if you could work with a black scholar even better. And that she would support if you were south side even though she couldn't come

You don't want to be my future spouse anymore?

I just didn't assume I was. Weren't you engaged to the love of your life and how could that work out for her?

Wow

I couldn't help myself.

I noticed

Don't get all up in your feelings now

All the way up

Why are you in your feelings?

Are you mad?

Not at all

Sorry getting ready for the call with the guy

Was not bad he seems to have the right intentions

Okay. Did you talk about the black students sharing their experiences part?

Just so you know I think about you and us in future tense. But I'm a single woman until I'm a married woman. And you're a single man until you're a married man.

Yeah

I told him it's extractive

What do you mean single?

Like to see other people

I'm confused

And what was his response? You

I mean... we are single people in relationship.

Until we become married people in relationship

Oh okay

He wasn't

So what's the plan?

With?

Talk to you about this tomorrow and then S*?

Oh maybe getting my car back

What happened with moms?

The doc just called. All done. Just to pick her up now

Keep me posted please

I ordered Uber eats. The person is riding a bike. I may just starve to death

Poor person must be hot

What did you order

I think they lied. It was a man who delivered the food

Not Maria

Ackee and salt fish

How was it

Good

Good

Can we date

Wha?

I'm slightly jealous of my friends who live with their SOs

They have a hang out buddy

We are two single people

Ok what's your point

I should find someone else to hang out with?

Nothing

You're the one who said it earlier not me
So I still don't really understand
Do you want to find someone else to hangout with?
So this is what we are about to do
I guess I'm just confused
But I think I understand what you meant
Until you're married you're a single person in a relationship
So what's confusing if you understand
The use of the word "single"
Single as in not married
Okie dokie
I feel like this is about to be a problem
I'm aware that I'm in a monogamous committed relationship with A* i
It's not at all
We keep things 100 and if you did want this to not be monogamous you'd tell me
We good I promise
You going to watch spike lee movie
On date #1 I asked if you were open to seeing people. You said no. I left it at that.
Which movie?
His new one
Well now I'm asking you
your preference
Not cause I want to see someone else so we are clear!
How did we get here? All I said was I wanted to go hang with you.
More importantly
Can you please tell me what happened with moms
She's home now. Not feeling so hot but she needs to eat and rest
Right but then the single thing popped back up in my head and I remembered the
monogamous convo
And I feel like you wanted that but my response didn't allow you for to say that
What did dr say?
He did a biopsy and will send the info to the oncologist. The procedure was
uncomplicated so she should start to see some changes in the next couple days
and it will take a few weeks for the jaundice to go away. Hoping her appetite
returns.
The biopsy is going to help the jaundice?
No...she put in a stent to clear the blockage and that will help with the jaundice.
They also did a biopsy while they were in there
Oh wow long day
Poor mother in law
Yea she's not feeling good right now
I hope a couple days of eating and sleep she'll be good to go
Are you taking care of her
I am trying to
Go sit with her and watch tv
No phone or work
She's doesn't want to watch tv
Okay go sit with her
Okie
When I'm done with this call
I'll be here
No texting
What call
A former colleague is just checking in
Tell him you're busy
You probably didn't meet him ... N*
Tell him you've got a man so not to call back
He's a whole married man
That was funny
So I'm passing a gas station with a car wash and there are tons of young guys
washing sports cars
We are all gonna get covid
Did you get your mask?
I'm going to food basics then shoppers
I'll see if they have masks
Okay can you see if they have cases of water I need 4
Why?! You're polluting our planet with that plastic bottle shit
It's for tomorrow
Okay

Doing?
Sitting with my mom as you suggested
And watching the spike lee movie
Tell her I said hi
I will
If you think you should stay with her tomorrow instead let me know
I'll see how it goes
When is the memorial
She says to tell you she's in pain.
3pm
Ask her if I can send her something
This is all assuming car tomorrow
She says what are you sending her? Will it get rid of the pain
Chocolate?
Are you making this convo up?
She laughed and said sure
Promise not making it up. I'm sitting in the chair in her bedroom
Okay I'm sending it
What's your address
Ahhh you're too sweet
Also this movie is crazy
It is crazy!!
DQ?
Ice cream cake
She'll appreciate whatever you sent
I'm asking if she eats that
She'll
She does. But buy the smallest one
They only have one size
Or you can just send flowers
I'll enjoy those too
Damn it they closed as I was ordering
Ordered
Thank you babe
No thank you needed ever
You both need a treat
You're a good boyfriend
She had a rough day
You've had a rough day
Sometimes chocolate helps
And not because you bought ice cream cake ...
But you're very thoughtful and I appreciate it
Also this movie is ... crazy A*
Shh we just started it don't tell me
It's not an ice cream cake dq closed
I ordered a hodgepodge of deserts from some other place haha
The movie is gonna scar you
SHH!!
I'm already scared
They are going to deliver to door FYI
Okie
Tomorrow I assume?
Tomorrow?
No tonight
Says 10:45 so watch out for them
Ohh ☐
11:10
This is not the movie to watch on a night like this
Change it
Is your mom watching also
Nah I'm watching it to the end. I'm invested now
Nah she fell asleep
Why?!
The stuff is on the way lol
8min
She'll wake up soon enough
Okay good
Let me know when it arrives
I will babe [...]



Gratitude

me time

less demands on time

solidarity + community

intentionality
- activities
- priorities
- care

more dessert

slowing down

HOMECOOKED FOOD MADE BY MUM

video calls with family = LOVE

Self-care + preservation

brain fog

EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS

More space in my days

loneliness

loss of support

need support

FEAR

no motivation

ANGRY



20
hats
ved ones.

stress on
relationships

worries
bout
\$

ces
to
d



ort

Sad

Last

sick.

MIGRAINES

anxious.

anticipating
more
work

Worried

chronic
PAIN

♡
taking
stock of your
life

EMBRACING
THE BEAUTY
OF
GREY HAIR!

anti-racist
action

more time
to reflect

Tired.

♡
embrace
new
philosophies

Black
Lives
Matter

DOES NOT
TIME
mean
LESS MONEY?

Learning
chess

YOU WERE THERE

You were there, but I was not,
I was there, and you were gone,
Gone you were, past the love,
Love that left the fields bereft,
Bereft were those pining primes,
Primes that prided in its wonder,
Wonder that lusted a fine another,
Another call for a rose prim and too red,
Red was dainty for the forest she tread,
Tread she will for you lured her to,
To the love that was left to steep deep and brew.

WHEN LOVE LIVED ALONE

In the forlorn hours, when love lived alone,
It dreamt to be red, to be pampered and fed,
It begged to be read, to be ironed and tread,
It fought to be said, to be conquered and to conquer the head.

SPREAD. BUT NOT READ

I feel like you walk over me, all over me,
Your gait was tall and my expanse vast,
I lengthened to measure up to you,
To bear you is what I knew.
Every step you needed, kneaded me,
Every step you beaded, pleaded to me.
I sniffed the passion you wore for me on you, I lived on it;
a long breath that embodied your intensity made me gasp,
Gasps are what I have, while you have me spread out for you.
You didn't know that my red was not what you read,
You never could read me, else it would have freed me,
You enslaved me, your love did – it didn't consume me – I now wish it had

A CROWNING GLORY

No, it isn't what it sounds like really,
You probably just don't know it yet,
After all it gets, I don't get it,
An equal amount of regret, gives a reason to fret,
No matter how I interpret, the blues are a pet.

Hues and a vibe, a swoosh and a wipe,
The brown curls in sheepishly; black is thy world,
The Green awaits the dark against,
Cover; cover it all; the hues are no more.

Prime is the path I take, for I don't know what it takes,
Luminous is the hole that digs, so deep for the breath it takes,
Grounded is the crowning glory, for it ends in another story.

A look and it's all gone, under the cloak it's still on,
Wounded is the core, it needs to get through the pore,
Tickle the pain away, the wound is here to stay;
Taste the smell, the rouge gives away.

The touch will sense the pride you veil,
The siege within blends with snow,
Melts the red that lies below,
Just to let it flow – it is a crowning glory,
It flows and it goes...

FOR FLOW IT WILL

For flow it will,
charming and undulating
enervating and calming
For show it will,
growing and glimmering
slithering and settling
For blow it will,
brimming and scintillating
rustling and roaring
For trust she will,
overpowering and deafening
staggering and withering
For love she will
scandalizing and ravaging
whispering and pruning
For know she will,
scraping and scathing
scooping and skating
For win she will,
tracing and touring
seeking and soaring



Maggie¹

The need for critical gender analysis and Indigenous feminist lenses does not stop with aging. Instead, what happens with aging is that the forms and actions of sexism change – but not their consequences.

To date, Indigenous feminisms has been situated almost entirely outside Indigenous law and Indigenous internationalism. Further, when Indigenous feminisms have been considered, they are often characterized as an external to Indigenous societies and histories, rather than as intellectual thought and theory integral to and deriving from Indigenous law and internationalism.

Consequently, Indigenous feminisms are still underdeveloped and under theorized. It is time to develop and apply numerous Indigenous feminist analyses from within Indigenous law and internationalism in order to generate and support a new field of Indigenous feminist legal scholarship. Such a focus is essential to the health of Indigenous law, and would support Indigenous feminist scholars to change the usual lopsided Indigenous scholarship concerning land, governance, law, and political ordering. It would also support Indigenous female academics and others to challenge the ubiquitous and invisible forms of Indigenous male privileges.

The following story of Maggie is to contribute to the uncomfortable conversations that we all need to have.

Maggie

The old woman is sitting in her kitchen. She wears a kerchief with bright red and yellow flowers tied around her head. Beneath it, wisps of fine white hair escape. Her face is a mass of tiny wrinkles and her hands gnarled with work. She sips her tea from a heavy porcelain cup with a dark green stripe. She is watching the dawn arrive, the light touching the hillside and trees, brightening the world. The robins have been singing for over an hour.

She takes another sip. She is alone in her little house. She glances about at the quiet kitchen and at the old black dog sleeping on the mat beside the door. The dog snores a little, its muzzle is white. Her tea finished, she rises intending to put the cup in the sink. Instead she sinks back down in her chair.

¹ An earlier version of this was published as, In the Name of Elders: What Are We Constructing? (2009) 28:2 Canadian Journal of Native Studies [website not longer active].

She reads the article again, just to be sure. Yes, there is was. That Tomson Highway, he really did say that life has to be breathed into the new trickster, who is “passed out under some bar table at Queen and Bathurst, drunk out of his mind, to pitch him off the floor, make him stand up, back on his own two feet – so we can laugh and dance again.”² “Well I’ll be”, she says quietly. She thinks there must be quite a few tricksters around the country judging by what she’s seen over the years.

She looks at her hands and at the strings attached to them. There are strings on her feet too and another that protrudes from the back of her kerchief. She sighs deeply and wonders if the price of visibility and acknowledgement as an elder has been too high. The strings only seem to control her at public events where she does her duty as an elder. She did her best to be an elder, whatever that is. But she doesn’t really know what to think about this role – elder. She considers her life now. When she isn’t an elder at a public event, she is alone in her little house. Drinking tea. Invisible.

She wonders about who pulls the strings to make her perform. Every once in a while she catches just a glimpse. What is the show, she wonders? Who is watching? She doesn’t even feel like an elder, whatever that is.

She gets up from the table and goes to the counter where she opens a drawer and pulls out a pair of scissors. She cuts the strings, one by one. Then she takes the kerchief off and does a little dance around the kitchen. More of a shuffle really, but that is okay. She notices that she is breathing – freely.

She looks down and sees the shapeless house dress and floppy slippers. Shaking her head at her sad sack attire, she pulls the dress over her head and throws it across the room. She takes off her kerchief and tosses it aside. She kicks off her slippers. The dog is now watching her closely, its head resting on its front paws.

She goes into her bedroom and roots around in the closet. After much grunting and groaning, she selects a t-shirt with phuck housework, spelled with a p-h, on the front. Now where did that come from? She grins, must have been a granddaughter with a sense of humour.

She digs some more and finds some sweats. Then, triumphantly, she locates a pair of rhinestone sandals that she recalled someone gave her a long time ago. She outfits herself and brushes out her long white hair. She considers cutting it, but decides against it. In the mirror, her image looks back at her and she smiles. Most unelderly.

² Mirjam Hirsch, “Subversive Humour: Canadian Native Playrights’ Winning Weapon of Resistance” in Drew Hayden Taylor, ed., *Me Funny* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2005) 99 at 109.

"My name is Maggie," she says aloud, "I am a woman, a dancer, I love to laugh. And I am old. And, yes I am a Cree woman too."

Maggie looks at the dog, "Come on Watson".

Maggie and Watson leave the house and walk into the sunshine filled with many robin songs. They climb into her little blue pick up truck and drive off. Somewhere. Maggie doesn't care. She just drives. Watson's nose is hanging out the window catching the scents of wonderful and mysterious things. Maggie starts to sing at the top of her lungs. Watson smiles with her tongue hanging out.

She is still driving because she hasn't found a place where she can stop and be Maggie yet.

I have friends who may be considered elders. These people are old and wise. They care deeply about the world around them and are generous with their support to others.

I share this in order to situate myself because I am critical about the construction of the Indigenous elder in the current legal and political discourse. I am also critical of the lack of gender analysis in that same discourse. By way of further situating myself, I am a grandmother and I participate in sweats whenever possible though I am far from home here in Victoria.

I am troubled by the largely unexamined and contradictory rhetoric about elders that has become a constant refrain in so many settings – classrooms, boardrooms, and community halls. Over the years, I have seen old Indigenous women disrespected and sitting ignored in school classrooms that they have been invited to.

I have talked to many old Indigenous people who fear their children and grandchildren. I have seen old Indigenous people who ache with loneliness as they look out their windows to watch cars drive by. I have talked to old Indigenous people who are judgmental and angry about the younger generations. I have talked to old Indigenous people who are dictatorial, abusive, and disrespectful. I regularly see old Indigenous women labouring and working hard while their loutish grandchildren sit for hours on end in front of loud television sets.

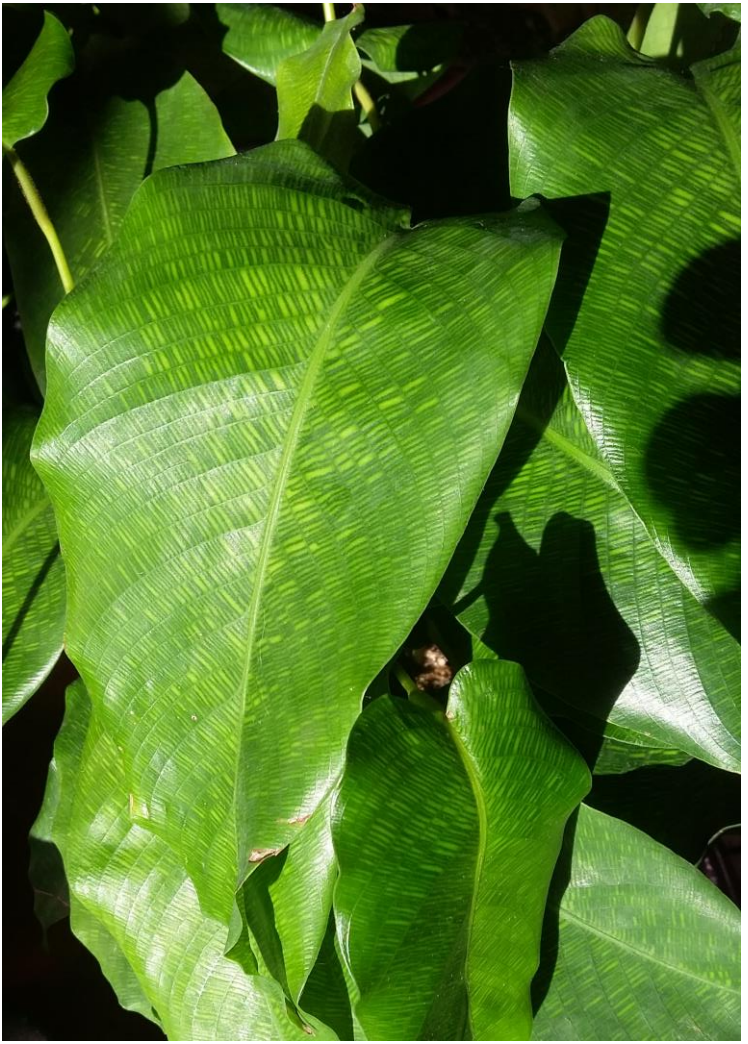
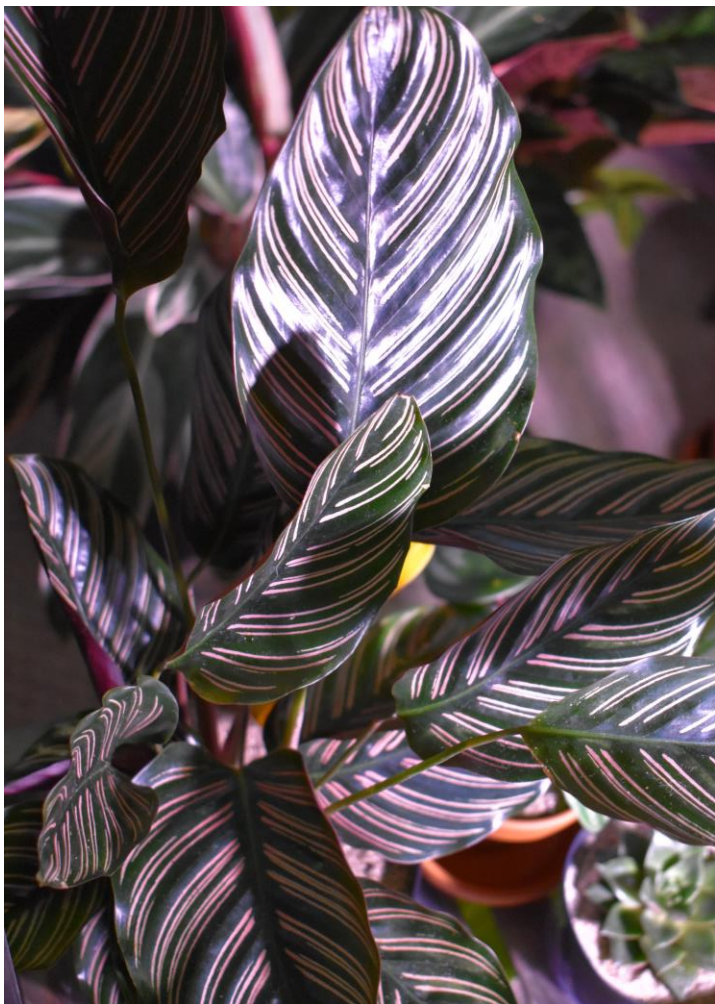
Elder abuse is a problem in many of our communities. Abuse by elders is also a problem in many of our communities. I doubt that these are disconnected phenomenon. There are many widespread consequences created by the lack of critical examination of these important issues.

For example, in many of our political, social, and legal institutions, the politics include 'pick your favourite elder' and 'duelling elders'. Then there are the various authenticity fights (i.e., who is the real elder) and name calling such as "popcorn elder". By what authenticity standard do we judge one another? By what standard have I attempted to authenticate myself by disclosing that I am a grandmother who attends sweats.

There are other problems too. A few years ago, in one community where I was working, the elders and youth were put together in a language and cultural program for the summer. It turned out that they didn't even like one another and wouldn't talk to each other. In this case, the elders thought the youth were useless, lazy, and spoiled – and they made disparaging remarks about the youth. The youth were angry at the elders for playing bingo all the time instead of protecting them and their younger siblings in their homes. The youth let their hair hang over their faces and refused to look at the elders. The elders threw up their hands.

There was another dynamic too. On the one hand, the elders were tired of being expected to know all the answers to complex and difficult questions. On the other hand, the youth were tired of being underestimated as if they knew nothing. This was one of my most challenging experiences and while all the problems weren't solved, for a moment at the end of the summer, the elders and youth saw each other as people.

Elders are people have not emerged from colonialism unscathed. Despite this, some old Indigenous people are wise and have much to offer. This story of Maggie is written in remembrance of my grandmothers, both of whom drank too much and partied too hard, but they should be remembered and honoured as survivors of colonialism nonetheless. They were flawed women, imperfect warriors who acted within the confines of their oppression – sometimes recreating it, other times transcending the oppressive relations of power beautifully.



Go home!: I don't have one

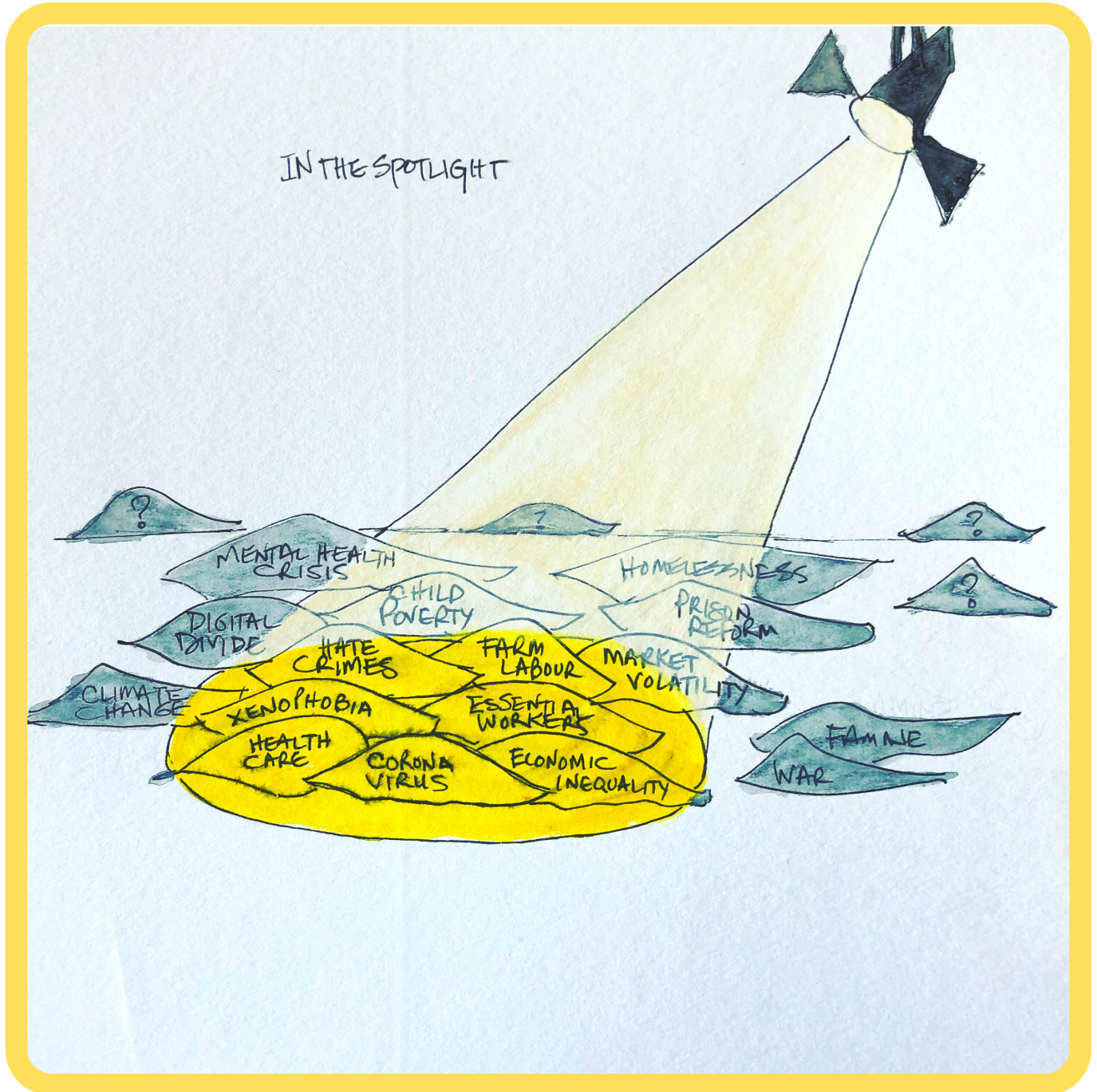
No laptop , no education?

At frontlines. No time with my family

I hate reading on my screen

Online learning- Not for us!

Is social isolation for everyone?



Are we in this together?

Staying at home? Can't!

Racial Inequalities: A New Beginning

To you my people, the pain still lingers,
As the memories of the past have not
changed.

The lives of Black people, continue to
succumb,
To systemic racism, that feels like a hit
and run.

Ongoing police brutality is devastating
the Black community.

In countries where their ancestors
spent days and nights,
Building nations that fight for human
rights,
While denying Black people their basic
rights.

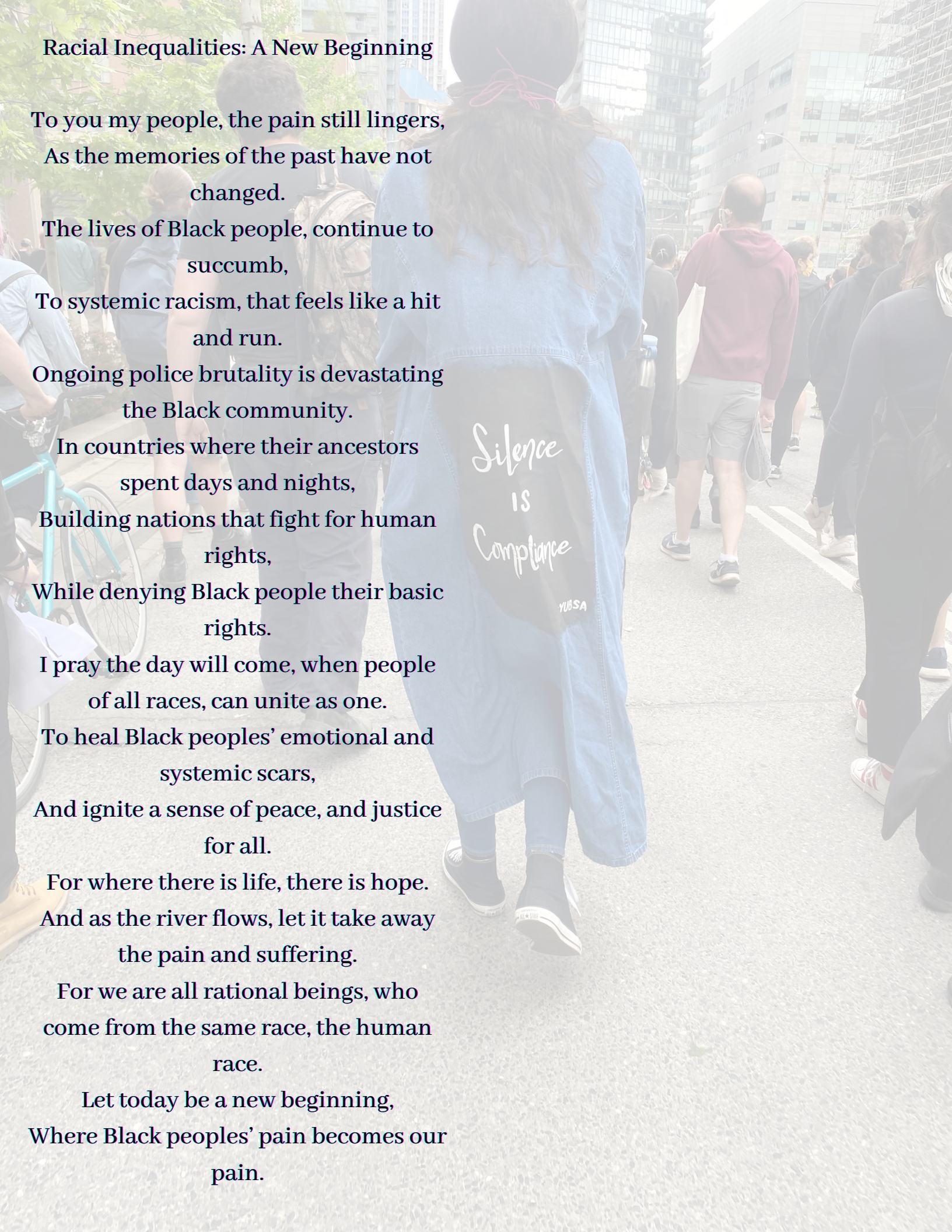
I pray the day will come, when people
of all races, can unite as one.

To heal Black peoples' emotional and
systemic scars,
And ignite a sense of peace, and justice
for all.

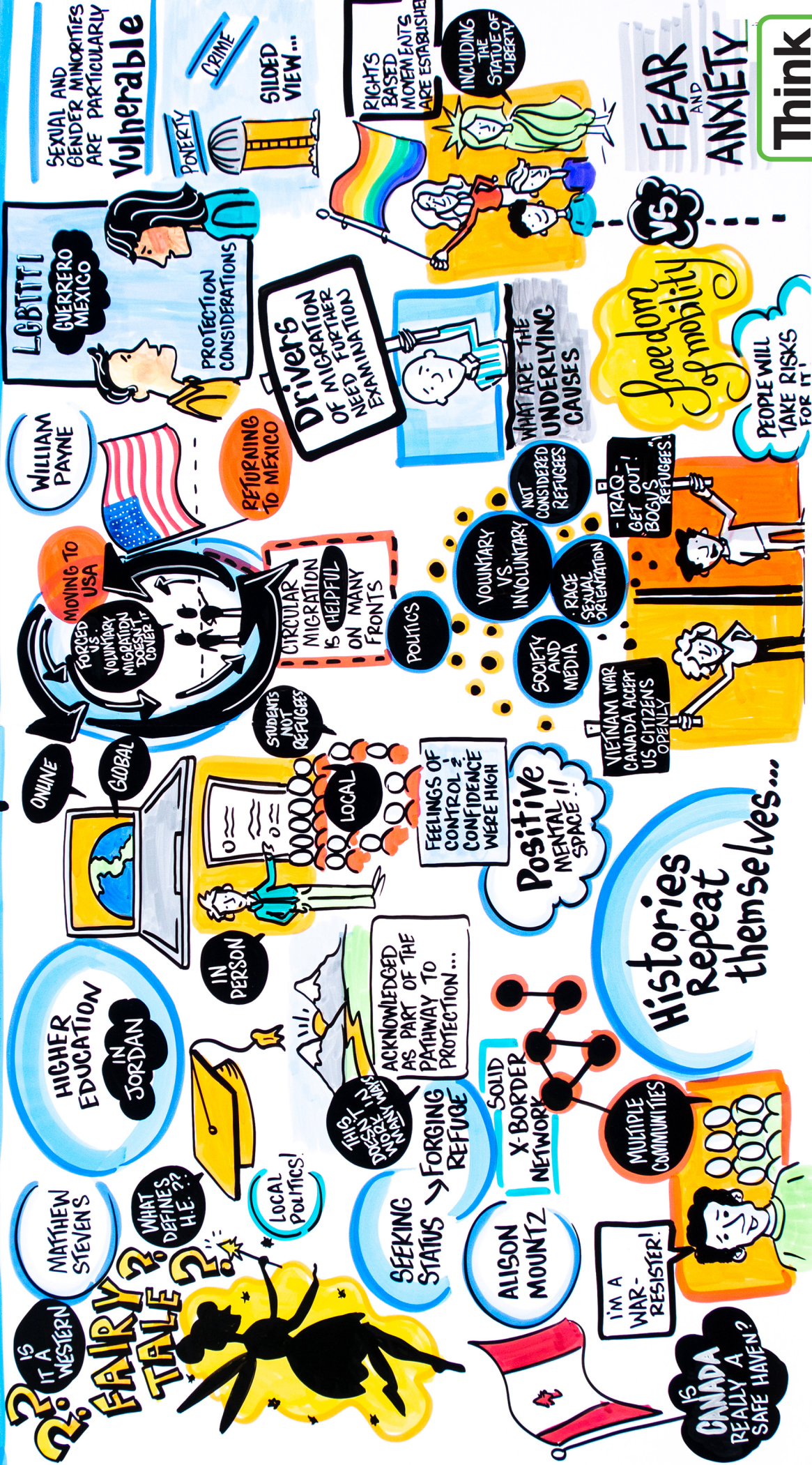
For where there is life, there is hope.
And as the river flows, let it take away
the pain and suffering.

For we are all rational beings, who
come from the same race, the human
race.

Let today be a new beginning,
Where Black peoples' pain becomes our
pain.



Alternative Protection FOR People ON THE Move



day 4: and I begin to think... who do i want to be when i step out of that gate again?

day 6: i tried to make bread today, but the dough did not rise. turns out the yeast expired in 2018.

day 7: i can't stop thinking about privileges and how the need to be home" might look like to someone who does not. have. one.

day 8: despite social distancing precautions, i embrace my old friend. he has traveled to the ends of the Earth to be with me in these times. his name is Uncertainty.

day 9: i'm finally accepting that i cannot do what i had in mind with certain commitments. and i finally decide to create a new routine, again.

day 13: i the idea that i have about god right now (someone or something to pray to) is so connected to nature, and i'm not really sure about how i connect to nature, what are the steps that i need to take to find my way back to faith?

day 12: i make a to-do list. the first item i put on it is "cry"
i mention this to a friend via text.
he says, "is that something you can schedule?"
i say, "we'll see".

day 10: my flatmate hangs out of the window to talk with the construction worker below, shouting on the road. we laugh and feel connected.

day 14: cleaning windows with care, like it's important, like Karate Kid. my flatmate says it's silly but she's only on day 2.





Why Feminist Scholars Needs Dogs. Or Cats. Or Both

Earlier this year, just as the pandemic was ramping up, I became dogless for the first time since 1988, due to my dog developing a fast moving cancer. The geriatric cats did their best to step up, yowling on schedule at 4:15 am in hopes that breakfast would be delivered two hours early, vomiting on chairs and the guest bed as a distraction, and sitting on the laptop or on my chest when I tried to write anything scholarly.

In other words, like all my past dogs, and my newly arrived dog also do, they remind me to focus on life, which is NOT the laptop or the meeting (ZOOM or otherwise) or the endless academic politics and the subtle implication you aren't worth much to your institution. It is NOT one more manuscript submitted or one more committee attended.

It is watching the sun rise over the trees at the dog park. Of wondering just what the cat is watching so intently (when you can't see anything; seriously, is the house and yard haunted???). Of remembering the importance of food (and not just settling for the first thing to come along, after all that second or third can might be really worth it). Of appreciating who you know, whether they have treats to offer or not. Taking the time to smell the flowers, the spring greening (the pee spots, the long dead thing).

When you finally get back to that laptop, paper to be graded, meeting request, or (possibly irritating) colleague, it is with a sense of balance, of appreciation for other ways of seeing the world, maybe more empathy or at least the ability to get through, because there will be another walk, cuddle, or reminder that the lap is really for the cat, not the laptop. And all is well again.



HOW NOT TO SAY GRIEF

When you want to say grie-
unhinge your jaw with a paperclip
Let every clamped sinew become slack

Say, "I'm sorry" into a well
let it drown there.

When you want to say g-
wade into the lake
don't come out until you've drained
all the puss from your lung
supine yourself upon completion
sundry your wet bones

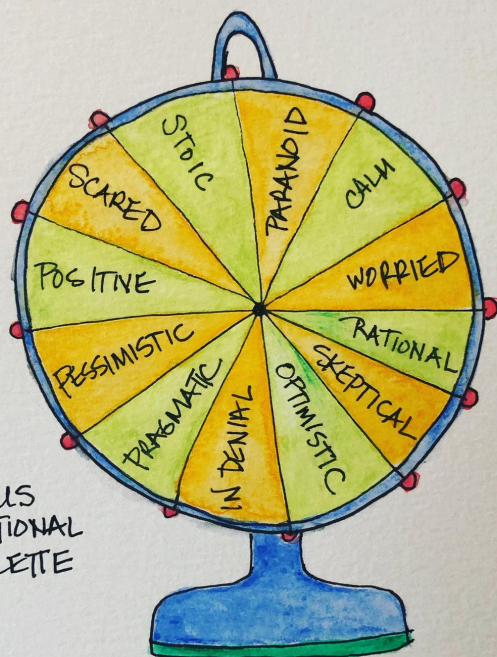
When you want to say it
just say ouch
just say why me
just say it shouldn't have to be this hard
just say never again

When you want to just scream
just literally fucking scream just curse
just cry on stage just trash the whole venue
just set shit on fire and crazy laugh till dawn

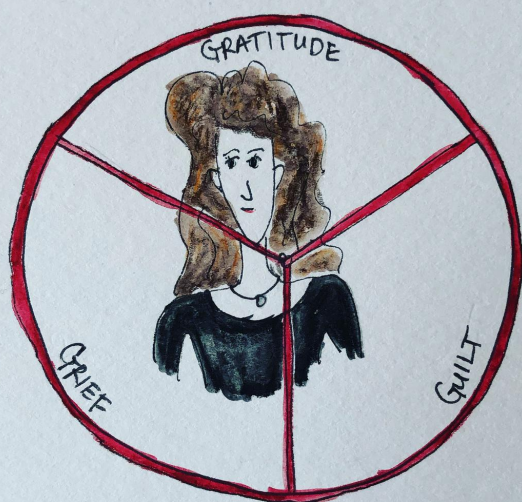
When you need to talk about what they did
and how it turned your skin to rind
and how you can't even feel yourself feeling
just don't. Just lap at your crinkled flesh

When you need to, just ask
just point to your skeleton and say help,
Please. Make it stop. I'm tired of enduring
Just ask and never stop asking. Just do that,

Instead.



VIRUS
EMOTIONAL
POULETTE



#EQUAL PARTS

Virtual Solidarity & Utopian Dreams: Navigating Unprecedented Times Through Cyberspaces

Writing a thesis is hard. Writing a thesis when the whole world is burning *and* going through a pandemic is a nightmare. For most people, in these times, cyberspaces have become little havens where they go to escape the realities of the everyday challenge that is life. Facebook and Twitter are our therapist's couch. For me, these cyberspaces have been the source of immense support and solidarity – “cyber solidarity,” if you will. In this post, I write about a Facebook group of academic researchers, how it has helped me through these troubled, uncertain times and inspired me to keep working on my thesis.

The group is called “I should be thriving: Advancing minorities in academia.” According to the description on Facebook, it is “an inclusive community seeking to decolonize academia through countering epistemic injustice in academic spaces and supporting a thriving diversity of voices across disciplines.” So, it is a feminist intersectional group that strives to empower and uplift people on the margins of academia – first gens, gender, racial, and ethnic minorities – by bringing them together on one platform. It is, in essence, a virtual prototype of what academia, ideally, should look like – a bucolic microcosm. A safe space which is non-judgmental, where the community celebrates every little achievement of its members, where nobody is an outsider, and where you can circumvent the current capitalist-networking structure and “meet” people from all over the world by spending zero money. It is an academic's, and particularly a grad student's, utopian dream.

This cyber group proved to be a space where I found confidence, motivation, and aspiration. A space where I, a first gen-ethnic minority-female grad student, quickly managed to escalate my status from being a ‘lurker’ in the group to being a ‘conversation starter.’ It is a testament to the fact that if we have a nurturing environment, we can exceed the protective boundaries we impose on ourselves as academic proletarians. I have, without hesitation, turned to my fellow group members for advice pertaining to thesis writing many a times and have not once been disappointed. In academia, through the publish or perish discourse for example, traits like competence and competitiveness are perpetually reinforced in grad students while the inculcation and expression of solidarity, benevolence, and empathy remain underrated. I found kindness and courage in the group and realized how crucial these are to “thrive” in academia. Today's grad students are tomorrow's mentors. With the intention to foster a positively productive and welcoming space for future academics, we unequivocally need to adopt a feminist, intersectional perspective and extend the principle of this prototypical cyber group to engulf and revolutionize the whole of academia. After all, every revolution begins with a utopian dream!



BLACK LIVES MATTER & ANTI-RACISM RESOURCES

Organizations+Resources:

Black Lives Matter: <https://blacklivesmatter.com>

Audre Lorde Project: <https://alp.org>

The Combahee River Collective Statement: <http://circuitous.org/scraps/combahee.html>

Color Of Change: <https://colorofchange.org>

Colorlines: <https://www.colorlines.com>

How Racism Makes Us Sick:

https://www.ted.com/talks/david_r_williams_how_racism_makes_us_sick?language=en#t-400543

The Difference Between Being “Not Racist” and AntiRacist:

https://www.ted.com/talks/ibram_x_kendi_the_difference_between_being_not_racist_and_antiracist#t-5234

The Conscious Kid: <https://www.theconsciouskid.org>

Equal Justice Initiative (EJI): <https://eji.org>

Families Belong Together: <https://www.familiesbelongtogether.org>

Your Kids Aren’t Too Young to Talk About Race:

<https://www.prettygooddesign.org/blog/Blog%20Post%20Title%20One-5new4>

Hogan Alley Society: hogansalleysociety.org

The Leadership Conference on Civil & Human Rights: <https://civilrights.org>

Undoing Racism: The People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond (PISAB):

<https://www.pisab.org>

Videos to watch:

Black Feminism & the Movement for Black Lives: Barbara Smith, Reina Gossett, Charlene Carruthers (50:48)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eV3nnFheQRo>

Dr. Robin DiAngelo discusses 'White Fragility' (1:23:30)

<https://medium.com/equality-includes-you/what-white-people-can-do-for-racial-justice-f2d18b0e0234>

What Systemic Racism in Canada Looks Like

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7GmX5stT9rU>



Feminist Intersectional Solidarity Group (formerly CWAG)

FIGS—the Feminist Intersectional Solidarity Group—is a study group
of the Canadian Association of Geographers (CAG)

Partial funding provided for this zine by CAG

FIGS on Facebook: Feminist Intersectional Solidarity Group (formerly CWAG)

www.unbc.ca/feminist-intersectional-solidarity-group (soon migrating to CAG)

FIGS listserv: figs@lists.uvic.ca