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CRISIS!

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Introduction to the Simon Fraser – University of Calgary Special Issue

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With this year's graduate student conferences hosted separately at the University of Calgary and Simon Fraser University, our goal was to encourage discussion and debate around the topic of crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic has been at the forefront of public attention; even forcing our respective conferences into the disembodied safety of virtual space. However, it is important to remember that COVID-19 is not the only crisis faced in recent years; the overdose crisis, crisis of the corporatization of universities, economic crisis, crisis of truth and misinformation, and the looming environmental threat of the Anthropocene, have been with us and will continue to be grappled with into the foreseeable future.

Crises echo through the past to the present, such as those experienced by our Indigenous communities. They re-emerge, still to be grappled with and struggled against. As individuals and researchers, we may assume any number of these crises are out of scope or outside our area of expertise. We often fail to consider them. However, crises defy temporality and spatiality as easily as disciplinary borders; both squeezing and stretching, accelerating, and suspending notions of the like. The contributors of this special issue consider an array of crises as they collide with diverse fields and disciplines, encouraging us to reflect on how they intersect our own. Ultimately, we aspire to trouble the notion of crises themselves. Questioning our understanding and reapplying it where we had not previously considered. In these general 'times of crisis,' what counts as such? How is it communicated and miscommunicated? What are the effects on resilience, recovery, and possibility? Where can we seize opportunity following a crisis?

The Chinese symbol for crisis is composed of two parts: opportunity and danger. Where the Simon Fraser University conference focused on resilience in a crisis, the University of Calgary conference expanded on potentials of opportunity. As invited editors to this special edition, we viewed contributors, not as tackling separate entities of the term 'crisis,' but instead, as a framework to building back

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stronger, seizing an opportunity, and practicing resiliency as we maneuver through this danger to a better future. As Zhang and Li (2018) have argued, it is in a co-creation of both sustainable and resilient development which can lead to assurances of overcoming and withholding a community's vulnerabilities, or their potential crises. This development may use standards setting as an opportunity to ensure resiliency (Thompson, 1954), encouraging democratic participation for an equal seat at the table, and taking the lessons learned during a crisis to apply to a better future (Brundtland, 1987).

In the field of communication, we are oftentimes stretched to an incohesive front based on the competing discourses of the canons of our field (Carey, 1997, 2009; Peters, 1999). The study of communications then is not a discipline, but a field of fields, perhaps a crisis of definition in our own knowledge community. In these competing views we see the beauty of this interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research, as reflected in how graduate students across Canada thrive in their specializations. Emerging as a new group of scholars who, as the world was faced by crises all around, produced these articles in the pages which follow for this special edition; we as the invited editors see the ways in which graduate students practice resiliency in their work, seizing opportunities, and overcoming the crises which surround.

危机
Crisis.

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Alexa, Please Babysit My Child

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Abstract
According to the 2019 Statistics Canada report, Canada beats out every other country in the world regarding the amount of time spent online. This has likely been amplified due to the stay-at-home order caused by the COVID-19 crisis, hence why the new Bill C-11 will strengthen the current policies defending Canadians from corporate digital overstep. *Alexa, Please Babysit My Child* will explore, analyze, and evaluate Amazon's neuro-capitalistic technologies, specifically pertaining to the technologies made for child use. Neuro-capitalism is dangerous as it speaks to a corporation's ability to control the mind through the current hyper-technological society. Jurisdictional complexity surrounding artificial intelligence and cybersecurity can be mitigated by government-funded education. Therefore, my research explores the question: From a digital-colonial standpoint, to what extent are Amazon's child-targeted technologies' (such as Kindle 4 Kids) consistent with the new, proposed Bill C-11? This policy analysis will consist of three sections—first, an analysis of Amazon's Kindle 4 Kids Terms and Conditions (Site 1). Second, an evaluation of Bill C-11's ability to protect children from the pernicious aspects of neuro-capitalism (Site 2). Lastly, a compare and contrast section of the two entities, ending with a discussion of the findings. Particularly during the COVID-19 crisis, we must be sure that the Government of Canada is doing everything in their power to aid the youth of the country that spends the most time online and thus the most time with their babysitter: Alexa.

Keywords
child, digital colonialism, neuro-capitalism, Alexa, Bill C-11

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> I watch my teenage children clutch their smartphones wherever they go lest they be forced to endure a moment of boredom, and I wonder how much more dependent their children will be on devices that not only connect them with friends, but actually are friends- irresistibly upbeat and knowledgeable, a little insipid perhaps, but always available, usually helpful, and unflaggingly loyal, except when they're selling our secrets. When you stop and think about it, artificial intelligences are not what you want your children hanging around with all day long. (Shulevitz, 2018)

Cybersecurity in Canada is simultaneously one of the most complex and crucial areas of the country's national defence. There are apparent reasons where identity theft, government system hacking, and nuclear weapon controls exist. However, there are also more overlooked aspects of cybersecurity, such as the effects of neuro-capitalism. Neuro-Capitalism, as explained by author Giorgio Griziotti in his book by the same name, is a political-technological area of study in which "we have moved from a time when the driving force of all activity was accumulation in the physical sense, to a society based on performance and the exploitation of life in a broader sense" (Griziotti in Di Biase, 2016, para. 12). Griziotti explores tech giant's roles in Silicon Valley, explaining that "capitalism in Silicon Valley, which is part of the financial machine, founded its own power on its mastery of algorithms and ability to manipulate our attention, and even space-time" (Griziotti in Di Biase, 2016, para. 11). Griziotti concludes by stating that "we should not underestimate the importance of the debate on the ethical, political and social purpose of the use of these technologies" (Griziotti in Di Biase, 2016, para. 29).

While Griziotti regards the broader political-technological intersection, my research is more narrow, as it analyzes Alexa and Canadian legislation, exploring the ways the COVID-19 pandemic have impacted both:

> [the COVID-19 pandemic] has not only magnified the value of the internet, but also what's wrong with it. Newsfeeds that spread misinformation. Digital ads that track and target us. Algorithms that make opaque decisions about our credit ratings or our dating lives. Smart speakers that listen to — and store — our every word. In short: the internet is indispensable — and imperfect. At this fraught moment in our digital society, Canada has a major opportunity to address much of what's wrong online. Several weeks ago, Canadian legislators in the House of Commons introduced Bill C-11 to enact the Consumer Privacy Protection Act. (Bednar & Surman, 2021, para. 1-4)

The adverse neurological effects that time spent online has created can be explained in several ways, but perhaps the best way would be through the Cam-

bridge Analytica scandal. In latent terms, neuro-capitalism took the world stage through the Cambridge Analytica Scandal when the 2016 Presidential Election was allegedly heavily swayed by Facebook's algorithms, pushing voters toward the Republican candidate Donald Trump (Meredith, 2018). And while the mere act alone of subconsciously swaying votes by allegedly influencing the American people is bad enough, what is even more unsettling is the fact that the Trump administration concealed it. Because there is so much jurisdictional complexity around the term cybersecurity (as surmised by the 2017 Canadian Cyber Review Consultation Report), Christopher Wiley--the Cambridge Analytica whistleblower— did not need to flee to Russia like the NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden had to. The very same reason why the Trump administration and Mark Zuckerberg knew to keep Cambridge Analytica under wraps is the same reason it is so important to shed light on it: they are aware of the neurological impact data can have, and that is why I would like to shift my focus from Facebook and look at this impact with another tech giant: Jeff Bezos's Amazon's Alexa (Meredith, 2018).

Furthermore, according to Shulevitz (2018), Ovum projected that there would be almost as many voice-activated assistants on the planet as people by the end of this year, 2021. This, tied with Canadians spending the most time online, may be grounds for concern.

Background information

Alexa, Please Babysit My Child is a developing project that will assess the relationship between Canadian children and one of the most popular interfaces in the world: Amazon's Alexa through the prism of digital (or data) colonialism. It makes the argument that Alexa has the potential ability to shape a child's cognitive development due to its position as a virtual co-parent.

Alexa, Please Babysit My Child employs the conceptual framework of political economy and, more specifically, digital colonialism. Digital colonialism is a term coined and defined by Nick Couldry and Ulises Mejias (2019) in their book *The Costs of Connection*. It is their "term for the extension of a global process of extraction that started under colonialism and continues through industrial capitalism (Marx), culminating in today's new form: instead of natural resources in labor, what is now being appropriated is human life through its conversion into data" (Couldry & Mejias, 2019, Location No. 255).

Digital colonialism is the colonization not of our tangible human selves but our digital selves. According to Couldry and Mejias (2019), one danger of digital colonialism is that it "undermines the autonomy of human life in a fundamental way

that threatens the very basis of freedom" (Location No. 147). They argue that the same way colonialism has been studied through political lenses and has impacted society, digital colonialism should be subjected to the same critical analysis. I take this argument further and apply it to Alexa and Bill C-11: the Amended Consumer Privacy Protection Act.

> Bill C-11 is structured into two sections, where:
>
> Part 1 enacts the Consumer Privacy Protection Act to protect the personal information of individuals while recognizing the need of organizations to collect, use or disclose personal information in the course of commercial activities. Consequently, it repeals Part 1 of the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act and changes the short title of that Act to the Electronic Documents Act. It also makes consequential and related amendments to other Acts.
>
> Part 2 enacts the Personal Information and Data Protection Tribunal Act, which establishes an administrative tribunal to hear appeals of certain decisions made by the Privacy Commissioner under the Consumer Privacy Protection Act and to impose penalties for the contravention of certain provisions of that Act. It also makes a related amendment to the Administrative Tribunals Support Service of Canada Act. (Amended Consumer Privacy Protection Act, 2020)

The threat for Canadian children

It must be reiterated that the Cambridge Analytica scandal allegedly aimed and succeeded in affecting the American vote by ultimately swaying voters that were 18+ years of age--the legal age to vote in the USA (Meredith, 2018). If their objective worked among adults, what does that say for those typically more susceptible, those who spend even **more** time online: children? Children who were practically raised online by virtue of *technological ubiquity* (or coined as "data natives" by Nick Couldry & Ulises Mejias). If the 18+ citizens could not escape the influence of Cambridge Analytica, then children sure cannot. That is the reason why I titled my research *"Alexa, Please Babysit my Child."*

Indeed, there are terms and conditions set in place that offer a fair "warning" to each user (or the user's guardians, in this case), but just how "fair" is "fair?" How many people are reading the terms and conditions? Are Amazon's lawyers hoping that these are read? I tend to think not. Moreover, if they were read thoroughly, I wonder how this would change the number of people that press "agree." A 2013 documentary about this titled *Terms and Conditions May Apply* by Cullen Hoback explored the dangerous truth behind ignorance, unread, and barely-read terms and

conditions. Many reviews were published about the film, but I believe it was best conceptualized by Mark Weinstein (2013), the CEO of MeWe, a company that prides itself on user privacy protection, who compared the documentary to the box office horror genre hit: *The Conjuring.* Hoback made this comparison because he claimed that the film, too, is a "horror movie based on real events" (para. 1). Such a juxtaposition speaks for itself.

A work in progress: Objectives

For my major research paper, I am considering examining not one site but two. This is because I am conducting a comparative study; therefore, I need not only analyze the Canadian policy but Amazon's terms and conditions as well. First, I must select which of Amazon's many child-targeted technologies to research, which I shall refer to as Site 1. To name a few, there are Amazon Kids+, Prime Video for Kids, Kindle 4 Kids, 'Amazon Kids,' Echo Dot Kids Edition, etc. However, I am leaning toward Amazon's Kindle 4 Kids.

This is because--unlike Alexa's other kid-centric technologies--a Kindle (which is an electronic reading device meant to replace a book) is precisely something that was not part of a typical child's learning-to-read experience twenty years ago.

The visual of a child being read to by their mother or father using a bedside night lamp is not a difficult one to conjure for a 90s baby. However, the same visual conjured by a 2000s baby could be imagined very differently with all of the lights off, showcasing a child using Kindle for Kids instead because Alexa can read to them in place of their parents.

The significance of this is that it demonstrates how Amazon's child-targeted technologies take over the roles of legal guardians. This transition minimally speaks to J.R Whitson's theory called "the gamification of labour," which is the act of gaming spaces that were recently not associated with gaming (2013). One of those spaces would be parenting/reading, which is why I believe Kindle 4 Kids may be the best technology to choose.

Proposed methodology

I plan to incorporate both Critical Discourse Analysis and Policy Analysis in my methodology. The Critical Discourse method will be conducted upon Site *1,* whereas the policy analysis method will be conducted on *Site 2*. I must apply a methodology based on legislation in order to comprehend the political-technological

intersection within communication and social justice. The provisional step-by-step process will be as followed:

Step One: Conduct a critical analysis on Amazon's terms, conditions, and relevant discourse

Step Two: Conduct a policy analysis on Bill C-11: the Amended Consumer Privacy Protection Act.

Step Three: Compare and contrast the two entities and subjectively calculate where Amazon's Alexa is in accordance with the law and where it is not.

Step Four: Discuss the findings.

The relationship between Political Economy and Critical Discourse Analysis has been validated by academics Jane Mulderrig, Nicolina Montessori and Michael Farrell in their work titled: "Introducing Critical Policy Discourse." Mulderrig, Montessori, and Farrel believe that these two methods working in tandem have a threefold benefit to research methodology and, in particular, projects like mine (2019). They argue that with Critical Policy Discourse, they have:

> developed a framework for conducting systematic, yet contextually sensitive, analysis of texts based on a critically grounded theory of discourse. Its abductive, multi-layered research methodology involves con-tinual movement between theory, method, and data, allowing the researcher to link macro social processes to micro discursive events such as texts or conver- sations. Second, it shares with CPS a number of important assumptions about the object of research, as well as epistemological, ontological, and normative principles, which in turn have implications for how research can and should be conducted ... As such, [they] hope [they] make a significant and highly practical contribution to the field of critical and interpretive policy studies
> (Mulderrig et al, 2019, p. 5)

Literature review: Schematics

My in-progress literature review consists of dozens of documents ranging from peer-reviewed articles to legal documents that survey Alexa and her relationship with children. I acknowledge that a more comprehensive literature review is required. However, the schematics thus far are as follows:

1. Digital Colonialism: *Digital Capitalism, Neuro-Capitalism & Cognitive Theory*

   a. The Digital Revolution & the Social Quantification Sector (Shulevitz, Couldry & Mejias)

   b. Weaponized Data

2. Data Protection Political Discourse:

   a. Historical & Modern | USA, UK & CAN

3. Company-States

4. Situating the 'Child' in *Alexa, Please Babysit My' Child:' Personification, Anthropomorphism & Research Limitations*

5. Privacy Infringement...or the New Zeitgeist?

6. The Learning Dilemma

Why Alexa and why should we care?

I have composed a bulleted list detailing why *Alexa, Please Babysit My Child* is a relevant analysis:

- Cambridge Analytica allegedly shifted an election. The impacts of Algorithmic/Platform governance are severe and global.

- School boards in North America have moved to incorporate Alexa into their daily classrooms, ensuring that Alexa will step even further into her co-parenting role (Horn, 2018).

- Bill C-10 is being amended for a reason. During the current COVID-19 pandemic, now more than ever are Canadians reliant on Alexa as we shift to an online society (Bednar & Surman, 2021).

- Original, historical colonialism is a political endeavour that negatively impacted one part of the world and positively impacted the other.

    - My case study argues that digital colonialism is doing the same thing but to a lesser extent. Instead of the colonizer countries being the delegators over the so-called colonized countries, in my analysis, the colonizers refers to Big Tech monopolies (such as Amazon), and the colonized refer to the users of said technologies (such as children).

- The same way historical colonizers ensured that colonial infrastructure unfairly situated them on top of the food chain is how Amazon has been borderline desperate to make sure that their stronghold on the monopoly survives (Couldry & Mejias, 2019).
    - In 2018, Amazon actually lost money on each Alexa unit sold, meaning their objective was about more than just selling Alexa's, similar to the millions of dollars poured into oil was about more than solely being an economically profitable endeavour (Shulevitz, 2018). It was and still is about making everyone abide by one system: the colonizer's system.
    - If the Third World knew what they were getting themselves into when they signed those agreements that ultimately bounded them to a one-sided lose-lose system of extraction--then one can assume that they may not have signed it. Therefore, my tech law study's objective is to educate the citizens under this new type of colonialism because then the digital "Third World" may have a fighting chance. Since it is rare for people to read through the lengthy terms and conditions, what is crucial here is for *Alexa, Please Babysit my Child* to read it for them in the hopes of providing meticulous analysis when compared to Bill C-11.
    - The artificial intelligence interface and digital colonialism intersection regarding algorithmic systems, algorithmic literacy, algorithmic regulation and algorithmic governance were addressed by several speakers at the Communication & Cultural Policy Conference in May of 2021.

- Unappealing terms and conditions are a deliberate function of neuro-capitalism. Big Tech like Amazon uses mind tricks and soft mind control to persuade the user to skip the reading and press agree. There is a reason why "mind-reading" is listed on the website as one of Alexa's "special skills."
    - Mary Shulevitz (2018) states that "we may not always realize just how powerfully our voice assistants are playing on our psychology, but at least we have opted into the relationship." This is an interesting notion because it touches on the concept of neuro-capitalism in my major research paper. Then it directs the attention to opt-in relationships, evidently referring to Alexa's terms and conditions.

- Canadians are dealing with a new generation that sees Alexa as more than a machine.
    - Lovato & Piper (the authors of multiple children & voice input system studies) call this new generation a new, neuro-capitalistic ontological category distinct from the ones we already know (2015).
    - Shulevtiz (2018) cautions parents by stating that this instantaneous friendship with Alexa is worrisome because emotional relationships open up for vulnerable situations; she feels as though this relationship will "come to wield quite a lot of power over us, and even more over our children."

There is a privacy component that I--unfortunately-- will not have nearly enough time to explore, and I wish I could research more about the dozens of brilliant studies encountered, such as The Common Sense Media Survey (2013), The Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes Report (2013 & 2014), and The Childwise Monitor Report (2014)--however, none of these studies looked at the new Bill-C-11, and Canada was rarely a case study (Littleton & Kucirkova, 2016).

Conclusion

By using digital colonialism as a conceptual framework, *Alexa, Please Babysit My Child* hopes to use Canada's new Bill C-11 (the Amended Consumer Privacy Protection Act) as a case study to explore the effects of digital colonialism on Canadian children. It will apply a two-fold strategy called Critical Policy Discourse to understand the political-technological intersection of digital colonialism discourse, Amazon's Kindle for Kids terms and conditions, and the Government of Canada's Bill C-11. The overarching research question is:

From a digital-colonial standpoint, to what extent are Amazon's child-targeted technologies' (such as Kindle 4 Kids) consistent with the new, proposed Bill C-11?

The main objective of my research is to aid children's cybersecurity always, but especially during this pivotal COVID-19 crisis. We, as citizens, must be sure that the Government of Canada is doing everything in their power to protect the youth of the country that spends the most time online (Statistics Canada, 2019). But also be sure that the government is doing all they can to protect the Canadian youth from health hazards that include--but are not limited to--the spread of respiratory illnesses. Amazon has a significant opening to do as they please considering the world

is currently looking at physical health threats instead of neurological ones that show no cough-like symptoms. We should care more about digital colonialism for reasons similar to why we care about historical colonialism. I argue that parents must be wary of their babysitter: Alexa, because if they are not, then I predict that it will only be a matter of time until we have a different pandemic--dare I say a *digital pandem-ic*...on our hands.

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Humanitarian Communication Through the Lens of Feminist Ethics of Care

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Abstract
Ethical principles are the driving force of humanitarian action; they lie at the heart of the definition of humanitarian work and shape its objectives and mission. In 1965, The "Proclamation of the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross" instituted the seven principles that govern humanitarian action until today: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality. Researchers have primarily focused on studying organizational commitment to these principles, paying less attention to the role-specific ethics of this field. Moreover, researchers who consider the humanitarian field from a media studies lens have often focused on media representation, while questions about communication as practice are sidelined. In this paper, I approach humanitarian ethics with a particular focus on role morality and communication practices. With a specific focus on the role of a humanitarian communications specialist, I argue that the feminist ethics of care is a useful framework that can guide communication specialists to better practices when they are in the field of operation. I also answer the following research questions: What are the main ethical principles that humanitarian communication specialists are expected to observe? Why are these principles insufficient? How might feminist ethics of care fill the gap left by current humanitarian principles, and what would be the added value of this framework for practicing humanitarian communication? To answer, I ground my approach in an experiential understanding built from my personal experience as a humanitarian communications specialist. Second, I offer a literature review to highlight the common ground between humanitarian ethics and the feminist ethics of care. Then, I discuss the added value of the feminist ethics of care if applied by humanitarian communication specialists. Finally, I provide some examples of communications practices that would be improved to follow the feminist ethics of care model.

Keywords
Feminist ethics of care, communications, humanitarian work.

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Ethical principles are the driving force of humanitarian action; they lie at the heart of the definition of humanitarian work and shape its objectives and mission. In 1965, The "Proclamation of the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross" instituted the seven principles that govern humanitarian action until today: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality. The first four principles have been the most widely influential in the humanitarian field (Labbé and Daudin, 2016) and thus have been considered foundational values in humanitarian action.

Existing literature shows that these universal humanitarian principles have posed some challenges to humanitarian organizations because they are not culture-sensitive and very general. Due to their universal nature, each of these values has been susceptible to varying interpretations by humanitarian actors interpretations (Slim, 1997; Dijkzeul and Moke, 2005; Labbé, and Daudin, 2015), which has consequently hindered these principles' efficiency in unifying practices and morals in the humanitarian field. Moreover, there is no direct relationship between these principles and communications practices and activities, except for the principle of humanity that focuses on dignity in humanitarian communications[1]. Finally, these principles have also led many organizations to disregard that humanitarian workers usually come from other professions--physicians, lawyers, social workers, psychologists, photographers, and accountants-- who typically have their own ethics codes. Consequently, humanitarian workers have been expected to shift their moral reasoning from their profession-specific values to humanitarian ones; meanwhile, the prospect of combining humanitarian principles with professional codes to improve the performance of humanitarian workers has neither received investment nor investigation.

This paper is particularly interested in the role of a humanitarian communication specialist, i.e., the person or people in charge of producing the public/external content that humanitarian organizations share in various forms and through multiple platforms. Through my professional experience as a journalist and a humanitarian communication specialist, I have learned that there are many similarities between these two roles on the level of responsibilities, tasks, and educational background. Often, communication specialists have studied journalism and thus carry many of the same skill sets and approaches to storytelling. However, in an age when journalism has become known for its fast, sometimes superficial, or

[1] Slim (2015) mentions that "To date, humanitarians have been good at writing their ethics in declamatory principles, but the profession remains strangely under developed in exploring its applied ethics" (p.21).

misleading and sensational approach to content creation, communication specialists—many former journalists or social media managers—are now expected to present their humanitarian organizations in an ethical and humanitarian way. In this paper, I argue that currently employed humanitarian principles are overly broad and insufficient for guiding these communications practices. I argue that, due to the rising challenges in the domain of public communication as well as the growing need for fast and saleable content in print and on social media, there should be a clear, culturally- and geographically- sensitive, and role-based ethical approach that communication specialists could use daily on their jobs. I also suggest using the feminist ethics of care as an ethical framework to guide humanitarian communications specialists. Therefore, in this paper, I answer the following research questions:

- What are the main ethical principles that humanitarian communication specialists are expected to observe? Why are these principles insufficient?

- How might feminist ethics of care fill the gap left by current humanitarian principles, and what would be the added value of this framework for practicing humanitarian communication?

Background

After a preliminary review of the feminist ethics of care literature, I realized that the main difference between humanitarian and feminist ethics of care is the world views from which each framework departs. While the humanitarian field is motivated by a human rights approach and is concerned with individual rights, the ethics of care is a responsibility-based framework that focuses on interconnectedness, relationships, and communities. The other less noticeable difference between these two frameworks is that humanitarian ethics are based on universal principles while feminist ethics of care works upon particularity. I believe, however, that there is enough common ground between the two frameworks to allow an application of the ethics of care to the humanitarian field. Moreover, both frameworks can complement each other by forming a comprehensive approach that responds to the particularities of an ethical dilemma and syncs with humanitarian principles. My argument is bolstered by Slim's (2015) work on humanitarian ethics. After years of academic and professional engagement with the humanitarian field, Slim (2015) has compiled a realistic understanding of the work dynamics in this domain and what it means to be a humanitarian. His knowledge about the humanitarian field goes a step further than academic research that lacks field experience and is limited to

knowledge acquired through literature review and data collection methods[2]. Therefore, Slim's (2015) work has made me realize the value of my personal experience in the humanitarian field in producing academic knowledge. Consequently, I use this approach to answer the research questions I have raised.

Method

Influenced by the worldview I described in the previous section, I chose auto-ethnography as my data collection method. First, I describe my experience working as the communication officer for an international refugee non-governmental organization that assists Syrian refugees in Lebanon. I worked for this organization for two years, from 2018 to 2020, and gained office and field experience through interviewing beneficiaries, writing success and human interest stories, capturing photos during events, managing social media accounts, and budgeting visibility activities. Second, I use recollections of my work experience, including the discussions held with my managers, my work on developing a set of "Standard Operational Procedures" (SoPs) for guiding an ethical and organized performance in my position, and the lessons I learned to create a list of examples on how the feminist ethics of care might be practiced in the field. I provide these examples while I am aware of the "irreducible particularity"[3] of the feminist ethics of care model, which opposes the reliance on universal principles or best practices. So, I do not claim that the examples apply to all or any situation, but I use them as tangible evidence of the usefulness of this feminist approach. Finally, my six years of professional experience in journalism and academic training in journalism are underlying my understanding of ethics in public communication.

To credibly implement the method of auto-ethnography, the researcher needs to be reflective about their involvement (Wall, 2008) because this kind of ethnographic work aims at observing oneself instead of others. Moreover, the added value of auto-ethnography is that it challenges mainstream research methods in social sciences that usually offer researchers a privileged position from which to gaze at other individuals or communities.

Using ethnography to understand the humanitarian field may fill some persistent gaps in the literature. For example, Ong (2019) argues that applying ethnog-

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[2] Slim (2015) acknowledges his biases by mentioned that he had "studied theology at university and write as a European Christian with liberal political opinions. [His] intellectual tradition is confined to the canons of Western thought, with its classical and Judeo-Christian origins. [He is] largely ignorant of other traditions of human thought and feeling" (p.21).

[3] A particularity of the agent, the other, and the situation" (Blum, 1988, p. 475).

raphy for studying humanitarian communication "can offer sharper critique of media and technological harm" (p.481). Applying this methodology is also a way to answer research questions that focus on communications practices, which is an area that continues to be under-researcher (Orgad, 2018). Moreover, the literature also shows that researchers who use their personal experience to study the humanitarian field, such as Bell and Carens (2004) and Sommers-Flanagan (2007), built their analyses on a solid understanding of the humanitarian field. They thus contributed realistic recommendations and solutions for problems. In this way, my data collection method also fills gaps in the literature because it relies on firsthand knowledge and thus leads to authentic findings.

However, because I rely on my professional experience, my research is susceptible to inquirer's "bias" (Creswell and Creswell, 2018, p. 258), which may be particularly embodied in my examples of practices that are an exercise of feminist ethics of care. I try to overcome this challenge by merging and comparing my personal experiences with the literature review on the most salient ethical practices in the domain of public communication, particularly in the field of journalism. I mainly relied on Quintanilla, et al.'s (2014) report entitled "Reporting on Humanitarian Crises: A Manual for Trainers & Journalists and an Introduction for Humanitarian Workers" as a tangible example of what good public commination practices in the context of a crisis looks like. However, future research on this topic might build on the work done in this paper by interviewing communications specialists who work at different organizations and in different locations to discuss their understanding of humanitarian ethics and the usefulness of ethics of care to the job.

Feminist Ethics of Care: From Personal Experience to Academia

It was challenging for me to get a job in the humanitarian field in Lebanon without prior experience as a humanitarian. I had, therefore, to prove my merit by highlighting my various professional experiences, skills, and knowledge through an exam and an interview. In addition to holding a Bachelor's degree in communications arts with an emphasis on journalism as an undergraduate, I also held a Master's degree in Media Studies when I applied for the job. On the professional level, I had six years of journalism experience and three years of experience in advocacy and public communications with a local advocacy group in my city. I dedicated my Master's thesis to studying the communication tactics of advocacy collectives in Lebanon, a relevant area to the job. However, if there was one question-- and one right answer-- that made me earn the position of a national communications officer, it would be the question posed by the advocacy specialist who was interviewing me next to the human resources specialist. She presented a hypothetical ethical dilem-

ma that required me to make a moral decision in few seconds. The scenario was the following: "What would you do if you had a tight deadline to report a story to a donor and after receiving informed consent from the participant and interviewing her she called on the date of the deadline saying that she would like to withdraw her consent?". After a few seconds of thinking, I said that I would cancel the story. The interviewer reminded me that I would miss the deadline. I assured her that I would cancel the story. She could not help but smile.

The Feminist Ethics of Care: A Definition

The idea of feminist ethics of care originated with Carol Gilligan's (1982) book *In a Different Voice*. From a psychological approach, she uses evidence from interviews with young women about their abortion decisions to make sense of the process of moral reasoning that women undergo and the considerations that these decisions entail. In her book, Gilligan (1982) argued that women tend to use what she calls the "ethics of care" as a moral framework when faced by an ethical dilemma. Gilligan (1982) believed that women usually see themselves and other people, as connected one to the next, in webs of responsibility. Her work emerged in response to her mentor Lawrence Kohlberg (1981) who claimed that men are superior moral beings, and denied the capacity of women to make moral decisions. Gilligan's work also challenged the dominant Enlightenment moral theories[4] that encouraged individualism and created the rational/emotional dichotomy (Lindemann, 2019).

While the Enlightenment theories that primarily influence the Anglo-American culture and morality have been developed by men and believed that b white heterosexual man was the standard and superior form of humanity, Gilligan challenged mainstream approaches in psychology the by drawing her theory on interviews with women. Gilligan's theory of ethics appreciated the particularities of a moral dilemma; Enlightenment theories, on the other hand, relied on "hypothetical dilemmas" (Gilligan, 1982, p.69), which they assumed would apply to different circumstances. Kantianism, for example, "allows no exceptions to perfect duties" (Quinn, 2014, p.72); because lying is immoral, then people should always avoid lying no matter who might be hurt if the truth was out. This logic does not acknowledge the particularity of the relation that might connect the moral agent and the other person involved in the situation that require lying. Furthermore, Enlightenment theories assumed that rationality is exclusive of emotions and believed that women

[4] The Enlightenment theories with their impartialist approach to morality have been the dominant moral approaches in "Anglo-American moral philosophy" (Blum, 1988, p. 472).

"lack full moral agency" (Clement, 2019, p.3). The rational/emotional dichotomy, in addition to being "misogynistic," misrepresents "emotions and its relationship to reason" (Clement, 2013, p.1931). I challenge this dichotomy by highlighting the importance of emotions in moral decision-making. I am also not arguing that care and emotionality are traits of "women" as a gender, instead, my goal is to abolish the stereotypical dichotomy that claims that only women are capable of being emotional and only men are capable of being rational. My goal in this paper is to normalize acknowledging emotions, relationships, and responsibility as factors that impact resolving ethical dilemmas and decision-making for every person. I believe that individuals and institutions should adopt an ethics of care for our communities to become more just and accommodating environments. Furthermore, this paper contributes to feminist efforts to re-categorize emotions and relationships, from being considered personal to becoming public and from being considered intimate to political.

I choose the feminist ethics of care as an alternative framework to morality in the humanitarian field because it "values emotion rather than reject it" (p.10). Held (2006) mentions that according to the feminist ethics of care, "emotions as sympathy, empathy, sensitivity, and responsiveness are seen as the kind of moral emotions that need to be cultivated not only to help in the implementation of the dictates of reason but to better ascertain what morality recommends" (Held, 2006, p.10). This theory acknowledges the added value of emotions for "Understanding the needs, interests, and welfare of the other person, and understanding the relationship between oneself and that other" (Blum, 1988, p.475). The ethics of care encourages viewing the other as an autonomous and self-sufficient human and "as different in important ways from oneself, as a being existing in her own right, rather than viewing her through a simple projection of what one would feel if one were in her situation" (Blum, 1988, p.475). This view contradicts the mainstream definition of empathy that calls for putting oneself in another person's shoes. Moreover, feminist ethics focuses on "responsibility and relationships" rather than "rights and rules" or "equality and reciprocity" (Gilligan, 1982, p.73). This theory suggests that moral decisions should always acknowledge our responsibility towards oneself and others, or put differently, our responsibility to a community where we are all connected through "webs of responsibilities" (Caswell & Marika, 2016, p.28); it thus calls for an inclusive social setting that does not exclude anyone, even those who violate the social rules, through "restorative models that aim to reintegrate violators into communities and to re-establish mutually responsive relationships" (Caswell & Marika, 2016, p.29). Moreover, the feminist ethics of care approaches ethical dilemmas by acknowledging the "particularity of the agent, the other, and the situation" (p.475). In other words, the feminist ethics of care emphasizes the importance of situating an

ethical dilemma in a real and particular context because details can influence decision making; it allows for recognizing "situational demands" that can obstruct what is referred to, in liberal discourses as "individual choice and free will" (Caswell & Marika, 2016, p.28). While some women have been taught that the care for others requires an "ethic of self-sacrifice," Gilligan's (1982, p.132) analysis of some interviews with young girls who were trying to solve the abortion dilemma shows that these girls were not able to adopt the approach unless they first were able to care for themselves. By setting the foundation of the ethics of care, Gilligan contested her contemporaries' approaches to morality by acknowledging the usefulness of emotions such as care, empathy, and responsibility in shaping moral decisions. Gilligan's theory has been considered a feminist theory of ethics because it was based on studying women while her predecessors, including Kohlberg, excluded women from their studies. While Gilligan's theory has been criticized for re-producing the social role and image of women as caregivers and as agents who are always expected to sacrifice their needs and wants for dependents, Gilligan' (1982) makes it clear that self care and autonomy are the pre-requisites of proper moral reasoning and care for others.

To sum up, Gilligan (1982) suggests that acting upon the ethics of care requires the following: (1) "a progressively more adequate understanding of the psychology of human relationships;" (2) "an increasing differentiation of self and other;" and (3) "a growing comprehension of the dynamics of social interaction" (Gilligan, 1982, p.74). Lindeman (2019) also provides some guidance to applying this theory, which reflects the worldview of feminist ethics: "If you care about the person you are caring for, you interact with [them] not simply as an object of your care but as someone with wants, intentions, and desires of [their] own" (p.108). Nevertheless, applying the feminist ethics of care is challenging because it is based on a personal understanding of care, emotions, and responsibility. It thus requires continuous reflection on a person's intentions, behavior, and the consequences caused by their behavior.

Humanitarian Communication as a Professional Field

As a communications officer, I was supervised by the grants' specialist and then the advocacy specialist, a form of line management common among humanitarian organizations. Some organizations have an independent communications department that still has to coordinate with grants and advocacy specialists. Most humanitarian organizations approach communications as a tool to comply with donors' requirements, fulfill the organization's fundraising ambitions, or disseminate political messages. Therefore, as a communications specialist, I often faced ethical

dilemmas where I had to prioritize the benefits of one of the following stakeholders—who enjoy varying levels of power-- over others: (1) the donors who fund the communications activities as part of their grant to the organization and whose relationship with the communications' department is usually centered on implementing communications activities that highlight the contribution of the donor to the recipients of assistance. Donors' aim is usually to make their contributions visible as part of their public relations strategy, (2) the organization itself, which is in best cases interested in creating a coherent image or "brand" for itself to attract more donors and create awareness among the public around the assistance it provides; organization are usually interested in meeting the donors' visibility requirements, and (3) the beneficiaries of assistance -- usually from vulnerable populations.

This structure, which always situated communication activities as tools for fund-raising or political activity, had limited my capacity to write stories that challenged mainstream narratives about the community; It also hindered my ability to brainstorm or implement communications activities that responded to the needs and concerns of the beneficiaries of assistance. Consequently, following the universal humanitarian protocols was never sufficient for guiding me into doing the right thing. I visited the field once to collect a success story about an adolescent girl who went back to school with support from the organization for which I worked. After interviewing the 13-year-old refugee girl Rym (pseudonym)[5] to showcase her story on the organization's Facebook page, it was time to photograph her. Although I received Rym's consent, in addition to the consent of her parents, for both the interview and the photo session, she seemed reluctant. I suggested trying a few shots before starting the "official" photo session to check out how she would look on the camera. She liked the photos and asked me about who was going to see them. Since I was going to share it on Facebook (and I informed her about that), I reminded her that anyone who visits the page would see her photo. She did not reject participating but seemed uncomfortable. I needed the photo because I had to create a Facebook post for our donor about their successful contribution. It was also hard to receive the consent of other parents for interviewing their children. This is an example of an ethical dilemma that I have faced in the field where I had to choose between wanting to meet the contractual requirements of the donor versus considering Rym's concerns about her privacy and looks. In the following section, I will explain why the current humanitarian principles are insufficient for guiding communications spe-

[5] I am not using the real name here to protect the identity of the girl involved in this incident.

cialists Then, I will discuss how the feminist ethics of care would have helped me make a moral decision about photographing Rym.

Communications specialists are always susceptible to facing similar dilemmas because their tasks require exposing the stories and bodies of other human beings to the public through photography, filming, interviewing, and writing. Despite that, researchers have continued to ignore questions about the ethics of this job and have instead focused on investigating the implementation of humanitarian ethics on the organizational level (Slim, 1997; Slim, 1997a; Bell and Carens, 2004; Sommers-Flanagan, 2007). To highlight this gap in the literature, Slim (2015) coins the term "role morality" (p.117) to refer to "a moral posture and particular behaviors that make sense when you are trying to achieve a very specific good, but which do not make sense as a general rule for all areas of life" (Slim, 2015, p.117). Slim (2015) highlights the importance of paying attention to role morality in the humanitarian field by mentioning that: "In practice, humanitarian professionals adopt a role morality much like a doctor, policeman [sic], politician, nurse, soldier, priest or accountant. In their various official roles, members of these professions must act in line with their role responsibilities when they are on duty" (p.117). While the focus on organizational ethics might in part go back to the universal nature of the ethical principles that guide humanitarian action, this paper focuses on role morality.

Humanitarian Ethics

Seven humanitarian principles have been guiding the humanitarian field since 1965: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality (Pictet, 1979). In addition, the "International Humanitarian Law" and the "Human Rights Law" (Slim, 1997, p.247) also govern the humanitarian field. Applying these principles has always been challenging for humanitarian organizations because "their relevance is sometimes questioned or put to the test by outside events and developments" (Labbé and Daudin, p.2016, p.189). In what follows, I define the four fundamental principles in the humanitarian field, i.e., the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence, and discuss their relevance to humanitarian communications.

Humanity

The principle of humanity is also one of the goals of humanitarian action "that aims to respect and protect the humanity in everyone" (Slim, 2015, p.45). This principle requires protecting and respecting the physical well-being of vulnerable populations, in addition to their dignity and identity because:

> Our humanity is more than just a body and more than just a mind. It is created by the unity of both and by our association with others. Our life is lived; it does not just exist […] Each human life has what Ricoeur calls its own "singularity" (Slim, 2015, p.48).

The principle of humanity is the only humanitarian principle that is mentioned in an article that directly addressed communication: the 10th article of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' code of conduct links humanity to dignity and emphasizes the importance of observing this principle in "information, publicity, and advertising activities" (Pictet, 1979, p.5). Humanity aligns with the feminist ethics of care because it calls for approaching the other person as an autonomous entity, with needs, wants, and concerns that are different and independent from oneself. The principle of humanity also calls for respecting that autonomy.

The principle of humanity had guided me to portray Rym in a dignified manner in my photo. However, the way I understood dignity was absolutely different from the way she understood it. I wanted to take a shot depicting her smiling and wearing a neat dress. However, she did not like the idea of being seen and identified by people she did not know or see back. Her dignity entailed protecting her privacy and agency over her body. For Rym, being portrayed in a dignified manner meant having enough time to try several framings and check each without feeling pressured to approve one photo; it meant choosing whether she wanted to smile or look at the camera. The principle of humanity alone does not teach communications specialists that they need to allow enough time and energy to do their job properly, ethically; it does not teach them to listen and understand to other people.

Impartiality

The principle of impartiality requires the humanitarian worker to assist others regardless of their "nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions" (Pictet, 1979, p.1). This principle "permits the impartial person to be judgmental—albeit not gratuitously so, but in line with agreed values," i.e., the value of the need for assistance. I argue that part of the definition of impartiality may be helpful to communications specialists because it calls for approaching all people as equal (to oneself and to one another) and reporting their stories without stereotypical prejudices or biases. Moreover, building on this definition of impartiality, I think this principle aligns with the philosophy behind the ethics of care, which is approaching all human beings as worth caring for and empathizing with. Thus, impartiality intersects with the ethics of care by encouraging the moral agent to respect and care for others based only on need. A caring communications specialist may act upon the

principle of impartiality in the humanitarian field by, for example, highlighting the stories of the people who are in the most need of support but this principle did not seem relevant to solving the dilemma I faced with Rym.

Neutrality

The principle of neutrality is, by definition, to "not take sides" in a conflict zone while on a humanitarian mission (Pictet, 1979, p.1). Humanitarian organizations and UN agencies have always challenged the principle of neutrality for two main reasons, according to Slim (1979). The first reason is related to a humans' rights approach to humanitarianism which favors disciplinary procedures towards human rights violators; this approach considers that the principle of neutrality "often imposes an unacceptable silence upon them in the face of grievous violations of human rights" (Slim, 1979, p.348). The other reason is related to field-specific realities linked to funding, political, and demographic particularities. Thus, some organizations consider that the principle of neutrality is "unfeasible in the light of what we now know about the manipulation of relief supplies, and the fact that combatants and civilians are intrinsically mixed in today's civil wars" (Slim, 1979, p.348). In journalism, neutrality provides equal opportunities for opposite sides of a conflict to express their point of view in an article. However, it is unrealistic to expect a humanitarian communications specialist to allow a militant to speak in their story; this is hard to see in real world. So, the principle of neutrality is not relevant to humanitarian communications, and it has been challenged as a journalistic principle in recent years. Neutrality might seem relevant to the logic of feminist ethics of care in its non-exclusionary approach, but the feminist ethics of care is a framework for moral judgment and for taking sides; it's about doing the best thing for the community. So, I do not think that the principle of neutrality syncs with an ethics of care because one cannot care and be neutral at the same time.

Independence

The principle of independence requires humanitarian organizations to "always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with Red Cross principles" (Pictet, 1979, p.1). Independence seems the least relevant principle to humanitarian communications because it relates to the organization's structure, sources of funding, and affiliations. But it is worth mentioning that the organization's commitment to the principle of independence can shape its approach to communications, i.e., whether the organization considers communications a tool for meeting donors' requirements or as an autonomous department. Moreover, the organizational commitment to independence or otherwise its politi-

cal affiliation also influences the quality of the public communications that it produces.

How did these principles help me solve the dilemma of taking a photo for Rym when she was not comfortable having her image seen by many people she does not know? Humanity guided me to portray her in a dignified manner and by seeking her consent and that of her parents. But this principle did not suggest framing my photo in a specific way and dealing with the worried girl. Moreover, the principles of impartiality, neutrality, and independence could not guide me into making the right decision at that point because they did not apply to the situation.

It is hard to have a set of ethical guidelines that can always apply to different and particular situations. Thus, the fact that these universal principles do not address communication activities *per se*[6] leaves a gap in morally practicing humanitarian communication. Moreover, finding ways to improve humanitarian communication continues to be challenging in the absence of academic literature about communication practices in the humanitarian field[7]. In the following section, I highlight the common ground between humanitarian ethics and feminist ethics of care; then, I emphasize the added value of the ethics of care to the existing humanitarian moral principles.

Discussion

Linking Feminist Ethics of Care and Humanitarian Ethics in Theory

I understand the common ground between the ethics of care and humanitarian principles as a mutual language and common beliefs. I have recognized the potential rapprochement between both approaches in Slim's (2015) book, where he focuses on "how to be a good humanitarian worker" (p.7). The starting point for realizing this mutuality is understanding the difference between a human rights approach and a humanitarian approach. Slim (2015) explains that the difference between these approaches--often used interchangeably-- is that human rights uphold a punitive approach that pushes its workers to identify human rights violations and

[6] The universality of these principles have led to various subjective interpretations and application of these principles, which is a problem that Dijkzeul and Moke (2005) highlight in their paper: "Many of these differences stem from the lack of shared agreement on definitions of the principles at the heart of humanitarian action… Many organizations and their staff lack a thorough understanding of them, or apply them inconsistently" (p. 675).

[7] The most salient academic questions in the field of humanitarian communication have focused on the representations that humanitarian organizations produce in their public communication.

punish the offender. On the other hand, humanitarians are motivated by the principles of humanity and impartiality, so they find themselves ethically obliged to provide aid for anyone in need, even human rights' violators. This reality says a lot about the centrality of the principle of humanity to the work of a humanitarian. Slim (2015) uses the language of care to describe this reality: "Driven by the universal moral value of humanity, humanitarianism hopes for a world in which everyone is motivated by humanitarian impulses to care for and protect each other" (p.10). Caring for other humans is part of being a humanitarian. Moreover, humanitarian principles does not reject emotions, such as sympathy, Slim (2015) mentions that "The ground of ethics in humanitarian action is a profound feeling of compassion and responsibility towards others who are living and suffering in extremis. It is a feeling of identification and sympathy that demands some reasonable and effective action as a response to suffering" (p.26). Slim (2015) also focuses on the importance of approaching beneficiaries as autonomous human beings, which syncs with Gilligan's (1982) definition of particularity and empathy in her discussion of what it means to offer "genuine attention" (Slim, 2015, p.50) during direct interaction with beneficiaries. According to Slim (2015):

> Humanitarian attention is not a looking down at people but looking straight at them to connect on equal terms as two people who share the condition of humanity. Proper attention is a meeting not an inspection by one side. In the focused attention of this meeting, a spirit of caring, curiosity, and response needs to be present to ask important questions (p.50).

Slim (2015) presents "responsibility" as the motive behind humanitarian action: "Humanitarian action manifests an emotional concern for other people, and acts from an intuitive sense of responsibility" (p.35). He also emphasizes particularity and response to suffering as part of the humanitarian ethics: "humanitarian practitioners must work face-to-face with affected individuals, and in their best interests, to find practical and often urgent solutions that best meet their needs" (Slim, 2015, p.112).

With its emphasis on approaching others as humans with personal needs and wants, the ethics of care emphasizes humanity and dignity as principles that are intrinsic to its application. Moreover, care, responsibility, sympathy, empathy, humanity, and dignity are terms that are intrinsic to defining humanitarian ethics. This common language between the humanitarian field and feminist ethics is the common ground on which I base my framework.

What is, then, the added value of the ethics of care when the language of care, empathy, and responsibility is already used for describing humanitarian action and when principles such as humanity and impartiality guide humanitarian action? The added value is recognized when the main difference between both fields is recalled--their differing points of departure or world views. While the humanitarian field departs from the individual rights, the ethics of care starts from responsibility towards the community (Richardson and Fullerton, 2016). Therefore, the ethics of care teaches humanitarian practitioners to consider the impact of their practices on the whole community. This is important because communication representations have always had an impact on the entire community of sufferers (Chouliaraki, 2010). Therefore, communications specialists need to pay attention to the impact of their activities on the community if they want to improve their practices. Moreover, by adopting an ethics of care, the communications specialist would be supporting the whole community rather than individuals. This, consequently, leads to a more positive impact of humanitarian intervention because

The feminist ethics of care also approaches care and responsibility as its core values and starting points. In contrast, the humanitarian field is governed by seven equally important moral principles that are expected to apply to different parts of the world. So, the ethics of care focuses on emotions of care and responsibility more than humanitarian principles do. This, again, would lead to more caring and responsible communications activities that avoid harming the person being involved. Thinking about ways to mitigate the harmful effects of communications activities is very important because the humanitarian domain has always been subject to critiques and continues to commit mistakes against vulnerable people by, for example, objectifying the beneficiaries of assistance (Chouliaraki, 2010; Orgad, 2018).

The ethics of care can always be relevant and useful to any activity that a communications specialist would implement because it is malleable: it's a personal worldview that affects how people see themselves, others, and power. Moreover, the ethics of care acknowledges particularity, so it can be efficient for solving many ethical dilemmas because it guides the agent to decisions that respond to the particular problem. At the same time, the ethics of care does not reject impersonal and universal details. While humanitarian principles are universal, the ethics of care allows for a more balanced approach to ethics that acknowledges "impersonal and purely personal questions" (Blum, 1988, p.474)[8].

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[8] According to Blum (1988), "Gilligan holds that there is an appropriate place for impartiality, universal principle, and the like within morality and that a final mature morality involves

Finally, this approach shows communications specialists that they have a duty towards the community with which they interact. It also allows them to see the impact of their behaviors, no matter how simple -- such as smiling, gazing, standing, sitting, asking a question, choosing a word, or dressing in a specific way. Consequently, they recognize that by working for a humanitarian organization and going into the field, they have a duty to be moral agents. By the same token, they realize the moral aspect of each practice they perform and that any of these undertakings involves ethical decision-making.

I believe that the feminist ethics of care would have helped me solve the ethical dilemma I faced when photographing Rym. First, this approach would have allowed me to acknowledge and accept that Rym is an autonomous person with personal concerns and needs. Thus, it would have helped me realize that I cannot apply the general protocols that I usually follow to finish my task. This approach would have encouraged me to spend time with Rym and to try to discover what she wanted and what concerned her about participating in the photo session. If I had been informed by a caring approach, I would have talked to Rym, asked her many questions, told her a few jokes to try to make her laugh and to relax, and allowed her to take some photos of me so she could feel in charge, and help break the ice between us. I would have tried several photo frames and shared the results with her. Using this approach to ethics, I would also have considered taking a wide shot for Rym from behind where she would not be so easy to identify, for example. Moved by respect, I would have set up the photo session as a collaborative work between Rym and me. I would have asked for her thoughts about how to best frame her own photo. Finally, moved by responsibility, I would not leave the field until I was certain that Rym was comfortable with the final image – one we would have selected together.

Feminist Ethics of Care in Action

How can humanitarian communications specialists apply the feminist ethics of care when on the job? As a starting point, I would like to mention that a sincere implementation of the approach requires a belief in its values and worldview. An individual who wants to practice the feminist ethics of care needs to question the way they see themselves and people around them, notably less privileged or less powerful individuals and communities. They should also think about the prejudices and biases that shape their thoughts and practices. Finally, a person might also need

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a complex interaction and dialogue between the concerns of impartiality and those of personal relationship and care" (Blum, 1988, p.474).

to acknowledge the privileges they enjoy as an individual and a member of a racial, ethnic, gender, or socio-economic group.

The feminist ethics of care is an approach to morality that values particularity. Therefore, it is hard to draw some general rules applicable to all situations out of this framework. However, I would like to provide some tangible examples of how communications specialists may work upon feminist ethics of care. In the following section, I will refer to the beneficiaries of assistance whom communications specialists encounter during field visits as participants.

First, before going to the field, a communications specialist would inform the participants of their visit. Giving notice before a visit is an act of respect to the participants. A caring communications specialist considers the needs and concerns of the participants; so, given the limited psycho-social knowledge that a communications specialist usually has, they should try to avoid doing anything that would trigger negative feelings such as fear or unsafety among participants. Participants usually consider the sites of activities as safe and undisclosed spaces, so seeing a new face without prior notice may trigger some negative feelings. A communications specialist may also consult with the psycho-social specialists who usually follow some protocols for field visits.

A caring communications specialist would make sure that the location of the interview or photo session is proximate, accessible, and comfortable for the participant; the participant should be able to tell their story without the risk of being heard by a third party. Participants should be able to access the location without traveling for a long distance, incurring financial expenses, or interrupting their daily life routine or job. Doing their best to find a convenient location demonstrates a communication specialist's responsibility towards the participant who would often be occupied by household tasks or long hours of low-wage labour.

When a communications specialist arrives at the location, they would start any encounter with people they meet in the field by introducing themselves and their job. If they decided to interview the person or collect quotes from them, they should seek verbal or written informed consent. Implementing an interview with an approach of ethics of care requires thinking about the questions that would be asked. It also involves reflection on one's language, gestures, and body language. When it comes to questions, a communications specialist might focus on more open-ended questions and less structured interviewing plans to allow the participant to focus on the details and aspects they want to tell. A communications specialist should avoid contributing to stereotypical images or narratives about the vulnerable

people they interact with. Instead, they should try to be the voice of that community because they have a responsibility towards them by virtue of their job. Moreover, being familiar with cultural cues can prevent a communications specialist from making mistakes that show disrespect or ambivalence, which might harm the participant and break the trust.

Finally, a communications specialist should continue to act upon the consent terms after returning to their offices. So, if a participant has refused to share their story on social media, the communications specialist should commit to that. Also, when writing their story, a caring communications specialist should spare enough time to reflect on the language they use; this is important because acting upon responsibility towards the person and the community they represent requires avoiding any possible harm resulting from the article or photo they are circulating.

Conclusion

Research about ethics in the humanitarian field rarely focuses on role morality, and research on communication in this field rarely focuses on practices. This paper was an attempt to fill the gap in academic literature at the intersection of humanitarian ethics and humanitarian communication. It suggests adopting a feminist ethics of care as a moral framework to better guide the decisions of humanitarian communication specialists, particularly when they are on field visits. In this paper, I have argued that this feminist approach, even though it comes from a different world view than that of a humanitarian one, can speak the same language as humanitarians. I invested in the common ground between humanitarian ethics and feminist ethics of care to show that the latter can be efficiently used in the former. Moreover, I argued that the feminist ethics of care can bring an added value to practicing humanitarianism, particularly in the role of a communications specialist. This paper acknowledges that acting upon the ethics of care is not easy; it requires a shift in the person's worldview and an understanding of their responsibility towards the community that their job allows them to access. To achieve that, it might be useful to start the process by questioning one's biases, prejudices, and privileges. Moreover, training oneself on practicing emotions of sympathy, empathy, and care might be a good start to adopt feminist ethics of care approach while on the job of a humanitarian communications specialist.

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‘Creator Gave us Two Ears and One Mouth’: Sound as a Signifier of Environmental Crisis at the Intersections of Indigeneity and Acoustic Ecology

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Abstract
Acoustic ecology has served as a foundational theoretical field for many sound scholars to understand the soundscape as a signifier for environmental crisis. While sound theorists like R. Murray Schafer and those in the World Soundscape Project (WSP) have developed ways in which to critically analyze environmental soundscapes, these methods have often excluded Indigenous narratives which offer complex understandings of sound through embodied experience. In this paper I employ a brief description of acoustic ecology, drawing attention to its benefits as a methodological approach to sonic ordering, while also demonstrating the possibilities for expansion of this field when examined in conversation with Canadian Indigenous perspectives and notable sonic activist movements. I address how Indigenous knowledge systems, futurisms, art, and activism can provide critical perspectives within the field of acoustic ecology, which lends well to understanding soundscapes of crisis. I identify a few examples of sonic forward Indigenous environmental movements which include game design by Elizabeth LaPensée, Rebecca Belmore’s *Wave Sound* sculpture, and the Round Dance Revolution within the Idle No More movement. In sum, this paper works to bridge the work of acoustic ecology and Indigenous sonic movements to encourage a complex and nuanced relationship to sound, and to explore moments for understanding sonic intersections at the forefront of environmental crisis.

Keywords
acoustic ecology, Indigeneity, environmental activism

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Canada Day, July 1st, 2017, marked 150 years since federation; a date aptly titled Canada 150. In an interview with Flare magazine approximately two weeks prior to Canada 150, a number of Indigenous Canadians were asked to answer the question, "What would you like Canadians to know as Canada 150 approaches?" (Ratchford, 2017). *Onon:wat* (two-spirited) urban Indigenous person, Rebecca Benson, shared the story of a teaching from Oneida Elder Dan Smoke. Benson recalls a time when Elder Smoke had said, "Creator gave us two ears and one mouth for a reason; you should use them proportionately. You will almost always gain more by listening than you will from talking" (Ratchford, 2017). Elder Smoke's teaching identifies the importance of listening as a method through which to learn from others and discern knowledge through sonic interventions. Simultaneously, it reminds Canadians of the importance of prioritizing Indigenous voices through moments of reconciliation, sovereignty, cultural longevity, and environmental crisis.

As the Canadian government continues to build pipelines across this land and prioritize industrialism and expansion for the sake of capital growth, Indigenous voices stand at the forefront of environmental activism (Baker, 2020; B. Trumpener, 2021). To define the global current environmental crisis, a critical placement in which I situate this paper, I share a quote from the New York 2019 Climate Summit. The UN secretary general Guterres states,

> Nature is angry. And we fool ourselves if we think we can fool nature. Because nature always strikes back. And around the world, nature is striking back with fury…Make no mistake, when we see those images, we are not just seeing damage. We are seeing the future if we do not act now…The climate emergency is a race we are losing, but it is a race we can win. The climate crisis is caused by us – and the solutions must come from us. (Guterres, 2019)

As Elder Smoke suggests, these solutions to our climate emergency may be found through the act of listening. In academia, listening within the field of sound studies has encouraged these moments for reflection to consider sound as an environmental marker in ecological crisis; a method through which to discern environmental changes and to consider sonic solutions. For example, Hildegard Westerkamp suggests that the act of soundwalking, defined as an excursion with the intent of listening to environment, offers a strengthened connection to environment because,

> an ongoing and regular practice of soundwalking can be understood as an ecological act. The soundwalk itself is the action, which carries the potential for developing a conscious relationship to the environment…a soundwalk does not only reveal relationships within the

> acoustic environment but perhaps more importantly, makes relationships conscious between listeners' experiences and their acoustic - social environment. (Westerkamp, 2006)

The work of Westerkamp and her fellow sound studies researchers, such as R. Murray Schafer and Barry Truax, prompted the field of acoustic ecology. The field's complex history and timeline, as neatly outlined in the book *Sound, Media, Ecology,* (Droumeva & Jordan, 2019), radically shifted academic perspectives on sonic analysis: "The theoretical underpinnings of such an ecological approach were that of systems theory where the acoustic environment could be regarded as a complex system of inter-acting elements, rather than isolated acoustic phenomena" (Truax, 2019, p. 22). This framework for sonic analysis has encouraged scholars to consider the various aspects of a soundscape, learning to listen beyond the notable sonic context to discern knowledge within shifting audible patterns. Simultaneously, acoustic ecology researchers have also suggested new ways to examine environmental crisis, identifying signifiers of decay which remain invisible to a visually centric society but resonate within sonic worlds.

Although the field of acoustic ecology has proved unique and informative in that it prompts new ways of organizing and categorizing sonic relationships, various scholars across disciplines have argued that the structural processes and methods tied to this framework are limited and often exclude Indigenous narratives which have long identified embodied relationships within sonic reflection (Gross, 2014; LaDuke, 2016; Robinson, 2020; Westerkamp, 2019). To broaden the field of acoustic ecology, I suggest that a collaborative approach to sonic investigation in environmental crisis between academic fields and Indigenous led sonic movements may prompt new areas for reflection. These collaborative discussions may offer a variety of ways in which to understand sonic importance and environmental soundscapes as audible markers.

In this paper, I review the history of acoustic ecology in conversation with Indigenous sonic perspectives to explore the strengths of these fields and the possibilities of engaging in sonic research within and between these approaches to sound. Following a brief literature review of these perspectives, I consider a sample of Indigenous led movements and activists who are engaging with environmental issues through sonic means and digital futurisms. The decision to engage with sound art and environmental activists was a methodological choice made in an effort to bridge the ontological gap of academic sound studies and Indigenous forms of intervention. As Adamson and Monani describe in the consideration of Maori art in conversation with fields of cosmology, Indigenous art and design can function as a form of eco-political practice, "a creative, negotiable space where worlds can meet" (Monani &

Adamson, 2016, p. 11). By exploring the function of sound through Indigenous art and activism, this paper works to broaden the field of acoustic ecology by considering the sound art, sonic works, and the respective scholars and designers who exist outside of academic borders.

Methodologically, this paper will consider the perspectives through a brief literature review to comparatively address these fields and approaches to sonic analysis. To conclude, the paper will suggest 3 examples for consideration of Indigenous activism and futurisms. These examples include game design by Elizabeth LaPensée, Rebecca Belmore's *Wave Sound* sculptures, and the Round Dance Revolution within the Idle No More movement. Each example will consider the audience, call to action, means of production, and sonic markers by which participants are encouraged to engage. This paper works to consider the foundational aspects of acoustic ecology in conversation with Indigenous perspectives on listening and sound analysis, political and environmental activism, sonic art, Indigenous futurisms, and cultural knowledge systems. These comparisons can offer new modes of understanding and addressing environmental crisis through decolonial knowledge systems.

A brief overview of acoustic ecology

Considering the origins of the field of acoustic ecology, it is most widely accepted that soundscape studies and acoustic ecology were founded by SFU researcher, R. Murray Schafer (Droumeva & Jordan, 2019, p. v). Schafer's work aimed to capture evolving soundscapes through experimental forms of collaboration between music and nature (Schafer, 1993, p. 302). His compositions have acted as a call to action, encouraging those to listen to the environment and to develop sonic solutions to what he describes as an increasing urbanization problem. Most notably, Schafer (1993) articulates his overt frustration with noise and a reduction of the natural sonic world frequently throughout his work.

In the 1960s, he founded the World Soundscape Project (WSP), a group which attempted to identify issues of noise pollution from a positive listener-centric approach (Truax, 2019, p. 21). Across international borders, the team was able to amass a collection of soundscape recordings, exploring various evolving sonic markers through methods such as soundwalking, a process which encourages individuals to analyze qualitative aspects of a sonic environment and embodied listening techniques (Westerkamp, 2006), to other technologically focused methods such as bioacoustics and spectral analysis, which graphically analyze sounds and species by frequency range (Truax, 2019, p. 25). The team consisted of a collection of students and sound scholars including Barry Truax (2019) and Hildegard Westerkamp

(2006), who worked alongside R. Murray Schafer. Their work strengthened the field of acoustic ecology, exploring sound through environmental impact in academia and beyond; World Soundscape researcher Barry Truax notes that one of the goals of the project was to encourage the government of British Columbia to include soundscape ecology within the environmentalist agenda (Truax, 2019, p. 22). The work of R. Murray Schafer the World Soundscape Project was innovative in that it prompted various fields to consider sound within seemingly untraditional platforms of study. Simultaneously, they highlighted the importance of listening in a world that has become extremely ocular focused.

The 'whiteness' of acoustic ecology: Addressing the intersections of Indigenous perspectives on sonic worlds

While sound theorists like Schafer and those in the World Soundscape Project provide a critical analysis of sound media and environmental soundscapes, this field is primarily situated within settler perspectives of sound and sensory engagement. One reason for this lack of diversity in the field stems from the time frame in which this framework began. At the same time of the development of sound studies work at SFU, Indigenous people were facing the dangers of forced removal from their homes as Indigenous children were placed with white families or in residential schools (Hanson, n.d.). Simultaneously, in the context of academia, there has long been a history of barriers to knowledge sharing for Indigenous students and faculty. The institution has historically positioned these issues as individual plights by suggesting it is an issue of low achievement, lack of perseverance, or poor retention (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 2001, p. 1). Although various Canadian Universities continually make statements for recognition that they are moving towards a broader appreciation of various knowledge systems, the systemic and hierarchical perception of diversity amongst scholars and methodological approaches continue to permeate universities internationally. Australian scholar Sue Green remarks,

> Academia is a world based on individualism and competitiveness which for Indigenous peoples, and particularly Indigenous women, is culturally unsafe. Furthermore, whilst the academy is rushing forward to be inclusive of Indigenous peoples, cultures and knowledges, it does so whilst still maintaining its structures of white, patriarchal privilege. (Green et al, 2018, p. 256)

In order to move forward, we must ensure that universities demonstrate respect, relevance, reciprocity and responsibility for Indigenous knowledge systems, processes, and practices (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 2001). In this sense, it is clear as to why Indigenous perspectives are not as neatly integrated into the field of acoustic

ecology, as the mere fact of being Indigenous during the time of acoustic ecology's design in Canada, resulted in punishment and alienation.

I also suggest that this division of Indigeneity and settler narratives within soundscape research stems from the fact that many acoustic ecology methods are positioned as systematic and humanistic forms of analysis. Key research methodology employed by the WSP and R Murray Schafer such as soundwalking, sound count sheets, and recording techniques rely on the understanding of sound in relation to human experience. For example, R. Murray Schafer describes the role of classification of sounds "according to their physical characteristics or the way in which they are perceived; according to their function and meaning; or according to their emotional or affective qualities" (Schafer, 1993, p. 133). While these classification tools and methods may lead to improvement in judgement and perception for sound studies scholars, they rely on a centralized human perspective to order sounds according to distinct parameters. Considering Indigenous worldviews and integrating methods of Indigenous knowledge systems within the field of soundscape research could provide new ways of exploring sound and environmental crisis through embodied experience, cultural practices, and considerations of synergy – all of which actively work against humanist perspectives and position energetic and embodied connection as central to understanding sonic worlds.

Indigenous scholars such as Dylan Robinson (2020) and Lawrence Gross (2014) have published Indigenous forward sound centric research to combat these colonial narratives and broaden the field of acoustic ecology, offering discussions on listening positionality and cultural listening practices respectively. Robinson's work in particular has suggested a shift in listening positionality and anticolonial listening practices that resist what he deems a fevered pace of consumption and instead listen "in favor of new temporalities of wonder disoriented from antirelational and nonsituated settler colonial positions of certainty" (Robinson, 2020, p. 53). Robinson's work is one of many which offers a unique view on positionality and listening techniques to consider Indigenous ways of being at the forefront of sound studies work. Therefore, my aim is not to dismiss the work performed by R. Murray Schafer and the World Soundscape Project, but to expand on their analysis and theoretical underpinnings. I aim to consider their work in conversation with Indigenous sonic researchers to address Indigenous activism as a platform for understanding sonic creation and analysis as both a communication technique and as a form of environmentalism.

Various Indigenous perspectives on listening suggest a complex and layered relationship between sound and land, positioning listening as a multi-sensory em-

bodied experience built upon relational understandings of titles between speaker and listener (Gross, 2014; Robinson, 2020; Simpson, 2011). In essence, "the land is more than a backdrop, space, or a location; it is a sustainer, speaker, and archive for Indigenous stories" (Sium & Ritskes, 2013, p. vii). This differs from a colonial relationship with land and soundscape, one which relies on the concepts of territory and land through the lens of ownership (England, 2019, p. 8), and listening as a form of data extraction or rapid consumption (Robinson, 2020). In that sense, an embodied relationship with listening to soundscape means that every sound source carries a sonic identity and a profound meaning within the space (Hopkins, 2019). While an analysis of the sound outside of this context offers intricate ways of knowing, a consideration of the sound within embodied listening practice may unlock new ways in which to engage with environmental crisis through sonic means and understanding. Indigenous sound scholar Candice Hopkins describes in a presentation for SFU Graduate & Postdoctoral studies (2019), that environmental sounds are not always received as surface level, but often carry a profound meaning. She states that Indigenous systems of sound analysis hear the "harmonics of stones, who are believed to be grandmothers and grandfathers, the harmonics of the trees, that aim to teach individuals how to bend and not break, and the harmonics of water, continually flowing with new progress" (Hopkins, 2019). Hopkins suggests that de-colonial listening aspires to find meaning within and between the sources, deepening listening practices beyond sound source or tonal analysis.

Hopkins also suggests it is important to view sound as a relationship of exchange and the land as a listener that is attuned to our frequencies (Hopkins, 2019). Understanding the environment as both speaker and listener can evoke new comprehension of human and environmental relationships, exploring how our soundscape receives and responds through sonic cues. To understand this nuanced relationship means examining sounds of the past and exploring the sounds of the future (Hopkins, 2019), reaching beyond the sound source to hear what is inaudible. For example, pre-colonial architecture and acoustic compositions carry sonic cues that are tied to mimetic replications of their environment. In particular, the Maya Kukulkan pyramids were designed so that a clap at the base of the pyramid would stimulate an audio response that mimicked the Kukul bird (Lubman, 2002, p. 2285). Whether this sonic intention was designed to honour the animal or to create a new sonically relevant sound source, this historical design within architecture demonstrates a conscious knowledge of sound and land as malleable, informative, and embodied.

To better understand moments of environmental crisis and activism, it is important to shift colonial understandings from solely ocular information to the acous-

tic world, as scientists are noticing animals that rely on frequencies and sonic forms of communication are quickly anticipating environmental changes prior to our understandings (Hopkins, 2019; Leroy et al., 2018). To cite an example, a 2018 study performed in the Southern Indian Ocean noticed that blue whales were adapting their calls each year, adjusting the pitch gradually over time, potentially due to environmental changes and global warming affecting the acoustic properties of the ocean (Leroy et al., 2018, p. 8572). This example demonstrates how a shift from a visually centric society to a sonically informed community would prompt new ways of recognizing environmental crisis in its evolution. While the whale calls are one audible marker of this form of crisis, there are many more audible changes demonstrating various damaging effects.

Acoustic ecology & Indigenous sonic worlds: The frontlines of environmental activism

Understanding acoustic ecology alongside Indigenous movements and sonic knowledge, it is possible to further divulge an analysis of environmental activists as contributors to this field, broadening understandings of soundscape within the context of environmental crisis. According to Am Kanngieser, sound is inherently a political medium and can be anchored as such (2015, p. 1). Examining sound as a presence of inequality and future predictions can encourage, "political relations… to build new and creative terrains for human and more-than-human negotiations" (Kanngieser, 2015, p. 5). Similarly, the inequalities of sonic relations also mirror inequalities among populations and communities. Learning to listen for inequalities within communities can encourage discussions of colonial knowledge systems and state organizations.

Kanngieser's (2015) five propositions of sound identify ways in which to address and consider sound art and environmental activism in conversation with acoustic ecology in academia. Each of the case studies offered in this paper identify a moment to consider inequalities and political terrain through sonic means. Through the work of sound design in video games, sound installations, and static art pieces, to larger activist led movements rooted in sonic understandings of synergy, each example offers insight into sound as a signifier of environmental crisis and sonic worlds as a tool to converse within eco-politics. These examples may contribute to the work of Schafer by broadening perspectives of 'classification' – situating Indigenous knowledge systems, artistic ventures, and futurisms as widely scattered maps to sonic environments that provide contextual understanding outside of formalized methods of analysis and rigid classification structures tied to academia. Simultaneously, they may offer additional comparisons and considerations with the work of

Dylan Robinson by shifting listener positionality through artistic ventures which encourage participants to embody anticolonial listening practices. In sum, these examples contextualize the creative, negotiable space (Monani & Adamson, 2016, p. 11) of sound and environmental analysis – a space which accounts for multiple worldviews in conversation with academia.

Anishinaabe Metis creator Elizabeth LaPensée explores these signifiers of inequality to combat colonial narratives in video games while prioritizing environmental awareness through sonic tools and cultural practices. Some specific examples of LaPensée's work in this field are her games *Honour Water* and *When Rivers Were Trails.* Both games situate the player within Indigenous narratives, providing cultural analysis and participation through song use and exploring issues of land allotments (LaPensée, n.d.). Her work actively employs sound as a primary medium in which to engage players with environmental and social crises, situating the player in discussion with the water and embedded histories – casting land as both speaker and listener in the process. The gamification process of LaPensée's work contributes to Schafer's techniques of sonic analysis as it suggests a technologically focused form of classification by developing stories through sonic means and classifying voices through land and speaker. LaPensée's work offers players an opportunity to explore the complex relationships embedded in sound and sonic histories, expanding understandings of sonic ordering and analysis through a gamified experience.

Similarly, Rebecca Belmore is an Anishinaabekwe artist whose sound installations evoke a political and social consciousness. One of Belmore's series of sound sculptures entitled *Wave Sound* is designed to encourage people to listen to "consider the land and our relationship to the land" (Belmore, n.d.). These sculptures, situated in National Parks across Canada, work to amplify the natural soundscape, and encourage deep and present listening within these environments. This piece works in conversation with one of her earlier projects entitled *Speaking to Their Mother*, a similar installment which aimed to amplify the speaker's voice rather than the natural soundscape, to form dialogue with mother nature and gesture towards the power and politics of speaking to the land (Belmore, n.d.). *Wave Sound* is an extension of this prior project, inviting members of the public to actively listen to the land through these intricately crafted objects specially designed by the artist, to shift their listening positionality and embody the temporality of wonder (Robinson, 2020, p. 53) while engaging with the objects. While the *Wave Sound* sculptures vary between each national park, they encourage the listener to consider the positionality of land and our relationship to its survival, to listen to its voice in all its complexities, and to resist speech and instead intend to listen (Belmore, n.d.). Her work offers a unique perspective to explore soundscape and sonic change, and land as speaker

and listener, demonstrating ephemeral and ever-changing sound sources through a fixed piece of art.

Finally, I suggest one last example for consideration is the Round Dance Revolution as a key part of Canada's *Idle No More* movement. This movement brought attention to Indigenous sovereignty across Canada, and sparked the improvisation of various musical protests which came to be known as the Round Dance Revolution (McMahon, 2012). These protests took place in many public spaces across Canada to draw attention to their message of unity and strength in the face of threatened environmental and cultural destruction. Indigenous author Ryan McMahon notes that this movement, and the round dance revolution specifically, mattered because, "As kids, we were told that the drumbeat represents the heartbeat of Mother Earth. We were told our songs come from Mother Earth. We were told that our communities are only as strong as the sound of our drums" (McMahon, 2012). McMahon's sentiment identifies a method in which to understand and engage with the sound of the drums – as vehicles of embodied knowledge and as voices for synergetic relationships. In this movement, the drums act as a call to action for those to listen, a tool to engage in discussion with the environment through sound, and to identify listening and sonic creation as a mode in which to strengthen synergetic relationships.

The examples of LaPensée's game design, Belmore's *Wave Sound*, and the Round Dance Revolution offer a glimpse into sonic interventions and methodological approaches to understanding soundscape and environmental crisis in conversation with acoustic ecology. I reference these examples as a collection of multidisciplinary work which contribute to a greater understanding of sound through environment. These artists, scholars, and activists prompt many unanswered questions regarding the possibilities of sonic analysis and acoustic ecology: What could a collaborative analysis of sound within these varying perspectives evoke? What kinds of knowledge and environmental understandings may become prominent when artistic and methodological approaches are equally valued and, thus, equally expand the field of acoustic ecology?

Conclusion

To conclude, this paper works to provide an overview of acoustic ecology and to consider the possibilities for this field in conversation with Indigenous perspectives that explore eco-political themes outside of academia. This paper considers the comparison of these experiences with listening and sound analysis, political and environmental activism, sonic art, Indigenous futurisms, and cultural knowledge systems. At the core, practices of de-colonial listening can only further promote collab-

oration and shared knowledge systems, destroying colonial hierarchical relations and encouraging new forms of environmental awareness in crisis alongside ecological movements. As a final plea to you, the reader, I'd like to leave you with a call to action. As we continually battle social, economic, political, and environmental crisis, it is vitally important to listen and uplift the land and the communities who work to protect what remains and unearth knowledge embedded in embodied relationships. Listening has become a vitally important tool to understand and combat moments of crisis. Thus, it is important to remember, "Creator gave us two ears and one mouth for a reason; you should use them proportionately. You will almost always gain more by listening than you will from talking" (Ratchford, 2017).

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Graduate Students' Exploration of Opportunities in a Crisis: a White Paper

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Abstract
The following white paper details the University of Calgary's 2021 graduate student conference titled, 'Opportunities in a Crisis.' This white paper works to describe how graduate students explored the terms 'opportunities' and 'crisis' within their research interests. These research interests were interdisciplinary to various fields such as telecommunications policy, algorithmic studies, critical race theory, and video game studies to list a few. Through this conference, we observed an acute awareness of the ways in which the COVID-19 crisis has impacted research in media activism, feminist media studies, internet infrastructure, and teaching and learning, to mention a handful. This white paper is divided by panel sections, thereby allowing readers to connect with this graduate student conference and help inform future research on topics in communication and media studies, as they are framed in working through these crisis moments in our global history. Our white paper set out to achieve two goals: first, document the presentations and emerging scholarly work of graduate students; and second, reflect on how research can, and very well does, pivot in times of crises, specifically using our current global COVID-19 pandemic as an ongoing, lived experience. This white paper achieves these goals which we believe helps in the preservation of this unique moment in time to be a graduate student.

Keywords
Opportunities; Crisis; Graduate students; White Paper; Calgary.

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In 2020, graduate students at the University of Calgary came together to plan what would be their department's (Communication, Media and Film/CMF) first virtual conference. Immediately, the student organizers asked questions of how to capture the moment they were living in (online work and learning due to the COVID-19 global pandemic) while preventing a conference solely dedicated to analyzing the effects of the pandemic on emerging scholarship. To answer this, the organizers learned how the Chinese symbol for the word 'crisis' being a mixture of the words 'danger' and 'opportunity.' It was here the theme of the annual University of Calgary CMF graduate student conference was decided: Opportunities in a Crisis.

This white paper serves to document and reflect on the research which was presented from May 11th to 13th, 2021. The white paper has been divided into seven student sections from the week's various panels. The authors of this white paper were active in attending all panels and followed up with a handful of presenters for clarification on their presentations to ensure accuracy in this recorded account. Through the crisis of a virtual conference setting in missed networking opportunities, we hope this white paper serves as documentation of the impact graduate students made in the conversation of their research conducted during the COVID-19 crisis.

Media & Memory

Document, experience, and memorize; these words guided the Media and Memory panel discussions, in which presenters asked questions of social, cultural and historical relevance through the lens of Indigenous, feminist and archaeological studies. The works sought to critically look at representations—artifacts, photographs, and film—in order to challenge traditional patterns of framing the memory of a group or an event. The authors focused on bringing to the discussion aesthetic, ethical and human issues, which not only pointed to the problems in the representation and conservation of memory, but also to new opportunities in times of crisis. Thus, our presenters conducted the talk on three main fronts: preservation and historical value in the McDougall Memorial Church case (Thomas), self-representation of the refugee's women memories (Zanco), and sound experience in Indigenous uprising films (Gonzalés).

The first presenter, Drew Thomas, explored the tragic historical, social and cultural event—the 2017 burning of the McDougall Memorial Church, by focusing specifically on historical value of the preservation and destruction of artifacts, and its implication to archeology. McDougall Memorial Church was considered a protected historic resource, having been founded on the site of the first European settlement in the area. Thomas questioned the judgment of values in relation to the cultural value

of historic places, stating that this judgment goes against current heritage management practices, where places are judged largely by the presence and number of artifacts. Thus, through a detailed discourse analysis of the Human Resource Institute of Alberta (HRIA) reports and small number of interviews with local archeologists, Thomas focused on how these documents build historical value and how local professionals capture the impressions of those using the HRIA system. Thomas concluded that "categorizing and recording the value of a site like the McDougall Memorial Church did not result in its protection from the fire that consumed it, but recording it within a colonial physical frame, did create a perception of value that carries over after the fire" (Thomas). In other words, Thomas concluded that value in the HRIA system is created from criteria that are based on a colonial perspective of occupation based on an established reality of materials. For the presenter, measures taken to correct documentation inequalities will now have lasting effects on what is known and shared about heritage. Given this context, Thomas highlighted the challenge that Alberta faces in maintaining the integrity of the HRIA rating system and identifies trends that point to the need to overhaul the system to support the protection of Alberta's historic resources more accurately and effectively. Thus, the presenter ended his presentation warning the need of communication scholars to pay special attention to the crisis of erasure of historical value.

Expanding beyond the crisis of historical values, we came across the discussion raised by the second presenter, Amanda Zanco, who brought a theme that transpires the term crisis in all its different facets. The presentation reflected on how self-representation of refugee women through amateur photography can help in the construction of their identities and exiled memories by using new media as a platform for activism and recognition of daily struggles. These women are victims of a global refugee crisis resulting from a combination of different factors (armed conflict, natural disaster, diseases, etc.), additionally, they also face subjective crises in lands that they now call home. Given this scenario, Zanco began the presentation by stating that the aim of the research—which is still in construction—is to reflect on photographic practices outside of mainstream media. For this, Zanco first presented a literature review of the state of humanitarian photography, which was divided into: (1) photographing distant suffering, (2) looking beyond the violent scenes, and (3) framing refugee memories. This literature review had the purpose of deromanticizing the humanitarian photography's term and questioning the ethical and human limits in representing the pain of the other. The presenter raised questions about compassion fatigue, witnessing of distant suffering, and political and social issues surrounding an activist representation of refugee memory. Thus, based on a critical reading of humanitarian photographic practice, Zanco proposes for her ongoing research the use of participatory photography, a creative method that enables the self-representation

of refugee women through amateur photographic practices. Zanco's main intention is to treat refugee women as active participants in the research process. That is, these women will translate their perceptions to a world photographically framed; these women will visually frame their memories by their own eyes. The amateur photographs will be posted on a Digital Platform to give visibility to the visual narratives of the refugee women participating in the research in order to expand the production of knowledge and broaden the discussion on the activist representation of refugee memory beyond academia.

Following the same lines of mnemonically framing the history of a group, the last presentation led us to a reflection on how sound works to build truth claims and aesthetic experiences in documentaries about Indigenous uprisings during the 1990s. Berenice González began her presentation by raising an important question regarding the efforts of nonfiction films in construct statements about reality through direct and synchronous indicial sound. However, the presenter said that despite providing an aura of realism, these film narratives do not leave aside the expressive, subjective and emotional auditory dimension. Thus, non-fiction films use the sound artifice to construct the truth and provide the viewer with an aesthetic experience of subjectivity. Gonzaléz highlighted documentaries of official historical accounts that represent struggles, crises and revolutions, for which she focuses on two films within the North American context: Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance (Obomsawin, 1993) and A Place Called Chiapas (Wild, 1998). Both films, according to the presenter despite their auditory realism, reveal affective and cultural representations. Therefore, through a critical and detailed reading of the sound aspects, Gonzaléz's ongoing work shows the aesthetic experience as a fundamental part of the construction of the filmic narrative insofar as it articulates and crystallizes the Indigenous memory.

Given this brief exposition of the Media and Memory panel’s enriching presentations, it is possible to notice the importance of a critical analysis of memory representation in its different form, whether in the artifacts of a memorial, refugee memory in photographs or sound artifacts of non-fiction Indigenous documented accounts. The presenters were asked to reflect on the role of memory within their own work: What role does memory play in each presenter’s research? How do you think about memory within critical media and communication scholarship? What is the social relevance in bringing the issue of memory up for discussion? The answers were interesting and related to the theoretical context of each research. However, we can draw as a conclusion to this brilliant panel that it is necessary to reflect on mnemonic representations, especially the role of memory in times of crisis, as by looking back to the past, we can understand our present and orient our future towards new activist representations and communicational opportunities fairer, more ethical, and humane.

Mediated Activisms

Amidst a complex social moment with the increased visibility of Black, queer, and feminist activist movements facilitated by digital media platforms, the CMF Graduate Student Conference panel "Mediated Activisms" offered insight into the various ways users engage in social activism using digital media. In considering how the intersecting identities of media users shape their activist practices, the panellists explored three seemingly disparate case studies – Taylor Swift's fandom (Swifties), Nintendo's *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* and Netflix's *Patriot Act by Hasan Minhaj*.

The provocations from this panel are foregrounded by a broader scholarly conversation across disciplines about the meaning of activism in our current media moment, seeking to answer questions such as: What does activism look like? What counts as activism? What opportunities does digital activism offer? And finally, who does it serve? This important conversation about digital media platforms as opportune spaces for activism is especially pertinent given the COVID-19 pandemic which required immaterial forms of activism as in-person events were more difficult to facilitate. All three presenters addressed how digital media afford affective connections between activists and their intended audiences, positioning their activisms as active processes that shape how the users conceptualize the material world around them.

Doctoral student Victoria Sands proposed that the predominantly girls and young women who make up Taylor Swift's fandom engage in a kind of "emotional activism." Following Taylor Swift's 2017 album, *reputation,* the fandom attempted to recuperate what was described by the media as a moment of crisis for the artist. Fans took to social media platforms to defend Swift, imaging their digital emotional labour to be a part of a larger feminist project. Sands proposes that the fandom conceptualize their labour as a part of a feminist collective movement. By defending Swift, they are taking a stand against the misogyny that undergirds social life. Within this context, their practices are not just about Swift herself, but instead a larger feminist project of dismantling the patriarchy.

Because the activism does important discursive work for a corporate entity (in this case Swift), it has the potential to be exploitative. In the case of Swift's fandom, the feminized emotional labour was mobilized in particular ways to help mediate Swift's star image which according to the fans, was in crisis. The fans "go to work" for Swift, coordinating their spending power and social media savvy to ensure Swift's success — a supposed win for feminism in a misogynist culture (Banet-Weiser, 2018). This research offered important insight into how girls and young women conceptualize feminist interventions. Furthermore, Sands' argument opens the opportunity for

further discussion of the discursive work fandoms (and users) do for media producers, particularly as it relates to framing the politics of powerful corporations. For Swift, the fandoms labour is beneficial to the reconfiguring of a celebrity persona that was no longer serving her, helping usher in a new era of Swift's star image as a feminist. The blurring of the fandom's politics with Swift's politics as the media producer shares a strong connection with Sam Stockton's work, which considers how players of *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* subvert the Nintendo company's intentions for the digital game.

Released in March 2020, just days before worldwide COVID-19 shutdowns, Nintendo's life simulation game *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* offered a digital space for socializing. Users design unique islands which are then populated by non-player characters. Invitations to their islands can be extended to other *Animal Crossing* players, with the intention of trading items and showing off their décor. While much of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement took place in person, Black and LGBTQ2S+ activists also made use of *Animal Crossings*' island visit function to engage in immaterial activism. Users hosted in-game demonstrations, information sessions, and traded customized in-game LGBTQ2S+ Pride furniture and clothing. This immaterial activism focused on queer and trans-BIPOC, decentralizing whiteness from both Pride and BLM.

Animal Crossing only allows players to host a certain number of visitors. To circumvent this, players took to streaming their islands on Twitch, raising money for BLM through the streaming platform's fundraising function, and allowing the in-game activism to be more widely distributed (Schofield, 2020). The affordances of *Animal Crossing*'s game design and Nintendo's corporate prerogatives shape the kinds of activism made possible through the platform. Yet, it is the subverting of the intended use of the game in which media studies scholars should be interested, as users respond to media and negotiate digital platforms in novel ways.

The question of engaging media platforms was further explored in Hafsa Masqood's work. In exploring the political comedy show *Patriot Act with Hasan Minhaj*, Maqsood argued that comedy is a powerful mechanism through which marginalized communities can speak back. Using Netflix as a platform, Minhaj explores his identity as a Muslim Indian American using comedy to decentre whiteness and offer counter-narratives to Islamophobic western stereotypes. In a North American society where Islamophobic sentiments are pervasive, *Patriot Act* provides new ways to think about the lived experiences of marginalized people. Maqsood's work extends beyond a textual analysis of *Patriot Act*, using critical discourse analysis to consider audience reception data from YouTube comment sections. While *Patriot Act* was

cancelled after two seasons, it is archived both on Netflix and YouTube. The Netflix special was uploaded to the video-sharing platform, allowing for an even larger audience. The platform also afforded a new space in which discourses could be negotiated and reinforced. In considering these comments, Maqsood demonstrated both the opportunity of comedy as a mechanism for activism and the complexities of comment sections as spaces in which lived experiences are negotiated.

As Stockton reminded us during their presentation, while these forms of activism might feel new and novel, they are rooted in deep histories. Digital platforms with increasingly complex affordances offer new ways to think about doing activism, but marginalized communities have been engaging in digital activism for decades. For example, during the AIDS crisis, the queer community turned to the early non-centralized network USENET to share covert information. For media studies scholars, further lines of inquiry open when we explore the evolution of how communities engage with media platforms while paying particular attention to the corporations who ultimately control digital media platforms. Our opening keynote speaker, Dr. Alex Cho, argued that while current popular media platforms are designed and experienced through the mechanics of empire, social media does not need to be designed this way. Instead, as we think about the future of sociality on platforms, particularly the experiences of marginalized groups, we can recognize the possibilities offered by platforms in their current iterations. At the same time, we can imagine alternatives digital spaces whose designs rethink the mechanics of empire extending opportunities to marginalized voices.

Tracing the Colonialist Space

The second day of the conference began with student panels presenters Crystal Chokshi, a doctoral candidate in CMF, OM Olanyian, and Pamela Forgrave framing their research in colonialism and the monetization of space. Through a calm, capturing, and well-guided presentation, Chokshi identified the means in which Google's predictive word capture AI (artificial intelligence), featured in its Gmail enterprise, commodifies language. She titled her presentation, 'In Other Words: Smart Compose and the Consequences of Writing in the Age of AI,' describing the means of how Google frames their word capture AI as one of time saving, however, that this AI acts as a form of data colonialism.

In a similar vein of though, Olanyian discussed racism as a public health crisis, as declared by health and medical organizations across Canada in the summer of 2020 during the Black Lives Matter demonstrations for racial justice. In these public health addresses listing anti-Black racism as a health crisis, Olanyian argued that the *kairos*

associated with framing racism in the health and medical sphere as an 'emergence' was a rupture in the Foucaultian sense, as this knowledge had been held by Black communities prior to this public announcement. Olanyian closed their talk with room for hope and change in Black health and wellbeing stating how the health and racism crisis as an emergency could gain the timeliness for resolution of this issue, thereby providing an opportunity in this moment of global health and racial reflection.

The final speaker of the panel—Pamela Forgrave—paralleled the historic relationship of honeybees and honey hunters with contemporary American-based veteran organizations which teach beekeeping to ill, injured, and traumatized soldiers as part of their recovery and community engagement. In this short lightning talk, Forgrave argued that these interactions between the honeybees and humans crease a multispecies 'contact zone' which work in a paralleled network of various species interacting with one another, similar to Latour (2006) and Law's (1992) analyses of actor-network theory, which can be seen as paralleling similar lines of thought with Chokshi's opening presentation on the commodification of words in the interaction between Gmail users and Google's predictive speech AI. The panel closed with questions asked about commodification of language and congratulations to these three graduate students in their engaging and thought-provoking research, allowing the audience to reflect on their positionality in the wider social-political sphere.

Neoliberal Discourses within Platforms

In considering how crisis is negotiated on digital media platforms, this panel explored how neoliberal logics and user-generated content help shape platform dynamics, constructing knowledges about the world around us. The panellists approached the topic of crisis as mediated through consumer apps that promise connection, inspiration, discussion, and self-optimization. A key thread that links the arguments these scholars made was the understanding that neoliberalism is not just a set of economic policies, but rather a rationale that undergirds our social lives (Brown, 2015). Within this rationale, individualism, self-sufficiency, and self-optimization are the keys to living a good life.

Building on existing scholarly work exploring the affective dimensions of life under neoliberalism, doctoral student Alora Paulsen Mulvey used a local influencer as a case study to demonstrate how within neoliberal rationale, mental health becomes a scarce resource for accumulation – particularly by men. In early 2021, "mental wealth coach" Kaylor Betts went viral on Instagram after sharing a post calling into question the restrictions put into place in his province (Alberta) to combat a growing third wave of COVID-19. Over three days, his following more than tripled and the

video amassed more than 790 thousand views. Paulsen Mulvey argued that the very notion of a "mental wealth coach" implies that mental health is something to be commodified, accumulated, and distributed. If there is mental wealth to be accumulated, it exists in scarce supply. Betts marketized his own mental health struggles to position himself as an expert worthy of attention. Building on Sarah Banet-Weiser's (2018) notion of popular misogyny as an all-or-nothing reaction to perceived masculine injuries, this presentation understands Betts' sudden success as a manifestation of popular misogyny. Through a textual discursive analysis of the influencer's curated Instagram page, Paulsen Mulvey argued that Betts reproduces discourses about hegemonic masculinity as defined by neoliberal logics centred around entrepreneurship and individualism.

Just as mental wealth influencers offer their services as the panacea for the crises of the global pandemic, Direct-to-Consumer (DTC) genetic promises individualized, optimized advice. Tessa Brown's research considered the relationship between the popularity of DTC genetic testing such as My Ancestry, an increasing number of apps aimed at maximizing human potential, and a culture focused on optimizing productivity under neoliberal capitalism. While Paulsen Mulvey's case study focused on building affective relationships to instil trust in consumers, Brown's presentation argued that these apps put the focus on scientific data (genetics) to establish their trustworthiness. They promise to help both regular and prospective users lose weight, sleep better, be more productive, and be better at relationships. Brown was critical of the ways in which these apps feed into the hype surrounding genetic determinism. In offering the key to productivity, self-optimization, and the good life, Brown argued these apps frame themselves as operating with the consumers' best interest in mind. Yet, the apps provide corporations with huge amounts of personal data including demographic information, location tracking, and even access to DNA sequences. The consequences of this kind of access are often glossed over in favour of the promise of a guaranteed solution to the insecurities that are a result of life under neoliberalism.

Both Paulsen Mulvey and Brown's work draw on larger discussions about exacerbating fiscal inequality and ways for people to empower themselves through capitalism. Catherine Jeffrey proposed the concept of an economic crisis of scale to explore how the current rate of wealth accumulation increases inequality and complicates our understandings of economic processes. Jeffrey's initial provocation is the growing class of 'super rich' billionaires who have proliferated popular discourse. While still in its early stages, their research adapts the idea of a problem of scale from environmental studies to consider how current infrastructure including fibre optics, code, and algorithms make this accumulation of wealth possible. Their analysis also

included user-generated online content that attempts to communicate the economic crisis of scale to the masses, paying particular attention to how this unimaginable wealth is communicated to everyday people. As such, they considered how apps such as Robo-trader Wealth Simple provide a sense of access to wealth and how users are negotiating the economic crisis. Much like the other panellists, Jeffrey's was interested in how discourses about wealth accumulation are contended with on social media and other applications.

As the researchers on this panel were all interested in applications be they social media, fitness, or investment apps, Phoebe Fuller's presentation outlining her research experience provided important questions about theoretical and methodological considerations for researching these ever-evolving platforms. Fuller's project explored how a diverse group of TikTok users, a video-sharing social media app whose exponential global growth is attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic, negotiate body positivity. The pandemic initiated a kind of personal crisis for Fuller, as the platform's growth led to a glut of content during her data collection period. TikTok's unique platform affordances including the coveted 'For You' page, the apps homepage which algorithmically curates individualized user feeds, proved challenging to navigate from a research perspective as it was difficult to discover smaller creators. Furthermore, as much of the user-generated content began to orient itself around pandemic-related videos, Fuller's data set was interrupted. These were important findings for her research, as she concluded that the body positivity movement on TikTok was not as inclusive as it first appeared, instead it continued to reinforce postfeminist ideas about feminized bodies that need to be optimized and controlled.

The platforms discussed in this panel play active roles in our imaginations of the good life and our perception of the world around us. The need for self-optimization that Fuller argues is articulated on TikTok echoes Paulsen Mulvey, Brown, and Jeffrey's research, illustrating how self-optimization is a key tenet of neoliberal rationale. This panel offered important provocations about the proliferation of neoliberal rationale, but also the state of social media and app research during economic and societal crises.

From the Global to the Local: Political Economy Framing of Contemporary Media Challenges

At a digital media conference, held at a distance, the topic of connection is undoubtedly part of most conversations. One panel in particular dug deep and addressed the interwoven threads of infrastructure and policy that underpin our connected world just below the surface. Whether one looks at global examples or local

contexts the exigencies of our communication system are expressed in the organization of broadband access, transport layer internet infrastructure, and media landscape. Trang Pham, Dana Cramer, Katelyn Anderson, and Matthew Halajian each presented an examination of political economic frames of contemporary communications crises.

Humanizing the ligature of communication infrastructure is not an easy task for any academic conference to attempt. With the clear influence of the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated reliance on the means to connecting to one another, this panel brought the human element of the internet to the surface with a focus on the social, economic and geopolitical implications of infrastructure policy. Expressing increased public concerns over the ownership and privacy of public communication infrastructure and implementation policy, these panelists expressed the potential for remediation and rebuilding public trust and participation. By bringing the emotional and cultural elements of policy production to the forefront these contributions expose the raw nerve of public participation and encourage an understanding of infrastructure as an excessively contingent area of study.

In an inspection of our global ecosystem with an inspection in Vietnamese rural residents' internet use, Trang Pham, considered internet use genres as a metric of the success of internet access empowerment as part of the broadband internet rollout. By approaching their research of policy efficacy from the examination of rural resident usage patterns and distinct genres of use, Pham demonstrated the potential for empowerment this limited and nascent broadband expansion project has realized so far. Recognizing a historic discrimination and lack of policy consultation this enabled Pham to consider the ways that rural internet users can express their socioeconomic backgrounds through usage patterns and expression of cultural identity through creative appropriations of their broadband access. Ultimately, this study considered the emancipatory potential of these alternative usage patterns in strengthening local cultural identities rather than diluting them.

Commenting on the transition to global distance work, Dana Cramer considered the Chinese submission to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) of a 'New Internet Protocol.' Through incompatibility with the current Transmission Control Protocol over Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) this proposal would mean an entirely new internet resulting in two, or more 'internets' sprouting from our current paradigm of a singular internet. Highlighting the Chinese Huawei promotional campaign, 'ManyNets' arguing primarily on the basis for data transfer needs for an increasingly data intensive internet environment, Cramer described crisis both as a moment of change and opportunity as this technological shift represents a shift in global

infrastructural direction away from traditional standardizations of telecommunications production. Expressing concern over the concentration of authority within one national context, Cramer elaborated the changing landscape of the internet's infrastructure and suggested possible opportunities and challenges for our global and local contexts.

Bringing us back to our conference city—Calgary—and the country's largest municipal fibre broadband network, Kaetlyn Anderson elucidated the social and economic good of a municipally managed and universally expressed fibre network. Through discussion of the City of Calgary's municipal fibre broadband network, Anderson demonstrated the savings potential of a municipally run fibre network which is automatically implemented as part of the City's construction policy. Considering Calgary's broadband network as an alternative to private internet service providers for dense municipal centres. The City of Calgary broadband network example allows the City to provide service for municipal units and sell excess access to private interests. Comparing this model of municipal access with the high-speed broadband access principles of the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC, 2016), Anderson illustrated how municipally managed networks may help achieve these access goals, highlighting the emancipatory potential of broadband access to participate in our modern digitally mediated social world. From the heartland of Canadian private industry interest this entry suggests an opportunity for high quality and affordable municipal service from an ambitiously planned infrastructural imposition in the public interest.

Looking at another public interest question and associated public expenditure, Matthew Halajian considered the media landscape of the 1988 and 2026 Olympic Games bids. Describing what could be considered a crisis of public participation and interest, Halajian provided a quick exploration of how the large-scale sporting events provide opportunities for Calgarians to participate in celebration and recognition of its local community on the global scale. This review highlighted the effect of online public participation and the emotional context of our digital landscape. Comparing the 1988 and 2026 Olympic bids in Calgary, this presentation considered the effect of media coverage and the role that public participation online had on why Calgarians voted 'NO' in 2018.

Panelists provided a unique lens on the multifaceted and often hidden processes of decision-making that occur under the public's perception. Each exposed a wound of our current media landscape and the people, contexts and interests which fester in their unique worlds. While not a positive look at the world of public participatory policy making this conversation invited listeners to consider the role public

and private interests in the creation of public trust and participation. A through line of these discussions was the need for greater understanding of the role of individuals and groups in shaping our world. No panelist provided a fulsome understanding of how best internet materiality and policy participation can be expressed in the interwoven mass of fibre and data composing our COVID-era infrastructure, however, these perspectives can be viewed as a mosaic, prompting us to consider the possible futures expressed in participation, choice and engagement with the growing material space of the internet. In Calgary and across the world these crises provoke many opportunities for research of the physical and the ephemeral internet to join together and consider common challenges to bring the human element to the service with surgical precision.

Experiences of Teaching Assistants During the COVID-19 Crisis

Junior scholars often face challenges with teaching borne of a lack of formalized training before they are set loose in face-to-face course settings with students who—through no fault of their own—also have a limited conception of what this relationship is to look like. Teaching Assistants (TAs) face the proverbial trial by fire that crafts both great teaching professors and the more scholarly academic sort as an implicit rite of passage where TAs codevelop their teaching styles with students (whether one chooses to recognize this or not) in a catch as catch can approach. It is in many cases considered a natural process through which academics learn the necessary skills to survive in teaching at the post-secondary level; but when we consider that TAs during the COVID-19 pandemic were in many cases on the frontline of transitions to online learning, this picture becomes much starker with the personal, educational and professional implications of compounding crises of experience and resources expressed in new pressures online.

As TAs, Tessa Brown, Calli Nash, Kennedy French-Toller, Rachel Huh, and Anastasia Gushchina described their experience with the online teaching transition, the points of friction in junior scholarship become more apparent. Their mistakes and triumphs were unique and facilitate a deeper understanding of the role of teaching without the feedback of students in-person. While this inherent crucible provided opportunities for the growth and development of online teaching skills, it also illustrated the need for greater understanding and resource sharing between TAs and from institutions to prepare junior scholars when the feedback inherent to in-person instruction is ripped away. This panel discussed the methods attempted, as well the resources accessed, throughout teaching in the COVID-19 pandemic both successfully and unsuccessfully. In a true about face to the siloed nature of academic study, this group shared invaluable learned experience from undergraduate students about the

virtual classroom experience that is lost in the traditional academic format. Skills-sharing as a collaborative process troubles the persistent perception among junior scholars of the need to work in isolation by demonstrating the connections and strength that collaborative teaching and learning can bring to an online environment.

I (Drew Thomas) was impressed by the frank and open discussion of the deficiencies of TA training and the crucible method of learning teaching skills. It is beyond refreshing to realize the feelings of isolation and uncertainty caused by the switch to online courses is in many respects self-imposed by this outdated sink or swim model. By modeling a cooperative and collaborative approach to teaching that supports unique engagement with the scholarship of teaching and learning the panelists argued convincingly for the need for collaboration and resource sharing between junior scholars. This was paired with suggestions sourced from their collective experience for ways that universities could support junior scholars, the instructors they assist, and the students who are so integral to this approach. It was a welcome addition to conversations that were so often focused on problems that presented a solutions-focused response to current and historical pressures in teaching as a junior scholar.

Conclusion

As this white paper has demonstrated, crisis is understood in varying forms. As it relates to activism, memory capture, internet connections, teaching, this term is felt in various research trajectories by graduate students in the pandemic's 2020-2021 timeframe. In Canada—where the vast majority of presentations took place and where the host university (University of Calgary) is located, crisis can be matched with opportunity. The opportunity to learn, to shift previous cultural norms which have disadvantaged marginalized communities, to build back stronger.

In the final student session of the Opportunities in a Crisis conference, graduate student and the conference's Chair, Dana Cramer, provided a skills sharing session titled, '#SuccessfulGradStudent: Uncovering the Hidden Curriculum of Grad School,' where she outlined resources and learned knowledge of the academic job market to help inform those thinking about attending graduate school and first-year master's students. In reflecting on attending graduate school during a global pandemic, we the authors, have found the experience to be labourious, daunting, and oftentimes exhausting. With every challenge, however, there is an opportunity. Completing graduate school in a crisis is no small fret and provides opportunities for students to increase their digital literacy, learn effective time management skills to help decrease distractions and procrastination, and allow for engagement in more activities with newfound time saved from no travel to an office. The research presented at the

University of Calgary Department of Communication, Media and Film's graduate student conference, has shown the resiliency, creativity, and excellent scholarly work of the next generation of graduate students, which we believe will lead us to new beginnings following the end of the pandemic.

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Boom and Bust Archaeology: Examination of Discourses of Historical Value in the Alberta Historical Resource Value System

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Abstract
This study aims to inspect and critique the production of value in the Alberta Historical Resource Value (HRV) system based on its predisposition towards physical artefacts and lack of recognition of alternative ways of expressing heritage. The system of evaluation for historical value creates what can be described as a presence-absence model of archaeological significance that limits the ability for archaeologists to interpret and subjectively determine the historical value of materials. In addition, current systems often rely on a contractual relationship between archaeologists and industry to produce these reports, and rarely incorporate Indigenous perspectives of significance. With a focus on the assumptions and functional result of Historical Resource Impact assessments, we can examine the repercussions of the contemporary archaeological evaluative model within Alberta. A goal of this nascent assessment is to provide the opportunity for evaluation of a system that largely exists below the surface of public interest but has vast implications for future access to shared historical resources.

Keywords
heritage, history, communicating value, value discourse.

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In May 2017, the McDougall Memorial Church burnt down west of Cochrane, Alberta, leaving many grieving the loss (Junker, 2017). The church was a protected historical resource, having been founded at the site of the first pioneer settlement in the Cochrane area, it represented a historical treasure to the local community. As such, plans for rebuilding or repair are immediately mentioned in the news article initially documenting the loss. The article addresses the cultural value of the site, as the location itself, while physical, historical, and diagnostic materials have been destroyed which is purportedly contrary to our current system of determining cultural heritage value. This judgement of value, while ignoring the destruction of physical artifacts in assessing value, runs counter to current heritage management system principles, where heritage sites are judged largely by the presence and number of artifacts deemed diagnostic when referring to pre-contact materials. It seems that the assessment of materiality, and the existence of artefacts as the foundation of heritage value, is not necessarily true for settler-colonial materials, which are found to have inherent historical value even after destruction.

The debate over heritage and historical value continues to be fraught with the imposition of settler colonial values and interpretations. Even four years later, the restoration of McDougall Memorial Church demonstrates a flaw in the way historical value is determined. The question of whether a historical building, space, or place has value and assigning value to heritage artefacts is a long-standing one in Alberta, with over 50 years of heritage management starting with the introduction of heritage management legislation in 1970 serving as a model for many other provinces. The creation of the Historical Resources Act opened the door for preservation of Alberta historical sites, but also provoked a public revolution of the understanding of Alberta history as something that existed and for better or worse required a system to evaluate it.

To preserve and mitigate any threat to the material heritage of Alberta, the Historical Resources Act calls for a Historical Resource Impact Assessment (HRIA) to be conducted (ACT, 2017). Carried out by professional archaeologists often hired as contractors to industrial developers, HRIAs identify historical resources within areas of suspected historical or prehistoric occupation. Commissioned assessments are primarily the responsibility of industrial developers as a requirement for development in areas suspected of occupation as directed in the Historical Resources Act. Professional Archaeologists are then largely contractors of industry paid to determine if sites of development require any additional protection based on the presence of artefacts and their perceived academic significance. This close tie of industrial development to heritage assessment creates three distinct interests within the heritage management system: Government as the body requiring assessment, Professional

Archaeologists as the authority on heritage artifacts, and Industrial development which is the largest driver of assessments. Each plays a key role in the production of assessments and driving the determination of value, but Industrial development sets the pace of assessment based on expansion and development within the province. This means that without industrial development and expansion relatively few new HRIAs would be needed, tying Professional Archaeology and our heritage resource protections implicitly to the expansion of Alberta's industrial development.

Based on the Historical Resource Impact Assessment, each site is ultimately designated a Historical Resource Value (HRV), on a scale from one to four, which indicates the protection level afforded to the site, or classified as an HRV 0 (no designation). The rationale for these decisions, detailed in the HRIA reports, provide a significant source of data to help us understand how historical value is determined and ultimately used to continue colonial erasure and disconnect with Indigenous material pasts through the over representation of physical material in discussions of Indigenous heritage sites which is not equally applied to settler sites.

Examining the Historical Resource Impact Assessment (HRIA) system, this article aims to show research in progress to join current conversations surrounding cultural heritage management systems in the 21st century. Particularly, the question of heritage meaning (Butler, 2016), public engagement and ownership (Benetti et al., 2020; Endere et al., 2018), and most markedly, the nature of heritage and myth (Sterling, 2016). It is this contemporary questioning of the efficacy of heritage inscription as an imposed and limited settler-colonial act prompts further engagement with the government infrastructure which relies archaeological evidence to determine value. This article aims to contribute to these discussions by highlighting current evaluation methods limitations due to a focus on physical artefacts and industrial development to drive protection of shared cultural heritage. Alberta's Heritage Resource system is just one example from Canada; however, the lessons and frictions present in this example are applicable to a wide range of contexts. The purpose of a public archaeological perspective on Alberta's heritage system is to provide commentary on the narrative of history proposed by heritage resource systems and to critique the inequities in representation that these systems continue to create.

While archaeological evidence may be considered impartial to the social and political pressures of the time as a set of practices which determine the presence and interpretation of artefacts, the McDougall fire example illustrates that this may not be equally applied within the current system. The discourses of value evidenced in HRIA reports provide insight into the significant role that a value designation plays in the continued sustainability of archaeological sites in Alberta. This leads to the questions:

how is historical value created through the reporting and presentation of archaeological evidence in the HRIA system? And what effect does this valuation system have on the continued viability of these sites as historical resources? How does the colonial act of evaluation allow for the privileging of settler-colonial histories and the inherent silencing of Indigenous histories?

To answer these questions, I completed a discourse analysis of HRIA reports, focusing specifically on how these documents construct historical "value." Based on this study, I found that the Alberta government's historical valuation system currently prioritizes the presence (and quantity) of physical artifacts at sites when making preservation determinations. As a result, sites lacking in material archeological evidence, but possibly rich in cultural significance do not register as having "historical value" in the HRV scale which fails to account for alternative interpretations of heritage. This system reproduces settler-colonial frameworks of historical value through its privileging of material evidence as the primary benchmark of site preservation.

Discourses of Value in Historical Resource Impact Assessments

HRIA reports are indexed on the Government of Alberta's Online Permitting And Clearance database and full reports are accessible in consultation with Archaeological Information Coordinators. I examined a representative sample of HRIA documents and dashboards from 2014 and 2016 for discourses of value based on Hodes (2018) non-prescriptive approach to analyzing colonial discourses that "justify forms of occupation at the intersection of race, gender and power..." (p. 86) and traditional interpretation of value discourses (Hall, 1999) which interrogates systems of value determination and includes value structures in thematic discussion. The comparison of 2014 and 2016 was chosen to explore the impact of contemporary approaches to heritage management from two of the most recent provincial governments, the Alberta Progressive Conservatives (1971-2015) and their successor, the Alberta New Democratic Party (2015-2019). It is important to note that there was a negligible difference in the Ministry of Culture and Tourism budgets from 2014 (ACT 2015, ACT 2017) to 2016. The differences in 2014 and 2016 value discourses identified in the analysis are therefore not attributable to funding changes stemming from a political regime change.

In total, there were 963 HRIA reports produced in 2014 and 647 in 2016 (Tables 1 and 2, respectively). Due to the scope of the project, I selected 50 samples from each year to create a total sample size of 100 documents. The 50 reports from each year were selected based on a random sampling of every tenth report (as listed in the

HRIA dashboard). In cases where the tenth record was not available (as was the case when reports were not uploaded, for example), the missing record was substituted by the next available report in the list. For the sample set from 2016, only 46 reports were completed and available at the time of collection.

Each data set (for 2014 and 2016) contains a representative number of HRV designations, ranging from an HRV 0 (or "nonexistent" historical value) to HRV 4 (see Tables 1 and 2). Reports with an HRV 5 designation were not included for analysis, as they refer to sites pending evaluation. This data set includes a representative sample of project types, HRVs, and site preservation recommendations. Tables 1 and 2 below provide a description of the data examined in this study broken down into the total number of entries, random samplings based on percentage of total documents and the coding used to differentiate these documents.

Table 1. HRIA Document breakdown from 2014.

Total number of files in sample by value level (963 total entries)	**Historical Resource Value**	**Representative number (percentage of total)**	**Document coding**
345	0's	18	14-1, 14-2, 14-3, 14-4, 14-5, 14-6, 14-7, 14-8, 14-9, 14-10, 14-11, 14-12, 14-13, 14-14, 14-15, 14-16, 14-17, 14-18
4	1's	1	14-19
0	2's	0	
12	3's	1	14-20
601	4's	30	14-21,14-22, 14-23, 14-24, 14-25, 14-26, 14-27, 14-28, 14-29,14-30, 14-31, 14-32, 14-33, 14-34, 14-35, 14-36, 14-37, 14-38, 14-39, 14-40, 14-41, 14-42, 14-43, 14-44, 14-45, 14-46, 14-47, 14-48, 14-49, 14-50
	Total	50	

Table 2. HRIA document breakdown from 2016.

Total number of files in sample by value level (647 total entries)	Historical Resource Value	Representative number (percentage of total)	Document coding
194	0's	15 (14)	16-1, 16-2, 16-3, 16-4, 16-5, 16-6, 16-7, 16-8, 16-9, 16-10, 16-11, 16-12, 16-13, 16-14,
2	1	1	16-15,
0	2's	0	
31	3's	2	16-16,
420	4's	32 (29)	16-17, 16-18, 16-19, 16-20, 16-21,16-22, 16-23, 16-24, 16-25, 16-26, 16-27, 16-28, 16-29,16-30, 16-31, 16-32, 16-33, 16-34, 16-35, 16-36, 16-37, 16-38, 16-39, 16-40, 16-41, 16-42, 16-43, 16-44, 16-45, 16-46
	total	46	

Each report included in this study is anonymized (coded as YEAR-##) to ensure the confidentiality of the corporate and government entities who commissioned the reports.

HRIA reports range in length from 20-150 pages. The final data set consists of extracts drawn from specific sections of the 96 reports included for study. These extracted portions include the Executive Summary, Report Results, Summary and Recommendations, Dashboard Notes, and Context of Report—elements that contain reference to sites' "value." Although individual reports varied in format, these sections were relatively consistent across the sample. If a section was not clearly designated based on these categories, the most similar section of the report was substituted. The data set was studied for the pervasive themes and statements pertaining to "value."

Findings

While archaeological evidence may be considered unbiased to the social and political pressures of the time of collection, the recording of materials and assigning of value clearly creates some contradictions in whose values are represented. This contradiction of colonial and precontact materials is apparent throughout the discourses of value created by these collections of archaeological evidence in the HRIA system and the HRV scale (ACT 2016). Archaeological value of heritage sites are

determined by the recommendations that categorize the value of sites into five possible designations,

> HRV 1: designated under the Act as a Provincial Historic Resource; HRV 2: designated under the Act as a Municipal or Registered Historic Resource; HRV 3: contains a significant historic resource that will likely require avoidance; HRV 4: contains a historic resource that may require avoidance; HRV 5: believed to contain a historic resource. (ACT, 2016)

The HRV designation that is not described above (HRV 0) is characterized by the completion of an HRIA where the lack of physical evidence, or the destruction of physical evidence indicates there is no reason for avoidance of the site due to no physical evidence being found.

The HRIA reports indicate, however, most of the assessments (946/963 and 614/647 respectively) fall in either HRV 4 or HRV 0 as illustrated in tables 1 and 2. The sheer volume of sites designated as HRV 4 or 0, is concerning when you consider that this system is presented as a continuum. HRV 3, the designation that requires the largest amounts of mitigation or avoidance for development without municipal or provincial significance designation, is present sparingly. A focus on economic interests and academic value forces the evaluation of historical resources within the HRIA process to be based on their contribution to academic understandings of the past and the significance of the materials recovered in an either-or presentation. This means that while other interpretations of value are possible, current evaluation relies on these principles to designate value.

The professional archaeologists conducting HRIAs cannot designate sites as provincial or municipal historical resources, which means that HRV 1 and 2 are not directly designated through an HRIA and require municipal or federal approval to be classified as such. This limitation further restricts the practical utility of the HRV scale as an evaluative tool, since archaeologists are restricted to valuations of HRV 0, 3, or 4. While HRV recommendations by archaeologists in HRIA documents are common, the recommendation of HRVs of 3 with only 43 occurrences across both years is far less common than a 4 or a 0 designation with a collective total of 1,560 incidences. This deficit suggests that there may be a reason for this duality in the functional role those professional archaeologists play in HRIA assessments.

Also, the scale is often thought of as a largely semantic difference HRVs of 3 "…likely require avoidance." (ACT 2016) and HRVs of 4 "…may require avoidance." (ACT 2016), but the difference between these rankings has a large effect on the

amount of protection or industrial avoidance a site is afforded. The real difference between HRV 3 and 4 is in the inclusion of "…significant historic resource…" (ACT 2016) in the description of the HRV designation. The designation of significance then, is largely left to individual archaeologists to determine based on their reporting of physical evidence at heritage sites and their perception of significance, without clear parameters for justification. It is here that we begin to see the system as it works in practice as opposed to in theory, as Cultural Resource Management (CRM) companies often manage many HRIAs per year for resource industry companies, they have an economic imperative to designate more sites as HRV 4s, or 0s to support industrial interests, with the difference between the two largely being the inclusion of significance.

Trends quickly appear in these documents, as CRMs reuse similar phrasing to create value and move responsibility from current economic actors. HRV 4s in practice simply designate the presence of a physical artifact that may require avoidance or mitigation but the responsibility for preservation isn't in the present. Language use in these documents demonstrates this further as HRV 4 and 0 designations follow a grouping of phrases that include:

> no further historical resource work is warranted (14-21); limited heritage resource significance (14-09); further work will not contribute meaningfully to our understanding of the culture history of the region (14-15); …is deemed of limited historic resource significance (14-25); Avoidance or further historic resource work is recommended (14-18); avoidance is recommended. If… deemed… impractical then Historical Resource Impact mitigation…is recommended (14-11); No cultural features at (the site) (14-05); no further work is recommended (14-09)

Based on the absence of materials, the limitation of value, and acceptance of industry priority, assessments like these make it clear that there is no value in avoiding these sites whether they never had artifacts, or if artifacts were destroyed, the value of the site is not present. It is interesting to note here, that sites with previous recorded values of 4 were sometimes recommended for a reduction based on lack of physical evidence or previous destruction due to construction. When destructions of sites are mentioned, it justifies industry approval in this instance. There were no recorded reductions from HRV 3 to HRV 0 indicating that the real grey area between value occurs between HRV 0 and 4.

Throughout, all documents discussing consultation with Indigenous groups were limited to HRIAs with HRV of 3 or 4, and only seemed to occur when the project was being run by a governmental organization. It is this representation of value as

subjective, tied to a physical object, and evaluated against what information the artefact or material can provide a settler colonial understanding of Provincial heritage, that makes the valuation described so weak. A focus on the physical disturbance of sites, monitored and funded by industry, has commodified archaeological evidence, staking value to objects and the difficulties associated with their avoidance. Archaeological efforts that utilize this approach to Indigenous consultation still allow physical artefacts to determine archaeological and cultural value, which seems to inevitably supersede Indigenous value perspectives.

The HRIA system as it currently exists creates a system of measurement for archaeological value based on categorization, that lacks clearly defined parameters, and misrepresents itself as a continuum, in a way that endangers archaeological evidence. By comparing reports from two different years, it is evident that the issues of minimization and the dominance of colonial values are not isolated to one year, but systemic. A focus on the physical and diagnostic value of materials that supersedes cultural significance creates a version of Alberta's archaeological history that belies the richness and diversity of Alberta culture and the historical significance of archaeological sites.

Discussion

Discourses of value can be understood with consideration of the structural processes which defend and promote this perception of value (Hodes, 2018). With a focus on the physical, the dichotomy of presence and absence; ephemerality all play into determining value within Alberta's HRV reports. Drawing on approaches to address physicality (Sedgewick, 2003) and the settler-colonial structure of knowledge (Todd, 2016) it is clear that the value of cultural heritage as it is currently structured is based on the following attributes:

- Physicality: the reliance of this system on physical artifacts to support value
- Ephemerality: the inherent loss of this system due to lack of recognition of values other than the physical
- Recognition: value either is or is not present as a function of recognition

Physicality: What you can feel and steal

The focus of these sample HRIAs on the physical artifacts of sites is apparent in the organization of reports and the yearly dashboards themselves. The presence

and amount of cultural material often indicating to the reader, both overtly and implicitly, that a site was valuable. Initially, this seems like a valid way of expressing value as sites with more items likely indicate more prolonged occupation and by extension significance. This does not address the negative opposite of this approach where absence of materials indicates a lack of value. Archaeological sites lacking apparent cultural materials are quickly considered to be of lesser value, and this absence is the justification in these reports for less historical resource protection.

This approach is fraught with interpretive hurdles as one HRIA may assess artifacts as present, and upon return to the site these artifacts may not be relocated or assumed disturbed by human activity. This presents a challenge as sites are reclassified to have no HRV based on the assessment that materials had been removed or destroyed, thus removing the HRV of the site. Through the descriptions of presence and absence value is determined, "due to low artifact density and uncertain stratigraphic provenience of the material at this site, the site's significance is deemed to be low" (2016-07). HRVs are represented in the reports as physically attached to objects and their ability to contribute diagnostically to the archaeological record of Alberta. Which, as we have seen in other examples, does not track uniformly as with the McDougall Memorial Church. Lacking a physical object, value is reduced, or removed from heritage sites, in a way that completely contradicts ideas of historical value. Just as one diamond might be more valuable than five lumps of coal, so too does archaeological evidence measured by quantity misrepresent the value of recording archaeological material.

Professional archaeologists, basing their decisions on archaeological evidence, describe the responsibility to maintain sites based on previous precedent, "These investigations should be conducted in accordance with archaeological survey note 2006-02" (2016-36). Artifacts of a diagnostic nature are often removed from sites for documentation and the value of sites is presumed to be removed with them making the site lack archaeological value. Or in the case of other sites, where artifacts or features cannot be relocated, they are presumed destroyed or of no significance. "It is likely that either the features were destroyed during construction of the original pipeline or that the features previously recorded are not in fact cultural features…" (2014-05). The current HRIA in this case, blames the lack of artifacts on the previous HRIA conducted by another heritage resource company and uses it as justification to change the value of a site. In some cases, this absence of artifacts in previous HRIAs plays heavily into the justification of approval for industrial work. Absence, in the HRIA system, is justification for occupation and just as you know a clean room does not indicate an empty house, neither should absence be the primary justification for lack of HRV.

Ephemerality: The unseen, unheard, and underrepresented

In the discussion of Alberta archaeology, one must inherently address the colonial forces that have shaped our understanding of archaeological resources in the province. Following treaties 6, 7, and 8, Indigenous peoples were removed from their traditional lands and unable to travel freely throughout the province. This displacement created a separation of many indigenous peoples from places and contexts that were familiar. The contemporary discussion of Alberta archaeology in HRIA reports does not address this breech, in connection to place across time. HRV is limited to the archaeological perspective of value that does not address the removal of peoples from their historical context. What materials are useful diagnostically to archaeologists cannot represent the breadth of occupation that took place before treaty removal.

It is this conspicuous lack of Indigenous perspectives that continues to limit the preservation of archaeological artifacts. This is not to say that Indigenous participants are not mentioned "…field component was conducted by (CRM company name) archaeologists and participants from the (name of First Nation) and (name of First Nation)" (2016-24). However, even when these perspectives are included, they are tempered by the CRM in charge to ensure they are not overly utilizing that perspective in their report,

> In evaluating the property, (CRM company name) has relied in good faith on information provided by other individuals noted in this report… (CRM company name) takes no responsibility for any deficiency, misstatement or inaccuracy contained in this report as a result of omissions, misinterpretations or fraudulent acts of persons interviewed or contacted. (2016-24)

This caveat indicates an implied mistrust of traditional knowledge in the application of evaluating HRV. Archaeology, as a settler-colonial science, relies on physical artifacts to justify HRVs and when employing perspectives that are not as accurately recorded necessarily qualifies the information as lesser than physical artifacts.

Authority to designate value then relies on professional archaeologists who are beholden to archeological conventions, and corporate purses, and do not include alternative perspectives or methods of inquiry. This union of practices results in the designation of sites lacking physical diagnostic material as accessible for industrial development. Traditional knowledge, because it lacks formal recognition within this evaluation, also lacks value. Ultimately, this results in a loss of Alberta's archaeological history due to reliance on a western physical and verifiable frame.

Recognition: It's not a continuum

Cultural Resource Management Consultants (CRMs) have a large amount of power in the classification of historical value, if we view it, as it is viewed in practice, as a question of value or lacking value, and this is concerning in that in the current system economic influence may have undue impact on the performance of these CRMs. The presentation of a continuum allows for the perception of a multi-modal system of assessing value that doesn't exist in practice. The current system further obfuscates the role of a value assessment, in the designation and protection of Alberta heritage sites, by asking professional archaeologists to assess the heritage value of a site, without providing a system to clarify the difference between moderate and high heritage value. What motivates an archaeologist to recommend anything other than the HRV 4 that industry needs to be able to continue working, largely unhindered if the result is the same, and sites are provided similar protections?

If we accept that these categories function largely as described, as an either-or of physical artifact value, then we can see why this system does not adequately provide protection for the physical or ephemeral Indigenous heritage of Alberta. Categorizing and recording the value of a site like the MacDougal Memorial Church did not result in its protection from the fire that consumed it, but recording it within a colonial physical frame, did create a perception of value that carries over after the fire. While McDougall Church has been rebuilt the question of whether it should be categorized as a heritage site remains open. Sites that do not receive such recognition are not afforded the same status, and precontact sites with HRVs of 4 are quickly downgraded to 0 after activity —largely industrial—disturb or destroy cultural features (2016-01) (2016-02). There is a clear settler-colonial divide between the historical resources worth saving, and those not worth saving, and a continuum designation does not account for this discrepancy.

A counter argument to this is that resources found in 2014 and 2016 are more likely to be of low historical value as sites of high historical value would have already been studied and classified. This is akin to saying that archaeological history is defined by the order of discovery and not by the historical information they hold. Looking closer at the HRIA system one thing is apparent, the restricted access of this archive works to support the illusion of a continuum. While historical resources are listed publicly, the reports and subsequent dashboards are not public. The façade of report variation is propped up by the public face of HRIAs as supporting a continuum that is based on clearly defined categories for the presence of large amounts of diagnostic material, individual reporting language, and the perception of archaeological significance.

This perspective, however, limits the scope of our understanding of archaeological significance to the knowledge and diagnostic techniques of the time that we are investigating. As mentioned above, archaeological evidence often relies on ~~previous~~ precedents, and, just as we no longer rely on the interpretations of antiquarians on archaeological evidence, the judgements of this current time may limit or stunt our ability to study historical resources as a means of mapping traditional movements, promote understanding of traditional territories, or the history of Indigenous peoples that has been so extensively expunged from the Alberta landscape. Leaving archaeologists with an either-or choice of protection for denoting archaeological evidence doesn't only create an unfair dichotomy, it also removes the possibility of future interpretive methods to explore Alberta's Historical Resource landscape and imposes a continued colonial history of the province complete with further interpretive holes.

Questions for Future Research

What comparisons can be made between Alberta's system of privatized archaeological assessment and other jurisdictions?

For this, the data collected in this study would be helpful to complete a comparison of the functional differences of vastly different jurisdictions and within the Canadian context. While Alberta's system of HRV was held up by archaeologists in this study as the best system, the functional differences between provinces may also provide an interesting examination of storage and value across Canada. Comparison allows for the breakdown of the siloed nature of archaeological value and allows for more global perspectives to be viewed. In this way, the protection of Alberta historical resources could be based not only on limited comparison with adjacent jurisdictions but with the larger global heritage system.

How can an HRV system be representative of Albertan's values when these values are constantly fluctuating across generations?

This is by far the most pressing issue of any assessment of value as the decisions made today on heritage value have long lasting implications on what can or can't be valued in the future. Current archaeologists often look back on the work of previous archaeologists with scorn over what wasn't done to preserve materials for the future, the opposite is also true, but the important idea is that evaluation requires the ability to make this determination. Without an attempt to include public perspectives of archaeology this assertion is not defensible, as the production of HRV sways with subjective interpretation.

This process of categorization that ties archaeological efforts to industrial development makes the preservation of Alberta's heritage resources tied implicitly to the expansion of development of other resources. In the booms this has meant Alberta has had one of the most robust heritage preservation systems in Canada, but what happens when these industries don't expand? What unintended effects are implied by tying heritage preservation and protection with other more extraction focused resources? Or simply, can we live with boom-and-bust archaeology?

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Women Without a Nation: Deromanticizing Humanitarian Photography and Exploring Self-Representation

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Abstract
Photography has the ability to provoke ethical reflection and to provide an emotional connection to the reality of individual suffering (Hariman & Lucaites, 2016). Therefore, given the importance of visual communication in covering humanitarian crises, this short paper aims to problematize humanitarian photography practice and reflect on alternative ways of framing representations of refugee women's life experiences outside mainstream media. I propose here an initial conversation regarding my doctoral research that focuses on the self-representation of refugee women. I aim to investigate how self-representation can challenge methods of documenting refugee women's life experiences by constructing their exiled memories through visual narration. The objective of this paper is to deromanticize the idealized model of humanitarian visual representation by reflecting on the photographer's role in the field and by exploring alternative photographic practices that frame nations affected by crises. The word "crisis" governs my work not only because refugee women are victims of a global refugee crisis resulting from armed conflict, natural disasters, and diseases, but also because of the daily subjective crises that these women face in lands that they now call home. Through self-representation, they can construct their stories beyond the problematic representation of conflicts. By reflecting on the activist potential of the self-representation of refugee memories it is possible to consider new opportunities to make their struggles visible in times of crisis.

Keywords
Photography, self-representation, humanitarian approach, refugee women.

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The United Nations considers massive displacement—refugee crisis—to be the most intense humanitarian crisis of the century. According to UNHCR Canada (2021), 82.4 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of conflict, persecution, human rights violations, and violence1. Within this worldwide humanitarian crisis, it is possible to notice that gender inequalities are rooted in the refugee system, hence, refugee women are among the most vulnerable and face the most traumatic effects of a conflict. For instance, Afghan women made up 80% of the 250,000 Afghans forced to flee their country since May 2021 (UNHUCR, 2021). These women, in addition to dealing with the narrow interpretation of Islamic law that restricts their rights, also suffer the consequences of visual representations shaped by a problematic humanitarian discourse that do not provide justice to the refugee's cause.

Given this global context of crises and the pervasiveness of visual coverage of these events, this paper offers a brief critical reflection on the state of humanitarian photography by defining this practice and questioning the photographer's role in the field. Additionally, I discuss alternative practices that aim, first, to overcome the photographic depiction of violence and, second, to challenge determinations of Western newsworthiness. In particular, I interrogate visual representations that frame woman[2] as a gendered humanitarian symbol of victimization and charity, and I problematize the agency of photographers in the field, who reproduce colonial dynamics in the ways that they visually document a humanitarian crisis. I propose, instead, to use participatory photography practices as a method for self-representation by refugee women (i.e., Afghan women newcomers in Canada). I urge scholars and practitioners to seek out subjective refugee life experiences that go beyond a problematic visual representation of displacement. My intention with this approach is to also develop an early understanding of how these visual narratives can engage social reflection about the construction of refugees memories.

Humanitarian Visual Representation

Photographs are essential to reflect on the past, as well as to create visual memory and global awareness by offering an intimate relationship with reality (Hariman & Lucaites, 2016). This relationship between photography and the perception of reality raises questions regarding the role of this medium in confronting violence in its different facets, since most humanitarian crises are not the product of a single factor or event, but the interaction between natural risks, armed conflicts, and human

[1] More information: https://www.unhcr.ca/in-canada/refugee-statistics/. Accessed: 25 August 2021.
[2] In my study the word *woman* refers to any individual who identify themselves as a woman; it includes various subjectivities and ways of being a woman (Butler, 1999).

vulnerability. Thus, the visual representation of these crises encompasses distinct aesthetic approaches and, consequently, different relationships between the photographs, subjects, and viewers. On one hand, scholars assume that photographs that deploy the shock effect of violent imagery can provoke in the viewer either a perverse pleasure or compassion fatigue, both of which inhibit political action that would reduce the suffering of others (Moeller, 1999; Sontag, 2001; 2003). On the other hand, Hariman and Lucaites (2016) advocate for an understanding of photography that goes beyond the idea that negative images promote violence, suggesting that the aesthetic of shock can also provoke thoughtful reflection about contemporary social problems.

The polarized debate about the potential of photography to generate either empathy or moral anesthesia is also extended to problematize the aesthetic of positive, which rejects the imagery of the sufferer as a victim and focus on sufferer's agency and dignity (e.g., refugees participating in a development project). Chouliaraki (2010) and Boltanski (1999) mention that the positive imagery approach is accused of glossing over the misery of suffering. Positive image appears to empower distant sufferers, but it ends up disempowering refugees by appropriating their otherness in Western discourse of agency and rendering them as "perpetual objects of our generosity" (Chouliaraki, 2010, p. 113). The positive imagery points out to a more pragmatic risk of misrecognition resulting in an increasing compassion fatigue for positive images (Chouliaraki, 2010). Both, aesthetic of shock and positive imagery share a reliance on photorealism and focus their visual narrative in the power of emotions. These visual representations guided by Contemporary Western politics and a universal conception of welfare—which consist of the articulation of justice with pity (Boltanski, 1999)—confront audiences with distant suffering in two forms: shocking destitution and hopeful self-determination.

The emerging aesthetic resulting from a post-humanitarianism discourse distances itself from the universalism to focus on particularities of each cause. According to Chouliaraki (2010), this approach disincorporates the representation of suffering from its discourse by proposing that actions depend on each person's judgment. However, the post-emotional aesthetic is also interrogate because it draws on the resources of the media market in which humanitarian organizations are currently operating. Post-humanitarianism may be reinforcing dominant Western culture, "where de-emotionalization of the suffering of others goes hand in hand with over-emotionalization of our safe everyday life" (Chouliaraki, 2010, p. 122). Therefore, humanitarian visual depictions seem to be under a constant threat of delegitimization as there is no manner of representing distant others that seems to do "justice to the moral claim of suffering" (Chouliaraki p. 107). These problematics regarding the

representation of the other in vulnerable situations that moves between emotional-oriented narratives to post-emotional brings us closer to the concerns surrounding humanitarian photography practices itself.

In this context of witnessing "distant suffering" (Boltanski, 1999; Chouliaraki, 2015; Moeller, 1999)—which I define as the suffering of people outside one's sphere of influence— humanitarian photography not only confirm, document, and represent a crisis but also seek to generate a connection between viewers and photographed subjects. As mentioned above, this practice is oriented to make audiences feel for and respond to those in need based on moral universalism or particularities of the cause (Fehrenbach & Rodogno, 2015). Within this situated perspective of humanitarian photography to raise funds for interventions, the woman is framed in photographic compositions as an ideal universal symbol of disaster victims (Droga, 2011). These images do not just dehumanize subjects, gloss over their suffering, and/or follow a commodity logic, but also replicate gender stereotypes in problematics ways. For instance, according to Bleiker and Hutchison (2019), woman-and-child is considered a gendered humanitarian symbol as it translates the customary notion of motherhood and the idea of being prone to the circumstances surrounding them. "Women are thought to provide a humanizing face for what is often large scale, distant and dehumanizing disaster" (Bleiker & Hutchison, 2019, p. 235). Therefore, humanitarian photographic practices guided by the idealized model of humanitarian representation ends up documenting "a range of cultural assumption that reflected European prejudices of colonial 'subjects'" (Bleiker, 2018, p. 27) and reinforcing traditional visual representation of gender roles, mainly, woman as vulnerable and powerless.

Drawing on this, Azoulay's (2020) work points out that it is necessary to study photography by considering the imperial context that it emerged in and acknowledge that the camera shutter is an imperial technology. Azoulay (2020) asserts that the "operation of a shutter commands zero degrees of neutrality" (p. 42) and to consider it to be politically neutral is an exercise of imperial violence. In a split second, the brief camera's operation transforms an individual rooted in the life-world into mere representation of 'the refugee'. "Whatever comes from [camera's] operation is already stripped bare of its singularity, its singular way of being part of the world." (Azoulay, 2020, p. 52). Thus, to overcome the representation of refugee women as a mere object and/or as gendered humanitarian symbols placed in a photographic scene, it is necessary to understand the relationship between the photographer, photographed, camera and context. In the coverage of a humanitarian crisis, the act of framing the Other in a vulnerable situation raises complex issues regarding the right of the photographer to denounce inhumane situations and barbarity, but at the same time, the need to respect the Other's space of pain and their agency.

Photographing Distant Suffering

Within the Contemporary Western politics context that involves the promotion of social causes and the denunciation of calamities, we must also consider the fundamental role of the photographer who responds to the model of witnessing suffering. Western photojournalism, according to Kennedy (2012), was shaped by the idealization of culture, documentation to support colonizing purposes, and the promotion of compassion as an appropriate response to the suffering of others. While taking *good shots* to sell to the press, the photographer privileges the aesthetic of shock to follow the standards of newsworthiness. In this photographic composition, human suffering becomes mere information—a commodity—that stars on social media, on TV or in newspaper columns (Paglamidis, 2013, Moeller, 1999).

The photographer in the field experiences a fine line between taking an unauthorized photo and the journalistic principle to inform (Ribeiro, 2019). However, even in the face of this privileged informative position, the photographer's role should not be perceived as neutral as they make choices that have ethical and political implications for others' lives. Ribeiro (2019) suggests that the postures of certain photographers in the coverage of a humanitarian crisis are endowed with a violent or predatory instinct and that this instinct is specialist in cruelty. Photographers tend to frame violent scenes that, in a simple and unmistakable way, translate the messages about a humanitarian crisis. These negative images aesthetically foreground misery, hunger, disease, and death. However, according to Ribeiro (2019), the photographs that frame suffering do not add value to information; rather, they end up following the canonical standards of the visual representation of crises that portray different situations in equal ways, reproduce clichéd images, and promote stereotyping.

Given this context, when reporting on an experience photographing Syrian refugee women with their children at Al-Yasmin camp in Lebanon (2018), Ribeiro (2019) questions his own acts as a photographer: "Wouldn't it be a violence to point the camera at the refugee lady in Lebanon and take a photograph of her without talking, without asking if she would like, or could, be photographed?" (p. 4) .[3] To address this question, Ribeiro proposes *dialogical photography* as a way to get closer to a humanitarian approach. Dialogical photography is defined as placing the human being at the center of the process and goes against reporting the other as a mere object (Ribeiro, 2019). That is, the author suggests that photographers renounce their privileged and vertical

[3] Original: Não seria uma violência apontar a câmera para a senhora refugiada no Líbano e arrancar-lhe uma fotografia sem dialogar, sem perguntar se gostaria, ou poderia, ser fotografada? (Ribeiro, 2019, p. 4)

position and establish a horizontal and collaborative relationship with the photographed subject. For Ribeiro (2019), photographers must be committed to human rights and the preservation of their subjects' dignity.

An example of dialogical photography is Karin Garcês's work titled *Experiencing Childhood as Refugees* (2019)[4]. Garcês frames the everyday of the Palestinian children in refugee camps by respecting their individuality and, before taking pictures, seeking to know their life stories and dreams. Garcês creates a photo narrative depicting children playing and smiling to draw the attention of the international community regarding the responsibility it has in the face of the harsh reality of war and the lack of basic rights to which children are subjected. The construction of her visual narrative is centered on the children's daily activities and on the dialogue that she establishes with them. Garcês' visual project aims to raise funds for the Palestinian community, but also to create an archive for the Palestinian childhood memories in order to help these children consolidate their exiled identity; these children are not just reported numbers or bodies visually represented in the media. Palestinian children, who are born refugees, are bearers of stories, desires, and dreams.

Drawing on the idea of dialogic photography, I propose to look critically at the model rooted in a Western perspective that idealizes the positive possibilities of humanitarian photography. If photographers are witnesses who keep memories of survivors, wars, and victims, then, what is the best time to *take shots*? How might photographers documenting refugee experiences do justice to their subjects? I believe these questions might never find a conclusive answer; however, what can be done is to recognize photographers' limits in representing the other as a way to challenge the settler-colonial model of visual representation (Rajagopal, 2011) through dialogical photography or other photographic narratives that aim to look beyond violent scenes, idealized positive imageries, and oppressive gendered narratives.

Looking Beyond Violent Scenes

To get closer to visual representation that distances itself from the problems of media sensationalism and challenges settler-colonial prejudice, it is necessary to humanize the statistical data and to value the characters of the narrative as the protagonists. However, in this brief article, I propose to go beyond the representation of others through professional photographers' eyes. I intend to highlight how photography can translate refugees' subjective life experiences through self-authored visual narratives.

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[4] More information: http://www.retratosdeumconflito.com.br/. Accessed: 31 ago. 2021

Discussing self-representation by individuals affected by crisis, Graham (2014) investigates images of humanitarian conflict in the Republic of Congo and the representation of Congolese people. The author conducts anthropological research to understand the meaning that surrounds photographs of individuals affected by conflicts. Photography involves more than just the image itself. It also encompasses the context in which the photograph was taken, the photographer's decisions about how to photograph their subject, the demands of the camera, and the agency of the person pictured. As a result, Graham (2014) highlights the important role of vernacular photographers who create everyday portraits of life in Goma, an area affected by a humanitarian crisis caused mainly by natural disaster. The photos are produced by Congolese people and portray Congolese people. Here, self-representation challenges the image created by "victim photography" (Rosler, 2004, p. 178)[5], since, for years, images of the Congo crisis have influenced the way the world views the region. Focusing on the context behind the photographs that include the daily life of an affected nation provides another understanding of crises. The idea of representing daily life challenges the system behind news criteria and proposes representing refugees beyond the problematics of a humanitarian crisis. For instance, Everyday Africa[6] is a project in which local African photographers complicate shared mainstream photographs that focus heavily on conflict and famine by portraying African people's daily lives, activities, and cultural traditions.

Following the same line, Bleiker and Kay's (2007) study proposes transgressing the representation and stereotypes shared by mainstream media through a practice called *pluralist photography*. For the authors, pluralist photography seeks to validate local photographic practices in an attempt to overcome the stereotyped images of communities as passive victims (Bleiker & Kay, 2007). By generating multiple and creative ways to represent communities' social and political issues, pluralist photography helps viewers to recognize that the "process of representation is inherently incomplete, and thus inevitably political" (p. 141). In short, this local photographic practice proposes that the people who would be represented in mainstream media are the ones who reproduce the visual narrative; victims of a conflict are the people who report and represent their life struggles.

Inspired by these approaches that place vulnerable communities in the center of the visual narrative—and as narrators of their own stories—my research aims to

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[5] The term victim photography, explored by Rosler (2004), criticize documentary photography that paints its subjects as pathetic victims by asserting that in a photographic scene, the subject is "victims of the camera—that is, of the photographer" (p. 178).

[6] More information: https://www.instagram.com/everydayafrica/?hl=en. Accessed: 31 ago. 2021

discuss how the self-representation of refugee women through photography can be beneficial for the (re)construction of their identities and memories. I am particularly interested in understanding the activist potential of self-representation, that is, to what extend self-authored visual narratives of refugee women can add political and aesthetic complexity and first-person perspectives to the humanitarian photography scholarship. The practices of self-portraiture that participatory photography solicits are valuable for academic insights, but also to offer means of self-knowledge, holding the potential to help women in vulnerable situations reconstruct their marginalized life stories and silenced subjective experiences.

Framing Refugee Women's Memories

I consider refugee women's acts of photographing their own reality—self-representation—a way to (re)construct their life stories. In this sense, I understand memory itself as narrative, and I use the memory approach presented by Pollak (1989), who emphasizes the importance of narration for memory consolidation, whether through oral, written, or visual stories. Pollak (1989) presents the political issues of framing memory and the dispute for space within official narratives. For example, the author postulates that a Holocaust survivor recalls the memories of traumatic experience in the present, reinterpreting the past. Hence, by privileging the analysis of people who are excluded, marginalized, minorities, or victims, their life stories, which were silenced for so long, emerge in the public space and therefore vindicate their rights. These marginalized stories, called *underground memories* (Pollak, 1989), take shape in documentaries, documents, museums, and photographs. Through visual narratives, these marginalized memories gain visibility in the present. In the case of my work, this role is played by participatory photography, which provides a way to visually articulate memories that have been marginalized by (re)discovering the past and offering it a new look.

In this light, my research aims to explore the method of participatory photography, which uses the alternative photographic techniques presented above. Participatory photography is a practice used to (re)construct and reflect on the identity of people from vulnerable socioeconomic contexts, from communities formed by ethnic and social minorities (Meirinhos, 2012). I am interested in the community of Afghan refugee women newcomers in Canada, due to the current situation of Afghanistan under the Taliban regime[7]. Within the number of Afghans seeking refuge, women

[7] According to the UNHCR (2021), more than 400,000 Afghans have been forced to leave their country since the beginning of the year; this number adds to the more than 2.9 million who have been internally displaced across the country since the last record at the end of 2020 (UNHCR, 2021). More

represent the largest percentage, as the Taliban government directly threatens the basic rights of women. Afghan women are not only looking for a new home to protect themselves from armed conflicts, but also to have access to school, work, and to be able to recognize themselves as a woman without fear. Thus, I intend to integrate Afghan women, who are currently living in Calgary, as co-authors of the research[8]. Because my project is framing visual activism, it provides a site for negotiation rather than the idea of 'giving' voice (Fairly, 2018) to refugee women. That is, I do not intend to give voice to these women, but provide them a space to talk.

Additionally, a participatory photography practice is necessary to expand from the notion of speaking out to incorporate, as Fairly (2018) suggests, a complex conception of listening. Participants are negotiating self-authored visual narratives to find a voice for themselves, but also looking for 'listeners/viewers'. Thus, I propose creating a digital platform to share the photographs captured by the participants and a short documentary film that will result from the fieldwork experience. The participants will be involved in editorial control and ethical considerations will be followed[9]. I build on Fairley's (2018) approach to participatory photography because she also critically reviews this method by challenging and complicating the romanticised assumption that photography empowers the community. My research does not aim to suggest that self-representation is a better method in framing the refugee subjective experiences, rather I intend to study, as I mentioned above, to what extend can participatory photography add political and aesthetic complexity and first-person perspective to humanitarian representation and visual activism practices.

To meet participants, I will engage in a pre-process in which I will volunteer with an Afghan refugee women's project. My goal with immersion in the community is to be able to get closer to these women's issues, so that my research meets ethical, human, social, and academic expectations. Therefore, my research aims to invite refugee women to introduce their perceptions to the camera, so that they can build their subjective and personal mnemonic framework. My role in this process, as a critical media researcher, is to experience this process of translating lived experiences into a

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information: https://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing/2021/8/611617c55/unhcr-warns-afghanistans-conflict-taking-heaviest-toll-displaced-women.html

[8] The fieldwork stage will be employed from Fall 2022 to Fall 2033. This article outlines an evolving research project; therefore, I recognize that it might change over my doctorate trajectory.

[9] The ethical sets include several layers: (1) participants consent prior to the start of my research process; (2) participants maintain ongoing consent during the process and can withdraw from the study at any time; (3) participants are required to get consent forms from non-research participants in case a non-research participant is portrayed in a photograph; and (4) participants will be asked to give consent at the end of the fieldwork stage if they want their photographs to be used in the digital platform and documentary film (Brigham et al., 2018).

photographic composition together with these women and to provide a space for their voices to be heard through visual narration inside and outside academia.

Conclusions

Critically reviewing photographic practices, especially deromanticizing practices rooted in a colonial gaze, is necessary to provide alternative ways of narrating refugees' life experiences beyond the problematics of displacement. Thus, I hope that by bringing the refugee women community as co-authors of my research, I can provide a more comprehensive reflection on the practices of photographic representation and on the social responsibility of research in the field of communication. Within the major undertaking of my doctoral research, my biggest objective is expanding my research beyond academia to effectively return my findings to the community.

As an International Student, migrant, woman, researcher, and amateur photographer, I feel connected with studies that involve cultural apprehensions, self-knowledge, and discussion around memory through activist visual documentation practices. My interests involve discussing critically practices of self-portraiture that translate social problems and challenge mainstream media representations. Therefore, my final consideration in light of this brief argumentation is that research ought to change paths and discover new opportunities regarding activist representation in time of crises, but also to find, in new scenarios, chances for social metamorphosis.

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Looking in From the Outside: The Case of the Excluded Self-Publisher

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Abstract
A significant portion of books on Amazon are self-published using Kindle Direct Publishing. Self-publishers are given an opportunity to share their work with the world with a few clicks of their mouse. However, traditional publishing infrastructures are not as welcoming to the self-publisher. This paper performs a discourse analysis of government funding frameworks available to workers in the Canadian publishing industry. Through the analysis stage, the study finds that the self-publisher is ineligible to apply for funds and grants from the government both on the provincial and the federal levels. The self-publishing business model is not recognized as a legitimate one and is often equated with vanity publishing, which comes with a stigma. Furthermore, traditional publishing industry workers act as gatekeepers who also exclude the self-publisher from the conversation around the changing landscape of the Canadian publishing industry. Even though the self-publisher should be recognized as a legitimate worker of the cultural industries, they are not acknowledged as such both by government officials who distribute grants and traditional publishers. This study adds to the limited scope of research conducted on self-publishing in order to break the boundaries that self-publishers encounter. The study concludes with recommendations to assess the process of the distribution of government funds and grants in order to incorporate the changing practices of the cultural industries and incorporate new business models such as self-publishing.

Keywords
Publishing, self-publishing, government frameworks, funding frameworks.

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When David Chilton first self-published The Wealthy Barber it sold only 12,000 copies (McGugan, 2015). However, over the years the book was purchased over 2 million times (MacDonald, 2011). Even though Chilton's debut work can be considered a best-selling sensation, it has never been nominated for a Canadian literary award or prize. Self-publishers are usually excluded from the traditional publishing industry by being barred from award nominations in addition to being ineligible for government funding that is given to workers of the conventional book trade. As displayed by Chilton's success story, self-publishers can contribute substantially to the publishing industry in Canada and should be given equal opportunities as traditional publishers.

For the purpose of this study a self-publisher will be defined as someone who finds their own consumers directly, takes on all the financial burdens of the project related to each stage of the production-distribution-consumption cycle, which can include hiring others for such jobs as editing and distribution. The novel form of self-publishing that is discussed in this paper refers to digital self-publishing practices, which include the production of eBooks and the employment of online distribution methods. On the other hand, the traditional publisher will be defined as someone who works with multiple authors simultaneously, owns the rights to their work, and fully subsidizes the project. Traditional presses are in full control of the production, distribution, and marketing stages where the authors' opinions and preferences are secondary. The major disparity between the two business models is the fact that the production team has more agency in the process of publication, distribution, and marketing, whereas the self-publishers have full agency over these stages. With the introduction of novel distribution methods, such as the purchase of products online, the author no longer needs the publisher to be their link to the reader. Therefore, the conventional publishers can no longer be recognized as the only gatekeepers who provide access to consumers. The infrastructure of the publishing industry is changing with new digital publishing practices changing the roles of the workers in the book trade.

This paper performs a discourse analysis, which aims to deliver that some government funding models should be re-examined in order to incorporate novel business models through the example of the excluded self-publisher. Discourse analysis is associated with social interactions: "social reality is produced and made real through discourses, and social interactions cannot be fully understood without reference to the discourses that give them meaning" (Phillips and Hardy, 2002: 3). This type of data analysis is utilized in order to explore the relationship between the self-publisher and the traditional publishing sector through observing the language the government frameworks employ to describe "legitimate" candidates for their

funds and grants. The study concludes that the self-publisher is omitted from the government frameworks designed to aid actors of the publishing industry, which creates inequalities between new and traditional business models. The study concludes by suggesting some changes, which can be made to the government funding policies in order for the self-publisher to become a legitimate member of the publishing industry.

The Canadian Book Trade in Historical Perspectives

The Canadian government has had an active role in the function of the Canadian cultural industries since 1957 with the founding of the Canada Council for the Arts; in 1972 the federal government started providing funds and loans to publishers directly (Dewar, 2017). The role of the government in the cultural industries is an important one and is emphasised by a number of political economy scholars (Downing, 2014; Golding and Murdock, Garnham, 2014; 1996; McChesney, 2000; Mosco, 2009). However, no active research is being conducted on the government's role in the Canadian publishing sector and how new business models such as self-publishing can be successfully incorporated into the Canadian book trade. This study aims to open future discussions on the role of the self-publisher in the changing landscape of the Canadian publishing industry and highlight some issues present in government funding frameworks.

Vincent Mosco (2009) contends that creating "social policies and programs to protect the economic existence of social acts" is an important role of the government in order to have a democratic space, not influenced by capitalistic values of business conglomerates (p. 147). This can be displayed in the significance of having "Free Spaces" that take the shape of independent presses or public broadcasting networks (ibid). In Canada there are no public divisions or any open access platforms for writers to create and distribute their literary projects. Authors who do not want to pursue a traditional publishing career have to resort to third-party foreign online publishing websites (e.g. Amazon, Smashwords, etc.). However, in order for cultural diversity to flourish there has to be a balance between corporations driven by capital and the public division (Golding and Murdock, 1996, p.17). Government funding programs can potentially prompt the development of open access spaces that bypass traditional methods of production, which can create a more diverse environment. The current government funding available has mostly helped the already established actors of the traditional publishing industry. This is an issue because the corporate world of book production (the gatekeepers) often limits the entrance of new business models into the system.

In a historical perspective, the distinction between traditional presses and presses founded by authors have been blurred in the Canadian publishing sector. There was no evident stigma attached to writers who would go on to establish their own publishing houses; in contrast, they would be described as valuable additions to Canadian literary culture (Lorimer, 2012; MacSkimming, 2007). However, research on the Canadian book trade does not link the author-turned-publisher to the practice of self-publishing in any way. During the inception of the Canadian publishing industry many writers of poetry would start a publishing house to produce their own work. For instance, House of Anansi, which still operates today, was established by two writers: Dennis Lee and Dave Godfrey. The earliest work of the press was Lee's own poetry (Shoesmith, 2013: 10-11). Nevertheless, the term "self-publishing" is absent from studies conducted on the Canadian publishing industry. Furthermore, there are very few contemporary studies conducted on the Canadian self-publishing sector in general (Olson, 2014; Thomlison and Belanger, 2015); and there are no studies specifically outlining how new business models, such as digital self-publishing, are being incorporated into the Canadian book trade. This study aims to fill this void in order to bring self-publishing into the conversation around the changing practices in the publishing industry.

Federal Funding

The Canada Book Fund (CBF) and the Canada Council for the Arts programs are the largest sources of funding available to workers of the publishing industry. Approximately $39 million is allocated to publishers and publishing programs by the CBF, followed by $11 million distributed by the Canada Council for the Arts (Nawotka, 2018). The Canada Book Fund was introduced in 2009 and came into effect in 2013-2014 by replacing the Book Publishing Industry Development Program (BPIDP) (Lorimer, 2012, p. 174). The following section of the research draws on data collected from the CBF *Application Guidelines* from 2013-2019, in addition to the *Cultural Industries Cluster Evaluation Report* (Department of Canadian Heritage, 2014) in order to highlight some issues in the wording of the funding frameworks, which ultimately exclude new business models.

All the *Application Guidelines* analyzed for this study state that the main goal of the CBF is to encourage the visibility of Canadian-authored books through tools such as marketing and to strengthen "the infrastructure and efficiency" of the Canadian publishing sector (Canada, 2019a; Canada Book Fund, 2017, p. 2; Canada Book Fund, 2016, p. 2; Canada Book Fund, 2015, p. 2; Canada Book Fund, 2012, p. 2). Conversely, when the documents are searched for key terms that relate to cultural goals ("culture" and "heritage"), they do not appear in the program framework. There are

no objectives developed to advance innovative cultural projects or practices, such as incorporating new business models (self-publishing, online distribution systems, etc.) into the book trade system. However, the guidelines specifically underscore that the objective to strengthen the current publishing infrastructure can be achieved through investing in projects and presses that already display commercial success (Canada Book Fund, 2017, p. 4; Canada Book Fund, 2016, p. 4; Canada Book Fund, 2015, p. 4; Canada Book Fund, 2012, p. 2).

An analysis of the *Cultural Industries Cluster Evaluation Report* further accentuates that the CBF is primarily interested in the economic potential of the Canadian book trade (Department of Canadian Heritage, 2014, p. 39). The report emphasizes that "economic stimulus" (Department of Canadian Heritage, 2014, p. 11) is an essential factor in the stabilization of the publishing industry. Arguably, there is no incentive on behalf of the CBF to invest into new publishing practices but to specifically foster already developed traditional presses and their infrastructures that relate to the cycle of production, distribution, and consumption.

The goal of supporting aspects of the industry that are economically viable is not a new phenomenon. This practice can be traced back to the first program developed by the government in the 1970s, the Canadian Book Publishing Development Program (CBPDP) and later the Book Publishing Industry Development Program (BPIDP). The CBPDP distributed the majority of the grants directly to publishers; 61% of the funding went to only five of the biggest publishing houses, with the rest of the grants given out to less commercially successful presses (Lorimer, 2012, p. 100). Even though the amount of funding left over was still a substantial amount, there was a large number of small presses applying for these grants, which meant that each individual press would get much less funding than the top five publishing houses. Therefore, there were boundaries created from the inception of these government programs, which excluded new businesses and supported the function of the established traditional presses. The BPIDP was also not an exception to this practice of fostering financially viable presses because the program's goal was to combat low profitability (Department of Canadian Heritage, 2008, p. 44).

The CBF has specific eligibility guidelines, which state that author subsidized projects are not eligible to receive grants and funding (Canada, 2019b). However, none of the eligibility criteria specifically state that "self-publishers" are not qualified to apply. Based on the wording of the criterion, there appears to be a stigma attached to works that are subsidized by the author, which can be read as self-published or as vanity publications. Conversely, vanity publishing and self-publishing are two separate practices. The main distinction between the two is that

vanity publishers do not have the intention to sell the books because their main revenue comes directly from the author's pocket (Vanity Publishing, 2009). Therefore, vanity presses do not strive to employ the highest standards when creating the finished product when the self-publisher's main goal is to sell the product by creating a quality item that is marketable (Samson, 2018). Moreover, vanity presses provide packaged deals with no choice of professionals who create the final product such as editors and graphic designers; these packages are overpriced, and many authors end up in debt (Silver, 2017; Samson, 2018). On the other hand, the self-publisher is able to hire workers on a freelance basis and is in full control of who is aiding in the creation of the final product. Therefore, it must be recognized that vanity publishing is not the same as self-publishing. In the wording of the frameworks the two practices are not differentiated in any way but grouped together as similar practices that are not eligible for funding.

The CBF is not the only source of federal funding that aids the workers of the publishing industry which excludes self-publishers. The Canada Council for the Arts grants funding to individual projects as well as organizations. The distribution of the fund is based on a peer review method that evaluates the candidates on a case-by-case basis. However, the debate centered around funding projects that are economically successful versus culturally impactful ones has not escaped this government program either. Funding bodies such as the Canada Council for the Arts often need to display some economic arguments that justify the cultural products being funded such as "job creation, tourism and increased tax revenue" (Brault, 2005, p. 57). However, the council still predominantly funds artistic projects over commercial ones, which is displayed through their eligibility criteria that includes fiction, poetry, graphic novels, literary non-fiction, drama, children's literature (Canada Council for the Arts, 2020). Conversely, titles that the author contributes to financially are ineligible for funding (ibid), which directly excludes self-publishers. Once again, it must be noted that the wording of the document does not necessarily state that "self-publishers" are ineligible. There is a gray zone created by these frameworks that do not acknowledge the existence of this new publishing practice. Nonetheless, new workers of the publishing industry are excluded due to the vague wording used in the eligibility requirements.

The funding frameworks from the CBF and the Canada Arts Council emphasize the issue of how the government often primarily focuses on promoting the economic aspects of the cultural industries. The government's economic objectives often overpower the sociocultural ones. Once cultural industries are recognized as businesses that produce products for consumption, it is difficult to recognize them as separate entities in the capitalist marketplace (Raboy, Bernier, Sauvageau, & At-

kinson, 1994). In theory, it is logical to support businesses that are financially viable. However, the potential problem with that would be the lack of diversity of content. As stipulated by Golding and Murdock (1996) capital should not be the only factor in the decision of what cultural products are produced in order for diversity to develop (p.17).

To conclude, the federal portion of the funding programs available support and favour projects that display financial promise. Furthermore, the term "self-publishing" is not present in any of the documents under investigation. The eligibility criteria uses vague wording that excludes self-publishers without mentioning the actual term. Arguably, this signals that the practice of self-publishing is not recognized as a legitimate one in the publishing sector.

Provincial Funding

In order to understand whether self-publishers are only experiencing this exclusion on the federal level, the research analyzes the funding frameworks on the provincial level as well. All the art councils, with the exception of the Nunavut Arts and Crafts Council, have websites that display the different guidelines pertaining to the types of funding available to presses and writers. At the time of the study, The Nunavut Arts and Crafts Council website was under renovation, and no information on funding was available. The next section of the paper confirms that there are boundaries which self-publishers have to face not only on the federal but also on the provincial level in terms of their eligibility for funding programs.

Through conducting a discourse analysis of the frameworks, the theme of a "gray zone" in the eligibility criteria is also present in the guidelines of the provincial councils, where projects subsidized by the author are ineligible for funding. For example, Alberta Foundation for the Arts states that the following are not eligible for funding: "privately printed, self-published, and vanity press publications…print-on-demand or shared cost publications" (Alberta Foundation for the Arts, 2018). The role of the traditional gatekeeper of the publishing industry is reinforced in these guidelines, which do not accept the fact that the production, distribution, and marketing of a product can be done by a single person through utilizing freelance workers or online tools. Similarly, the Arts Council of British Columbia provides a funding package, *Operating Assistance for Book Publishers,* which does not fund "self-published books and books to which the author has made a financial contribution towards" (British Columbia Arts Council, 2018, p. 10). Another program supported by British Columbia Arts Council, *Professional Project Assistance*, does not provide funds towards for-profit projects (British Columbia Arts Council, 2019, p. 4-5). Man-

itoba Art Council states that ineligible projects comprise of: "commercial production work in any discipline" and "self-publication" (Manitoba Arts Council, 2018, p. 11). Even though some art councils state that they support the collaboration of the different actors of the publishing industry, the guidelines still state that self-published work is not eligible for funding (Ontario Arts Council, 2020). Arts Nova Scotia's funding guidelines state that 75% of titles produced by the press must be by authors "other than principals in the company" (Arts Nova Scotia, 2018, p. 1). Moreover, some art councils do not fund all the stages of the production, distribution, marketing cycle. Northwest Territories Arts Council excludes projects that need funding for marketing or distribution purposes (NWT Arts Council, 2019, p. 6). Additionally, commercial publishing projects and projects that present "sole financial gain of an artist" are ineligible (NWT Arts Council, 2019, p. 5).

Nonetheless, there are a few art councils that do support the work of the self-publisher, which signals a change in the publishing industry. New Brunswick Arts Board provides grants for new and emerging artist, which include individuals who "published at least one book with a professional publishing house or at least 10 poems or at least 3 short stories or 3 works of literary non-fiction…or at least one self-published book that successfully demonstrates commercial intent" (New Brunswick Arts Board, 2019). Similarly, Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council provides funding through its *Professional Project Grants Program*, which supports an individual who has "copyright in his or her own work and has received royalty or residual payment based on that copyright" (Newfoundland and Labrador Arts Council, 2019). Therefore, there are some art councils that do provide support to individuals who want to self-publish and not take the traditional publishing route. The Art Councils of Saskatchewan, Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, and Yukon were not recognized to support or exclude the self-publisher.

Through this analysis it becomes evident that half of the art councils analyzed (Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, North West Territories, Nova Scotia) specifically emphasize in their guidelines that they do not distribute grants to self-publishers or projects that are subsidized by the author. Arguably, this depicts that new business models are recognized but are deliberately excluded, while traditional publishing practices are promoted. On the other hand, the two art councils that do support all forms of production, self-published or not, are examples of how the self-publisher can potentially become incorporated into the publishing industry funding system successfully.

Reports from the traditional publishing industry

The next section explores reports published by key workers of the publishing industry in order to understand whether the boundaries that self-publisher encounter also stem from the traditional publishing sector. This study investigates a report issued by the Association of Canadian publisher (ACP), which represents around 115 presses and is a major association for traditional publishers in Canada (Association of Canadian Publishers, 2019). Another document is published by Association Nationale des Éditeurs de Livres (ANEL) that specifically acts on behalf of French-language presses. Lastly, this study also examines a report issued by members of the traditional publishing sector that met during a think-tank session in order to compile recommendations for the publishing industry in Canada. The study analyzes the objectives each report emphasizes and whether the self-publishing business model is mentioned in terms of the changes impacting the publishing industry.

The report published by the ACP highlights such issues as the lack of diversity in the publishing industry (Association of Canadian Publishers, 2015, p. 3) and the need for reallocation of funds towards the distribution and marketing stages of the publishing cycle (Association of Canadian Publishers, 2015, p. 7). Even though the report recognizes that the current infrastructure of the publishing sector is due for an upgrade, there is no mention of new business models (such as online distribution methods) that would be able to support these changes. Additionally, there is no mention of the self-publishing business model and how this phenomenon is becoming more mainstream. For instance, Bowker published a report, which revelled that over one million self-published books were registered in 2017 (Bowker, 2018).

ANEL is another publishers' association, which discussed related objectives as the ACP for the publishing industry in their 2017 report. Similarly, the issue of distribution of content has come up in the document (Association Nationale des Éditeurs de Livres, 2017, p. 4). However, there are no specific changes indicated in the report on how to proceed with new distribution models and who they should be available to. Another objective promoted by ANEL is the adoption of new tools and innovations by traditional publishers such as print-on-demand technology (Association Nationale des Éditeurs de Livres, 2017, p. 4). Arguably, this further cements the role of the traditional publishers as the only legitimate actors of the industry since they are promoted to host the print-on-demand technology, and there is no indication as to who can access it. Analogously to the report published by the ACP, there is no mention of self-publishing.

The *More Canada* report was written by twenty-nine professionals from the publishing industry in order to assess the state of the Canadian book trade. Similar to the two previous documents, the report outlines the issues with the accessibility and distribution of Canadian content, which was discovered through the use of language in the report (Canadian Publishers Hosted Software Solutions, 2018, p.11, 14, 17, 25). However, the self-publishing business model and the role of self-publishers in the Canadian book trade is not mentioned either.

BookNet Canada produced a report asking respondents from the publishing sector a series of opinion-based questions that relate to the future of the publishing industry. The top two answers to what can possibly disrupt the publishing trade were "self-publishers" and "new business models." Both of these answers were chosen by 30% of respondents (BookNet Canada, 2017, p. 33). It can be observed through this response that traditional publishers do not support the self-publishing business model. The self-publishers are mostly invisible to the workers of the traditional publishing sector, but when they are recognized they hold a place in the margins seen as the *disturbers*. None of the reports produced by workers of the traditional publishing industry talk about novel business models of book production (eBooks) or distribution (digital distribution methods), indicating that the novel self-publishing business model is excluded from the conversation indefinitely.

Conclusion

After analyzing a number of government funding programs and reports published by workers of the publishing industry, this study aims to highlight that as new and unconventional members of the cultural industries become more visible, there are challenges present that should be addressed. Arguably, traditional actors of the different cultural industries are often valued to a higher degree than new business models, which is problematic. As it was evident in the different reports published by the traditional workers of the publishing sector, the self-publisher is not recognized as a member and is not included in the conversation around the changing infrastructure of the book trade industry.

The following section of the paper proposes a number of recommendations to the current structure of the funding models aimed at the publishing industry that should incorporate novel business models. A short-term goal would be geared at incorporating self-publishers into the system at the provincial level. As it was discussed, some provincial art councils do not restrict the self-publisher from applying for funding and grants. Therefore, there is a place for the self-publisher in the government funding ecosystem. By lifting the boundaries at the provincial level for all

provinces and territories, self-publishers can start to be recognized as legitimate actors of the publishing industry.

A long-term goal would include the re-distribution of the Canada Book Fund in order to develop the current infrastructure that deals with production and distribution channels that would be open not only to traditional presses but also to new business models such as self-publishers. These new infrastructures can be modeled on platforms such as Amazon that provide self-publishers and conventional presses the possibility to upload books for sale without gatekeepers. Furthermore, the CBF can draw from other government programs in terms of its distribution practices such as The Canada Arts Council, which distributes its grants based on a peer review process. A similar practice can be employed for the Canada Book Fund by introducing different tiers or stages that an applicant has to go through. This process would be rigorous, but it would also be more inclusive by opening up the eligibility criteria.

The publishing culture is changing, which is displayed by the development of new infrastructures such as online book creation and distribution. The self-publisher is a part of this change and should be recognized as a legitimate member of the Canadian publishing industry both by the government and the traditional publishers, which can be done through opening up access to grants and funding.

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