The Journal

Master of Arts in Liberal Studies
Dartmouth College

“To chase down the truth, wherever it lies.”

Spring 2015
The Journal

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The Journal is a biannual publication for the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program at Dartmouth College. We showcase the strongest creative and analytical work produced by current MALs students as well as MALs alumni. We believe that by selecting and integrating work from all four of the program’s concentrations, we will promote intellectual engagement, fruitful questioning, and honest discourse within the realm of liberal studies.

We are currently accepting submissions in all MALs concentrations for the Fall 2015 issue, the deadline of which is September 1st. We are looking for creative (short story, short non-fiction, poetry, photos) as well as analytical pieces. If you have any questions, comments, or are interested in writing a feature piece, please send your e-mail to: The.MALS.Journal@dartmouth.edu.
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COVER PHOTO:
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Dear Reader,

When the submissions came pouring in for the Spring 2015 issue of *The Journal* we knew that this would be a very creative and artistic collection of work. This issue places a strong emphasis on reflection and deliberation, and while some pieces look to the future, many turn and stare down the past. It is our hope that the readers will find themselves considering the undercurrents of gender, language, identity, and religion featured in the writing on the following pages. With the long winter behind us, we look to the coming months and the future of *The Journal*. Sadly this will be our last issue together as co-editors-in-chief, but as we’ve said before, the world is getting smaller but *The Journal* is not, and we know we’re leaving it in good hands.

As always, we would like to acknowledge the previous editors. Thanks to their dedication we now have an ISSN number, which allows for *The Journal* to be distributed across several universities in the U.S. And as our time with *The Journal* comes to a close, we are glad to have made our own contributions. Each issue now includes a “MALS Spotlight,” which celebrates MALS students, or alumni, and their unique and inspiring achievements. The Spring 2015 “Spotlight” features MALS ’13 alumna Cinnamon Spear.

We would thank Wole Ojurongbe for his continued commitment to *The Journal*. Wole has visited classrooms with us, energetically encouraging students to submit their work, and he has sat down for meetings to help keep *The Journal* moving forward. We would additionally like to thank Professor Donald Pease, Amy Gallagher and Sarah Kleberg in the MALS office, Jackson Schultz for his management of our online website, and our five assistant editors. Lastly, we would like to recognize our new faculty advisor Professor Anna Minardi for her insight and support during this process.
In closing, this issue features a special “In Memoriam” to honor three MALS professors who died in 2014. Although you may not have known them personally, their achievements speak for themselves and each professor left their mark on this program.

It was a pleasure to be a part of The Journal and we hope you enjoy the Spring 2015 issue.

Sincerely,

Amani and Kelsey

The Journal

“To chase down the truth, wherever it lies.”
EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

Amani Liggett is from Sacramento, California, and received her BA in English and Philosophy at UC Davis in 2011. Afterwards, she worked as an inner-city reading comprehension tutor in Sacramento, as well as a grant writer for a Sacramento-based nonprofit that focused on refugee resettlement, rescuing victims of human trafficking, and helping the financially illiterate. Amani began attending the MALS program in the fall of 2013, where she is now Co-Editor-in-Chief of *The MALS Journal*. Through Dartmouth she attended a Literature Summer School at Oxford University (and will return again this summer), and presented a paper on the Haitian Revolution at the 2014 AGLSP annual conference. Amani has just completed her thesis about the history of women who have acted as Hamlet onstage.

Kelsey Smith grew up in East Corinth, Vermont where she graduated from the University of Vermont in 2011 with a BA in political science. After college, Kelsey worked as a public relations and communications assistant for the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth, and then as an account management specialist at The Advisory Board Company, a health-care consulting company based in Washington, D.C. In the winter of 2014, she ventured back to New England to attend the MALS program at Dartmouth where she is now Co-Editor-in-Chief of *The MALS Journal*. Kelsey is currently finishing her thesis: an oral and narrative study on the lives of foreign correspondents. Now living in Houston, Texas, Kelsey is a Brand Manager for The Black Sheep Agency, a cause-based strategic branding agency.

ASSISTANT EDITORS

Jeffrey Hatch is a graduate of Boise State University, where he earned a BA in Philosophy. He is currently studying globalization in the MALS program. He is also an active duty Captain in the US Army and has been an officer since he received his commission in 2005. He has served two combat deployments in Afghanistan and the Horn of Africa, and has been a Company Commander with over 200 soldiers under his command. His thesis research will focus on issues of security and conflict in the rapidly developing era of globalization.
Emily Hedges grew up in Muskogee, Oklahoma and now lives in Lebanon, New Hampshire with her husband and three children. She came to the Upper Valley from Minnesota where she worked as a freelancer, contributing regular articles to ECM-Sun Newspaper Group in the Twin Cities and executing blog book tours for authors. Prior to that she spent 10 years working as an editorial marketing and promotions specialist for local television affiliates, a small ad agency, the Tulsa Philharmonic, and TV Guide Networks. Hedges entered the creative writing track in the MALS program to accomplish two goals: to elevate the quality of her writing and to prepare for a second career as a high school and college teacher. *Emily Hedges is also a contributing author to this edition of The Journal. See “Grandpa’s War.” p 91.

Gregory Poulin is currently studying government and globalization in MALS at Dartmouth; he is an alumni of Wheaton College where he earned his BA in political science and history. His research has appeared in a variety of publications, including The Diplomat, Real Clear World and China-US Focus.

Maria Semmens is a New Jersey native. She attended Rutgers University where she majored in Women’s & Gender Studies and American Literature. She enjoys the non-traditional and eccentric; the macabre and occult, dystopian realms; and the dark interiors of society that so often go un-discussed. Also relevant: Harry Potter, animal memes, black metal, and anything that involves throwaway trivia-centric knowledge.

Amanda Spoto is originally from Staten Island, New York, is a 2014 alumna undergraduate from Dartmouth College. She majored in English (concentration in Cultural Studies and Popular Culture) with a minor in Native American Studies. She wrote a senior English honors thesis entitled, “Decoding the Alternate Gaze Amidst the American Labyrinth: Counter Memory and Re-remembering in Native American Literature” under Professor Pease and Professor Taylor. She is now in the MALS program and is currently on the Cultural Studies track. She has a strong interest in law school, and may soon pursue a Ph.D. *Amanda Spoto is also a contributing author to this edition of The Journal. See, “Decolonizing Terrorizing Zombies: Pathologizing Gender, Sexuality, and Race Through the Looking Glass.” p. 26.
AUTHORS

Thea Calitri-Martin graduated from Skidmore College with a B.A. in Theater-Literature, then followed her ear to Western CT State College where she became certified as a music teacher. In addition to studying creative writing in the MALS program, she teaches music in Lebanon, NH, is the principal horn with the Vermont Philharmonic, and plays jazz on the side.

Howard Carter enrolled in the Dartmouth MALS program in the Fall of 2014. He has received Bachelor of Arts degrees from Boston University and Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, summa cum laude. Howard is a retired Special Warfare Operator Master Chief who served in the Navy for 22 years. He is a veteran of the Bosnia and Kosovo campaign, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom-Trans Sahara.

Sarah M. Decker graduated in 2008 from Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado with a B.A. in English Literature, where she was also actively involved with the college’s literary club, Scarlet Letters, as well as submitted work to the college’s literary journal, Images Magazine, and wrote articles for The Independent News Magazine. In 2007, Sarah attended a study abroad writing workshop in India. As a member of Sigma Tau Delta, a national English society, she presented a collection of her poetry titled “Nature of Sin” at the 2006 International Convention in Portland, Oregon.

Elizabeth Dunphey studied at NYU and received a B.A. in Irish Literature and Art. She is an alumna who studied creative writing at MALS in 2006. She has worked as an online book critic, and a fashion writer for Joonbug magazine. She is a painter and works in the acrylic and charcoal medium. Dunphey currently lives in Queens and volunteers at the Park Slope library in Brooklyn.

Mary Ann R. Hunt grew up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Art History and Classical Civilizations from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She has worked at Dartmouth College for 14 years; the last seven have been in the Alumni Relations office managing the group travel program. Just after college, she lived in Montreal for a couple years where she acquired a passion for ethnic foods and cooking which has been further fueled by the travel and educational programming responsibilities of her current job. As a MALS student she is concentrating on creative writing, with a focus on travel writing.
**Robert A. Kaufman** graduated from Brown and served as a Fulbright Scholar in Oslo. His writing has been featured in Blaire magazine, Extract(s), FD magazine, and Fjords Review. Robert is currently a MALS student at Dartmouth studying poetry.

**Kelley Rossier** has a background in theatre and has been an advocate for breaking down cultural barriers through the arts. She has written full-length plays with this goal in mind. While pursuing an M.F.A. in creative nonfiction at Vermont College of Fine Arts, which she received in 2013, Rossier traveled to Slovenia and was inspired by the rich literary landscape. This led her to apply for a Fulbright in Creative Writing during her time as a MALS student. She was awarded a Fulbright in the spring of 2015 and will be traveling to Ljubljana in the fall to complete her collection of lyric essays.

**Vanessa Qing Zhao** graduated in 2013 from Nankai University in China with a B.A. in Mass Media, Broadcasting, and Journalism. She is interested in screen cultures, including films, music videos, and many other media products. She works at the Hopkins Center for the Arts and frequently goes to film screenings. Being able to speak Chinese, English, and Japanese, and having made her trajectory from the East to the West, she is also interested in multilingual and multicultural communication. In a combination of her interests, her research in the MALS program has focused on the media’s influences on people’s cultural perception.
MALS SPOTLIGHT: CINNAMON SPEAR

MALS ‘13

Cinnamon Spear writes for the people, her people. Raised on the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation in Lame Deer, Montana, and then fighting her way through Dartmouth College twice, has given Cinnamon a unique perspective on cultural versus financial poverty and privilege. In her most recent story, “Jimtown Ruined My Life,” published in Off the Path: An Anthology of 21st Century Montana American Indian Writers, Volume 2, Cinnamon uses local dialect, requiring her to invent spellings for commonly used “rez” (reservation) slang words. It was while working on this story that Cinnamon realized the importance and historical impact of her work.

As a traditional beadworker, writer, and documentary filmmaker, Cinnamon’s art is a direct response to misrepresentation and cultural appropriation. Her work provide insight into contemporary American Indian life. Off the Path, Volume I and II, are the first of their kind, including numerous Indigenous writers from Montana, North Dakota, and as far away as Australia and New Zealand. Spear’s contributions speak to a number of hardships including alcoholism, domestic violence, forbidden young, abortion and more.

“In rural, underprivileged schools, we don’t always identify with what we read or see on TV. Native artists are the only ones who can validate our youth and their lived experiences.”
Cinnamon’s latest story, written with her unflinching prose, details contemporary “rez” life happenings in the context of historical ties to place, and ultimately reveals a heartbreaking mother-to-daughter betrayal. Though she is the one who does the writing, she knows these words are not just her own—and within them lies the power to heal.

Cinnamon graduated from Dartmouth with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Native American Studies in 2009. Returning a few years later, she earned a Master of Arts in Liberal Studies degree in creating writing. As a natural storyteller, Spear picked up a camera (without training) and self-produced a documentary for her MALS thesis project. *Pride & Basketball* examines the role that basketball plays for the male youth in her tribal community. The 32-minute film highlights larger issues of racial discrimination, socioeconomic status, and the need for an improved education system.

Currently working as a Public Affairs Specialist for the Indian Health Service headquarters office in Washington, DC, Cinnamon travels to screen her film, holds book readings, and serves as a motivational speaker to Native youth. Cinnamon exists in a super exposed, bi-cultured hybrid state and with this she feels it is her responsibility to not only teach the world about the Northern Cheyenne people, but also to teach her people about the world.

“My stories are often referred to as raw and powerful. To me, it’s just honesty. Writing is a release. It’s freedom.”

“I killed Custer because Custer was killed by Cheyenne women...A lot of people don’t know the truth.”

-“Jimtown Ruined My Life”
*Off the Path: Volume 2*
FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF BIRDS

ROBERT A. KAUFMAN

There once was a time before New York was,
   And there will be a time when it is not.
But this time – here, now – is sublime because
When birds look down at this Gotham inkblot,
   They see all our color color color
And hear a cavalcade of colored sound.
They cannot caw to the lost boys and girls,
   “Caw! Look up! Caw caw! You’re already found.”
PETRICHOR

SARAH DECKER

At the top of a mountain my father seeks child-sized rocks around the rim. Taking a thick scavenged stick he leverages it against the precipice of the cliff and nudges. As these miniature boulders explode into shards of jagged projectiles he claps his hands together and gives a gleeful whoop.

Moving along the ridge he locates another rugged clump of compressed earth and chucks it down — adding another layer to the exposed graveyard. Excitement from this playful exercise uncovers the years of his life, and for a moment I can see the youthful man he was before children, trucking, and marriage.

He continues the game until a nerve pinches near his back sending shocks of pain. I gather the rocks that he can no longer bend to reach. He takes them in a firm grip and rolls them granny-style like a bowling ball. The rocks tumble half-heartily and lazily split into a few pieces. I push another with my foot closer to him. No, he says, you take this one.

I take the rough lump of marble and shift its weight in my hands. The silica shines as the sky winks back at me. Look how pretty, I say flipping it over and revealing a vein of milky quartz. That’s where the gold is, my dad says following the split. There used to be an ocean floor where we’re standing. Imagine all those fishies and plants floating around us. I close my eyes and feel the water flowing through my fingers. The rock liquefies in my hands and I throw it away before we drown.
After we are gone the rain will come. The night will settle and clouds with cheeks full of water will hover. This thirsty desert will take it all in, mixing the moisture with fragments of dust. With the slow, soft, wet kisses the smell of earth will percolate from each drop. The aerosols will mist the air perfuming the breeze. In the unmistakable, almost palpable sweetness – the petrichor releases. This divine blood of bottled epochs dislodges from eternity with a playful push.
Spring Harvest. Photography by: Farah Salam
SPRING

KELLEY ROSSIER

The snow takes its time. It lingers far past spring’s due date. Across the road the field is white. It keeps the winter close. Maybe the snow will last forever. Maybe May won’t come this year. But near the house, brown is revealed a little each day. The process is slow. The snow begins to melt. Memories of autumn are still frozen against the ground. The boot feels the crunch of last November under foot. Dried leaves are stuck to the earth. I am of two minds--wanting the snow to melt and not able to bear the thought of it. Every year it’s the same.

The stem of a once mighty leaf blows in the wind, its body attached to the ground. It clings to the embrace of winter, desperate to hold on. The leaf had grown safe in the folds of winter’s embrace. Perhaps it wonders where the blanket of snow has gone, the warmth of the weight. It seemed it would last forever.

My puppy sniffs the leaf.

“Don’t touch it,” I say. “Let it be.”

It’s inevitable, though. I know the truth. I know that the earth will warm. The leaf will not be able to hold on. The wind will finally take it.
Will it fly away into the sky? I won’t know where it will go. I won’t know if it will land somewhere else or disintegrate into the ethers.

“I should look that up,” I think. “I should ask someone.”

“Where has the leaf gone?” I should ask. But I don’t. I don’t ask.

The boot crunches across the field. The puppy takes in smells of a new season. She is energized by what she discovers, what she anticipates. The whole world is coming alive for her. She has never known spring. Her spirit is hardly contained within her seven-pound body. She runs and chases and lifts her head to the warming breeze.

I want to say to her, “Just wait, it only gets better.”

But I don’t. I don’t say that. I am still of two minds.

There is an inexplicable joy that comes with spring. I know this. I remember feeling the expectation of summer on spring’s warming breezes. I long for it, but turn away. My puppy jumps from frozen ground to snow to mud. We stand by the stream and listen to the water rushing across the rocks, mad with excitement, vital and raging and new.

The dry leaves on a tree quiver in the breeze. Their color so pale, they are almost transparent. I don’t know why they didn’t fall in the autumn, why they’ve held on. They make a rustling sound and my puppy looks up at them. She barks as if they are alive, as if they are speaking to her.

“There’s nothing there,” I want to tell her. But I don’t. I don’t tell her that. Perhaps the leaves have caught our attention on purpose. Perhaps
they want to say one last thing before they are pushed off the branch in the thunderstorms of April. Soon it will be May.

We think we know the ways of nature. We think we know when it is time to freeze, to sleep, to awaken, to die. We think we know what time means. Everyone says, “Time heals.” But it’s just something to say. Time keeps us locked in the place between two minds. It makes us unable to give ourselves over to the anticipation of something new, something warm.

“I just want to see one more summer,” he had said.

The ground near the house has softened. My puppy and I watch the leaf. It has pulled away from the ground. It had to.

“Nature deemed it so,” some would say.

I look up to the sky.

“Where have you gone?” I ask.

I want to notice the crocus sticking her tiny head out of the ground. I want to feel the warm air, let it invigorate me, let it make me jump from frozen ground to snow to mud. But I am of two minds. I feel the anticipation of an unbearable moment. It always feels the same, as if it’s not a memory, but a thing that happens just the same every year. The melting of the snow, the warming of the ground, the untethering of love. May.
In-Between. Photography by: Heidi Hough
I stand in the master bathroom of my house. The mirror is out of focus. But still, I look. I look at my body. My face, my eyes, too withdrawn to abide. My body is wearing black cotton pants with stitched knee and a navy blue camisole, worn to holey. A cardigan with two pockets. In one pocket, I carry my phone around the house in case he needs to call me from our bed when I’m in the kitchen making dinner or upstairs tucking my girls in. In the other pocket, a packet of tissues. I wear the same clothes every day. Clothes that lack a life beyond the halls of this enormous house. To gain momentum, I slide across the hardwood floors in wool socks.

I take the package of morphine from the Fed-Ex guy at my front door. Since I was told the cancer had spread to his brain, since I was told he would feel no pain, would die in his sleep, since I was told his world would become small, since I started to hear him slur his speech and forget what day it is, since he became unable to walk without my help to the bathroom, since all of this, I have started, in the secret places inside of me, to imagine what life without him would be like. I push the thoughts away. They taunt me. And yet, they also make me able to cope. To imagine my own future,
just a sliver of it, helps me to bear the unbearable.

The mirror reports nothing I dare to see. I manage to look up into my eyes and quickly look back to my clothes. I know that I will have to get rid of every piece of clothing I’ve worn in his presence. I know that I will box up a few sentimental things: the dress I married him in, the dress I tried on for him (“you look like a little fairy”) and bought in Denmark, the cream-colored silk dress with tiny red roses, a birthday present from him. It’s not an intellectual thought. It’s not a plan. It’s just what I know. I know that I will take the rest of my clothes, every single article to Goodwill, even though many of my things are too ragged to be recycled into someone else’s closet. Will sadness follow my jeans and sweaters into another woman’s house? Will her chest heave with sorrow as she pulls the red turtleneck over her head? Will she see my beloved’s face staring from the navy camisole as I have seen him all these days, his cheeks sunken, his eyes distant? How many losses and grieving women’s hearts stand in my closet now—things I bought at thrift stores myself?

Sometimes, when everyone’s asleep, I lie beside him with a flashlight in hand and circle clothes from a catalog. Dresses or tops I will buy when I’m no longer standing, tired eyes, looking into the bathroom mirror while he sleeps, restless, calmed by morphine, fast-acting and calmed again by morphine, slow-acting.

I circle seven dresses, five cardigans, one pair of pants, three tops and five camisoles, the same one in different colors: pomegranate, aspara-
gus, wildflower blue, blazing red and sunflower gold. The next night, I circle a metallic silver messenger bag and a pair of ostrich blue glittery sandals. The third night, my flashlight battery dead, I bring the catalog into the bathroom and sit on the turquoise-colored ceramic tiled floor. I cross out the poppy crinkle dress and change the wide-legged trousers to one size smaller. The next morning I wake up early and sit with my coffee in bed as I always do. I reach for the catalog, midnight markings scrawled, sizes written in, crossed out and rewritten, colors circled, notes to myself, “wear on a hot day,” “at a café,” “for a day by the sea,” “with oysters and beer,” “on the plane.” My future being drawn out in the margins of the clothing catalog. I rip the pages out and set each one side by side, as though there is a movement forward. As if the dress I will wear “on the plane,” placed before the dress “at the café,” makes the café far away. As if I will sit in a café far away. As if the day I will go to the café is part of a group of days that belong to the world outside this house. A world I can only pretend to imagine. I look away from the mirror. I whisper out loud.

*Who will I be when I’m not with you?*
DECOLONIZING TERRORIZING ZOMBIES: PATHOLOGIZING GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND RACE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS

AMANDA SPOTO

The normative, binary society we live in—one in which everything is categorized into two opposing, disconnected factions—has set several boundaries, labels, and fixed definitions to notions such as gender, sexuality, race, and ethnicity. Living outside of these boundaries often results in being an outcast, or abnormal since—as Carla Kaplan explains in her book on the Erotics of Talk, which explores the connection between feminist criticism and theories of communication—in “failing to provide [society’s] necessary conditions, social values also tend to blame the victim […] by accusing [them], in effect, of failing to engage with others, a failure that becomes proof of [their] inadmissibility to the public sphere” (Kaplan, 14). These individuals are placed within a void: a dark, Other, in-between space that does not necessarily have an assigned label, nor are they necessarily alive. They are the living dead—grotesque zombies—terrorizing the neatly paved, civilized streets of society’s single-tracked consciousness. The medical and/or political authorities tend to negatively diagnose such beings—namely women, individuals of darker races, and transsexuals—which, in turn, tends to confine them within a void: a partition-like
looking-glass through which to see themselves transposed against the “normalcy” of society as the abject, infected terrorists who are viewed as a threatening nothing. In Judith Butler’s “Undiagnosing Gender” and Jean Rhys’s Wide Sargasso Sea, both the transsexual body and the Creole female body are diagnosed and perceived as abject zombies whose “abnormal” identity—stuck in an “in-between” limbo—is perceived as a threat to the colonial, normative borders of society.

The purpose of Rhys’s novel, Wide Sargasso Sea (1966), is to serve as a prequel to Charlotte Brontë’s Jane Eyre (1847), or a story that precedes the storyline in Brontë’s novel in order to better exemplify a more nuanced psychological perspective of Bertha: the madwoman in Rochester’s attic. One of the complications in Brontë’s novel is that Rochester cannot legally marry Jane since he is already married to Bertha, who is kept a secret, or is at least considered nonexistent: incarcerated by society’s standards of what is acceptable due to her “other” race infecting England, which then, in turn, brands her body as an “insane” terrorist. Rhys constructs a pre-history of Rochester and Bertha’s relationship in order to provide a narrative history for Bertha (Antoinette Cosway in Rhys’s novel) whose bodily presence is ultimately absent, or imprisoned, throughout most of Jane Eyre. In Wide Sargasso Sea, Rhys essentially provides a voice to Antoinette Cosway who is formerly void of speech in Brontë’s novel set solely in England.

Through both Antoinette’s voice and history in the West Indies in
Rhys’s novel, many complexities of gender and race are raised, especially since being Creole—half white (or a descendant from England) and half black—sets her apart from both the black inhabitants of the West Indies and the white European colonizers. White Creole homes are described by the black characters as “unlucky”: “Mr. Luttrell’s house was left empty, shutters banging in the wind. Soon the black people said it was haunted, they wouldn’t go near it. And no one came near us” (Rhys, 16, emphasis mine). She can neither identify as white or black: she is “in-between,” a “white cockroach” with no financial stability. She is a terrorist Other in her own homeland, and is eventually quarantined in England by Rochester as such. She is unalive, or an inactive member of society: she is not a black slave, nor is she a slave-owner due to the Emancipation Act of 1833, and as a woman during that time, she also has no control over the arranged marriage to Rochester. Pathologizing Antoinette’s identity has confiscated her autonomy along with her existence as a presence in society.

Since Antoinette’s body is identified—in a way—as a terrorist, the blacks constantly remind her of her difference, and they make it clear that her body is not welcome in their homeland: “They hated us. They called us white cockroaches. [...] One day a little girl followed me singing, ‘Go away white cockroach, go away, go away.’ I walked fast, but she walked faster. ‘White cockroach, go away, go away. Nobody want you. Go away’” (Rhys, 20). Essentially, Antoinette is labeled as an unwanted pest, one who walks too slow for the “living”: in other words, she wanders
in limbo, unsure of where she fits in society. She is meant to suffer the fate of her own mother, who “[had] eyes like [a] zombie and [Antoinette has] eyes like [a] zombie too” (Rhys, 45). Even Rochester is perplexed by her “mad” appearance since she lies “in-between”: “She never blinks at all it seems to me. Long, sad, dark, alien eyes. Creole of pure English descent she may be, but they are not English or European either” (Rhys, 61).

Antoinette is diagnosed as a “stranger,” just as the landscape in the West Indies seems foreign, threatening, and Other to Rochester: “Not only wild but menacing. Those hills [and Antoinette] would close in on you” (Rhys, 63). Although she does attempt to identify herself with Tia—a black servant’s daughter—as a child, Antoinette’s reflective mirror is inevitably shattered. Her identity is juxtapositional but not fluid, which is present in the following scene between Tia and Antoinette after the blacks set fire to the Coulibri Estate:

Then, not so far off, I saw Tia and her mother and I ran to her, for she was all that was left of my life as it had been. We had eaten the same food, slept side by side, bathed in the same river. As I ran, I thought, I will live with Tia and I will be like her. Not to leave Coulibri. Not to go. Not. When I was close I saw the jagged stone in her hand, but I did not see her throw it. I did not feel it either, only something wet, running down my face. I looked at her and I saw her face crumble up as she began to cry. We stared at each other, blood on my face, tears on hers. It was as if I saw myself. Like in a looking-glass. (Rhys, 41, emphasis mine)

Through Tia’s gaze, Antoinette is abject: a grotesque being transcending borders that are known, causing Tia to be frightened and cry in response to
the person who was once so familiar, yet simultaneously alien. Using Julia Kristeva’s theory on abjection in *Powers of Horror*—which defines abjection as the repressive, repulsive forces that linger in one’s psyche—Antoinette can be understood as an abject being: she threatens life and must be radically excluded from the place of the living subject, propelled away from the body and deposited on the other side of an imaginary border which separates the self from that which threatens the self.

In his *The Grammar of Identity: Transnational Fiction and the Nation of the Boundary*, Stephen Clingman analyzes the scene between Antoinette and Tia as one that subverts links between peoples and identities, forming partitions (or boundaries): “The connective element divides, because connection is precisely what cannot be tolerated in a grammar of identity founded on demarcation and repression” (Clingman, 150). Related to the notion of delimitation, Rhys draws a sharp contrast of “female” performance between Antoinette and a nun she admires: “They sit so poised and imperturbable while [they] point out the excellence of Miss Helene’s coiffure, *achieved without a looking-glass*” (Rhys, 49, emphasis mine). In opposition, Antoinette is constantly diagnosed as a “forfeited existence” (Kristeva, 9), one that is impure and has “slept too long in the moonlight” (Rhys, 75) after viewing herself analogous to rats through the looking-glass: “But I was not frightened. That was the strange thing. I stared at them and they did not move. I could see myself in the looking-glass on the other side of the room, in my white chemise with a frill round the neck, staring at those
rats and the rats quite still, staring at me” (Rhys, 75). Her sleeping in the moonlight signifies the “walking dead,” or zombie-like individual who uses the magic of Obeah—a kind of sorcery practiced in the Caribbean—in order to sustain her ghost-like, haunted presence (or inherent absence). Adjoining her “madness” with death, darkness, or zombies further labels her as a will-less, speechless, threatening being: a dehumanizing diagnosis.¹

Even Christophine—Antoinette’s servant—warns Rochester that “she is not béké² like [him], but she is béké, and not like [Christophine’s people] either” (Rhys, 140). Clingman claims that Antoinette “is in the non-place of identity, between but not connective, contiguous but not transitive” (Clingman, 138-139). As a white Creole woman, she is incapable of claiming a living identity for herself. Rochester further alienates her identity by bestowing on her a new name, an Adamic, patriarchal act that possesses the power of assigning one’s identity: “Of course, on this of all nights, you must be Bertha” (Rhys, 123). All of the labeling and the narrowed borders placed upon Antoinette by her society restricts the fluidity of her identity, further regulating her creativity, her behavior, and her presence. She falls within the void of binary systems, wandering through limbo of race just as transsexual individuals are trapped in-between norma-

¹ The cover illustration on Jean Rhys’s novel portrays Antoinette laying among phallic-like flowers/plants as if to portray the Creole version of the white, Shakespearian Ophelia from Hamlet. Antoinette’s eyes stare at the reader/audience with eyes wide shut: blankly staring, further burying herself alive amidst the dirt and flowers, creating a gaping space between herself and her burning home in the background as she lies there inactive and speechless. This is a visual portrayal of her displacement.
² Béké is a Creole term used to describe a descendant of Europeans; white.
tive definitions and conceptions of gender, corporality, and sexuality. The restrictions Antoinette faces are also experienced by transsexual individuals by the diagnosis of medical practitioners who construct their presence in society as somewhat void.

Similar to Antoinette’s “in-between” identity, transsexuals also live in a culture that ignores, pathologizes, and degrades their bodies. Arlene Istar Lev, author of *Transgender Emergence: Therapeutic Guidelines for Working with Gender-Variant People and Their Families*, claims that “transgendered people have been labeled as narcissistic, histrionic, antisocial, depressed, phobic, obsessive, and of course, sexually deranged” (Lev, 3). They are often treated by medical “professionals” who use debatable procedures, and use—as stated in Butler’s “Undiagnosing Gender”—derogatory language in clinically assessing such individuals. In her essay, Butler describes how diagnosing a transgendered person with gender identity disorder (GID) labels that person as “ill, sick, wrong, out of order, abnormal, and to suffer a certain stigmatization as a consequence of the diagnosis being given at all. […] It assumes that there is a delusion or dysphoria in such people” (Butler 76-77).

Transgendered individuals do not associate themselves with heterosexism, nor are they exactly labeled as homosexuals: they are present in some sort of “deranged” void (or “in-between”) that is not understood by the “ordinary” guidelines or conventional standards of society. Butler addresses this issue by stating that “it would be a huge mistake to assume that
gender identity causes sexual orientation or that sexuality references in some necessary way to a prior gender identity” (Butler 79). She goes on to describe the “heterosexual matrix”: the belief that, even after a sex change, the individual is attracted to the opposite gender (i.e. a male that changes to female must be attracted to males only, because that is what seems logical through “normal” convention); however, according to Butler, this is not the case: “the matrix would misrepresent some of the queer crossings in heterosexuality. […] Indeed, sometimes it is the very disjunction between gender identity and sexual orientation […] that constitutes for some people what is most erotic and exciting” (Butler 80). Despite this overstepping of borders that already make some health professionals cringe, most individuals who seek a sex change are assumed to possess some sort of mental health issue; therefore, they are trademarked as an “abnormal,” dead figure since they are symbolically—and almost literally—legally changing their name and their gender. They essentially rebirth themselves in a culture whose diagnoses of them “assumes that gender norms are relatively fixed, and that the problem is making sure that you find the right one, the one that will allow you to feel appropriate where you are” (Butler 95).

As pathologized, transsexual individuals are diagnosed, they—similar to Antoinette—are deemed to be speechless, dead beings since their individual autonomy requires a subscription to one’s own abnormalcy opposed to an otherwise purported relationality between body and gender. Our culture denies the transsexuals of their right to exercise autonomy,
and the insurance companies—through their demeaning medical practices, language, and assumptions—seize the notions of liberty and autonomy from the individual. Transsexuals, therefore, are seen as abject figures placed outside of society’s borders, as if their choice to change their genitalia is a monstrous form of sexual taxidermy: “stuffing” a lifeless, “psychotic” being with alien genitalia that was not permitted to them at birth. They are the walking Frankensteins viewed through the gaze of normative society, a gaze that believes in the “notion of ‘assigned sex’—sex ‘assigned’ at birth” (Butler, 97). They are the zombies whose silent screams for love and acceptance are not heard, whose diagnosis calls for the need for a physical, conscious, and unconscious seclusion. They are the terrorizing cyborgs—mechanized, non-humans stripped of their human rights. Meanwhile, Antoinette’s miscegenated body, too, is not exactly viewed as being alive since she is neither the white colonizer, nor is she the dark colonized; rather, she is a form of darkness not associated with skin color, but as a blackened, alien “nothing” through which few can see or understand without fear. Antoinette and transsexuals are both subject to society’s diagnosis, and both represent a nonnormative identity that society fears.

In her article “The Laugh of the Medusa,” Helene Cixious encapsulates the dark, dead space—the void of the “in-between”—society fears, and the limbo space through which transsexuals and Antoinette occupy and wander through:

_They have wandered around in circles, confined to the narrow room in_
which they’ve been given a deadly brainwashing. You can incarcerate them, slow them down, get away with the old Apartheid routine, but for a time only. As soon as they begin to speak, at the same time as they’re taught their name, they can be taught that their territory is black: because you are Africa, you are black. Your continent is dark. *Dark is dangerous. You can’t see anything in the dark, you’re afraid.* Don’t move, you might fall. Most of all, don’t go into the forest. *And so we have internalized this horror of the dark.* (Cixous 878, all emphasis mine)

In society, there is no single looking-glass that can serve as an accurate model for an individual to live by or compare themselves to. The world simply isn’t black and white. There are so many different combinations of races, ethnicities, genders, and spectrums of sexuality that society cannot simply restrict the potential for fluidity in all of these categories. In relation to Gloria Anzaldúa’s argument “(Un)natural bridges, (Un)safe spaces,” bridges are definitely needed, especially in the case for mixed raced people (i.e. Antoinette in *Wide Sargasso Sea*), transsexuals (especially those outside of the “heterosexual matrix”), and for different genders. Anzaldúa calls the “in-between” space “liminal space”: “Transformations occur in this in-between space, an unstable, unpredictable, precarious, always-in-transition space lacking clear boundaries, [and is] in a constant state of *displacement*—an uncomfortable, even alarming feeling” (Anzaldúa, 243, emphasis mine).

Bridges, therefore, are indeed necessary in order to link the consciousness of the dominant, normative society that possesses power and the subservient, abnormal, “untraditional” bodies. This, in turn, will possibly loosen borders that were so tightly drawn, and can create some
sort of peace between the “terrorizing Other” and society as a whole, while also not excluding the bridges connecting various types of “Others” who are not white, or who do not abide by the beliefs of heterosexism. A new looking-glass is necessary in order to decolonize the bodies buried—half alive—underneath civilized borders and boundaries, one where “beauty will no longer be forbidden” (Cixous 876): “Frankensteins” brought to life, allowed a presence, a voice, and a human right to classify themselves without any constraints.
Works Cited


TORTUGA

THEA E. CALITRI-MARTIN

yesterday I was content
swimming the world of dark, cool green
every direction mine

today I feel strange and full
pulled to swim
to a place outside my realm

why do I go?
I do not need land, do not want dry sand
what is this call within me?

tonight the taste of the sea makes me turn
I lift my head and glide
through foam and wave

my body so heavy, swimming through sand and air
spraying hard grains and emptiness
the land-wind sings a harsh welcome

I know this place, know to climb
beyond the reach of the tides, then dig deep
donw to where the smell is rich and moist

new muscles stretch and contract
slowly dropping the future
these are mine, yet they are not

my nest glistens with eggs
round, soft and white
like the full moon above the ocean
the force that brought me here full
   has left me empty, but not alone
naming me “mother” and letting me go

the wind breathes out the smell of dying night
calling me to bury my clutch and leave
the eggs must ripen on their own under the firm sand

familiar waves wash and draw me to deep comfort
   will I come here again?
   is the choice of direction still mine?
Visit to Devil’s Trail. Photography by: Farah Salam
THE LOSS OF CHINESE LANGUAGE IN
CHINESE DIASPORAS IN THE U.S.

VANESSA QING ZHAO

Before coming to the U.S., I had never met someone who looks Chinese but speaks in a completely American way. It was during an audition for a Chinese drill instructor that I suddenly met many students who look like someone I can relate to, yet who appeared so distant once they opened their mouths. They talked to each other in English with “American” gestures. On their note cards were the sentences they prepared for the audition—with basic words, simple grammar, and most of them written not in Chinese characters but in Pinyin (a phonetic system for transcribing the Mandarin pronunciations of Chinese characters into the Latin alphabet). Carefully, they tried to keep their note cards from the sight of others, as if those were something they should feel guilty about.

During that audition, one candidate was supposed to go on the stage and teach us some sentences using other candidates as his/her students. The first girl got on the stage, and slowly she taught us her sentence “Wo Zui Xi Huan De Yan Se Shi Lan Se (My favorite color is blue).” She spoke clearly, yet with a kind of American accent that an “authentic” Chinese person would instantly discern. She then asked some students to repeat that sentence after her, but she became evidently nervous when several of her
“students” could speak that sentence in an accent-free and more fluent way.

After the audition, with great relief, these “ABC (American-born Chinese)” quickly went back to talking to each other in English.

“—So where are you from?”

“—I’m from New York.”

“—No way! I’m from New York, too!”

This time, it was my turn to be surrounded by my foreign tongue: English; it was my turn to feel uncomfortable and guilty for not speaking “their language.” It amazed me how easily barriers can be created among people with such similar appearances, because of the difference of languages.

After that audition, I was constantly intrigued by how language, something our everyday life is saturated with, is intertwined with one’s feelings of belonging, culture, individual identity and others’ perceptions. I have always been curious: for those adolescents who were born in the U.S. but whose parents or grandparents are from China, how did English become their dominant language, the language that they feel most comfortable with? What does “not speaking Chinese” or “barely speaking Chinese” mean to them, as a member of a Chinese diaspora family, as an Asian-looking American citizen, as a teenager at school, and as an individual in the society? What does the loss of Chinese-language ability do to their interactions with their elder generations and with their peers? How do they feel about Chinese history and Chinese culture without being able
to understand the Chinese language? Does their self-perception go against other people’s expectation and stereotypes, and, if so, what does that mean to them? To explore these questions, in this essay, I will first discuss the reasons for the loss of Chinese language among Chinese-Americans. I will then look into the effects of this language loss and how this loss challenges pre-existing impressions of the connections among language, race, culture, history, and identity.

**Reasons Behind “Not Speaking Chinese”**

For Chinese-Americans, more often than not, the loss of Chinese language is something they feel they should be guilty about and apologize for. In her book *On Not Speaking Chinese*, Ien Ang, a Chinese-American author, feels the obligation to apologize at the beginning of the book for the fact that she, as a person of stereotypically Chinese physical characteristics, cannot write this book in Chinese. As seen at the Chinese drill instructor audition, those students also felt ashamed for having to write Chinese in Pinyin and speak Chinese with an American accent. The shame of not mastering Chinese, as they feel they are supposed to in the view of others, is constantly stimulated, since the use of languages is ubiquitous in our life. Whenever Chinese-Americans meet someone either “authentic” Chinese or American, they usually end up feeling accused of, or judged, by other people’s puzzled and mystified expressions.

However, despite the shame these Chinese-Americans feel, it is
barely the case that the blame should be put on them, since one’s childhood environment never is the matter of one’s free choice. In addition, the inability to speak Chinese is due to their parent’s way of education, their way of constructing the world their children grow up in. For immigrant parents, they often feel pressured to choose English over Chinese, because they think that English is the right language to learn. It begs the question: is the pressure of erasing Chinese-ness and assimilating in America so strong that parents are willing to cut out their language ties with their homeland and create communication barriers within their family?

**Language Barrier in American Society**

The pressing need felt by immigrant parents to educate the next generation in English often comes from their own experience of linguistic segregation or even linguistic repression. Even long after one’s citizenship status becomes recognized by the host country, language continues to work as a way of exclusion and expulsion. This situation is perfectly summarized by Gerard Delanty, Paul Jones, and Ruth Wodak in the introduction for their book *Identity, Belonging, and Migration*. Their book describes language separation in Europe as follows: “Language competence is perceived as one of the most relevant gate-keeping devices, with many migrants reporting hostilities when they speak their ‘own’ language, or that when doing so they are viewed as not competent enough in the language of the majority” (3). Bell Hooks also argues in her book *Teaching to Transgress* that standard
English is used as a weapon to silence, censor, and marginalize non-white minorities (172). For a long time, the emphasis on English ability has been a way to keep non-white, non-Western elements from entering, and therefore contaminating the white and Western culture. The situation continues in current American society, where English proficiency is a written and primary requirement for students applying to colleges. For the workplace, though English proficiency is not always written implicitly in recruitment requirements, as to escape criticism of discrimination, it still remains one of the underlying factors to filter through job candidates.

The discrimination that Chinese immigrants previously experienced make them consider it a necessity, or even a survival strategy to educate their children to speak English as their first language. Linguistic assimilation into their host country is believed to hold “the promise of access into a secure world of comfort, affluence and, most importantly, the possibility of upward mobility” (Ang 9). Otherwise, parents fear that their children will be doomed to a life of failure due to their language deficiency.

**Emphasis on Education**

Before we associate English proficiency with “success” we have to discuss what “success” often alludes to in the Chinese cultural system. Throughout Chinese history, Dushu (studying) has been considered a way to change one’s destiny from poor to rich, from lower-class to upper-class, from average citizens to eminent bureaucrats. The Imperial Examination,
a civil service examination system in Imperial China established during the Sui Dynasty of the 6th and 7th centuries, had been the only open door for average citizens to be selected as administrative officials for the state’s bureaucracy. This system lasted for over a millennium, and its far-reaching influence lingers even today, with the old feudal system shifting into the college entering exams in modern China. The unparalleled importance of education is deeply rooted in Chinese people’s minds, even for Chinese people in U.S. diasporas today.

Receiving high-quality education appears to be more important for Chinese immigrants in the U.S. than for Chinese living in China because traditionally the former have lacked network and other resources outside their community to contribute to their upward mobility. Originally, Chinese immigrants came to America as laborers and formed “bachelor societies,” with barely any chance to move beyond their social status. Later, the arrival of their households gave rise to the need to move outside of their enclosed community to make a better living and blend into American society as a whole family. Education paved the way for their children to move beyond a lifetime of being laborers or running small businesses.

In modern time, more and more Chinese intellectual immigrants and relatively well-off businessmen are coming to the U.S. to pursue higher education, to work in academia, or to expand their global businesses. Therefore, it is natural for these people to anticipate that their children will
receive a high-quality education and continue with their success. Building up the base for their next generation, learning to speak English as a first language is believed to be the first step towards a better performance at school and higher education, thus achieving better career development and more upward mobility in their future.

Nevertheless, success in school not only refers to the acquisition of knowledge, but is also dependent on making connection and bonding with peers. While the mastery of English can contribute to the former, it cannot guarantee the latter. Here Delanty, Jones, and Wodak’s description of European society also applies to American society: “Even when immigrants have a command of the language and hold the citizenship of the host-country, they obviously feel that they are still not accepted or viewed as equal” (3). So why are they still viewed as being unequal? Not equal to whom? To Americans? To “real” Chinese? Or both? What does “not speaking Chinese” do to the power dynamic between Chinese-Americans, “real” Chinese, and non-Chinese?

**Impacts of “Not Speaking Chinese”**

The chance for upward opportunities in American society does not come without a price, and in fact, it has damaging effects on a variety of aspects. In this section, I will analyze the impacts of “not speaking Chinese” through the three separate parts in the term “Chinese-American”: “Chinese,” the hyphen in between the words, and “American.” I will first
analyze Chinese-American’s communication with older generations within their diaspora communities, and their perception of Chinese history and culture. Then I will move to the hyphen—the feelings of “neither-nor”: how the historical connection between Chinese language, race, and nationality is viewed in the eyes of non-Chinese. Finally, I will proceed to Chinese-American’s experiences in the host country of the U.S.

Cross-generational Communication

Among all impacts, perhaps the most salient detrimental consequence of losing Chinese language is the barrier of communication across generations within diasporic families. Chinese-American teenagers, who are brought up in an English-speaking environment and who receive formal English education, develop a completely American way of speaking, while their parents or grandparents, only adopt some basic English in their adulthood and use it rarely or not intuitively.

One Chinese-American I know explained the pattern of communication in his house: his parents talk to him in both Chinese and English, and he responds to them in English; his grandparents talk to him in Chinese but he can only answer them in basic Chinese. Because of this, during holidays and family gatherings he was always silenced while other relatives communicated with each other in Chinese, increasing the feeling of being segregated from his family. Cases like this, where communication between the older generations and their American-born children is cut off or hindered,
are very common in Chinese diasporas.

**Language as Historical and Cultural Connection**

History is not an objective truth, but a narration of sorts served for the benefits of those in power. For Chinese-Americans on the one hand, history is taught from a Western perspective so that a large part of Chinese history is absent. Moreover, parents who educate their children only in English and encourage them to blend into American society, lack the interest of transmitting their Chinese roots or cultural traditions to their children. On the other hand, Chinese-Americans also lose the ability to learn Chinese history in the language it is narrated, which leads to nuances in understanding due to inherent linguistic differences. Therefore, the sense of connection to Chinese roots is severely weakened with the loss of the Chinese language.

Language is not only a linguistic tool but also a cultural term. Language is not only a simple set of vocabularies and grammars, but also contains contexts, connotations, and implicit meanings that can only be understood through long-term interaction with other people from the same culture. Chinese culture, believed by Edward T. Hall to be a “high context culture” (qtd. in Sorrells 204), codes meanings within the explicit, transmitted part of the message, and many can only be transmitted through shared knowledge and nonverbal cues. For American-born teenagers who only learn and use basic Chinese with their families and a few friends, their cultural-lin-
guistic continuum is therefore cut from the ongoing interaction with other Chinese speakers. Even if they try to learn Chinese culture, considering the difficulty in translating Chinese to English while keeping the original flavor and authentic meaning, it seems impossible for these Chinese-Americans to have the same understanding of Chinese culture without “real” Chinese. This naturally formed language deficiency is often seen by others as a disloyalty, even though this “disloyalty” is to a culture they have never had any real interaction with.

Language as a Marker of Race and Nationality

Language, race, and nationality have always been intertwined together throughout history. In his essay “What is a Nation?” French philosopher and historian Ernest Renan carefully evaluates five elements as the criteria of a nation, among which language is considered and discussed. Renan thoroughly rejects the conception of associating language with race, and argues, “languages are historical formations, which tell us very little about the blood of those who speak them” (17). He also makes a claim that “man is a slave neither of his race nor his language” (20).

However, more than 130 years after Renan’s essay, the difficulty of divorcing language from race and nationality still persists. For example, in Making Nations: Sovereignty and Equality, Jewish historian Shlomo Sand investigates the lexicon “ethnos” by saying that it implies a “blending of cultural background and blood ties, of a linguistic past and a biological
origin” (28). In *How to Tame a Wild Tongue*, Gloria Anzaldúa also says that “ethnic identity is twin skin to linguistic identity—I am my language” (59). In many cases, language is still regarded as a sign or accompanying element of race and nationality.

However, one needs to consider what it means to be racially and nationally Chinese before judging “not speaking Chinese” as disloyalty to one’s race and nation. If “race” and “nationality” are not real things to begin with, does that link still exist? Unfortunately, the revolutionary idea in academia that “race” and “nation” are social constructs rather than a scientific category has not weakened the link between language, race, and nationality in real life. The tendency to link these three elements seem to stem from human nature: the nature of using fixed definitions and clear-cut criteria to perceive the outside world, dodging from accepting complexity and embracing diversity. The link between language and race is so strong that speaking Chinese has become the only perceived natural state for them. This has made it extremely difficult for Chinese-Americans to face their inability to speak Chinese bravely and positively, and more importantly, to anchor their identity.

**Language and Identity**

Language is a powerful means for one to maintain and negotiate identity. Since mid-1950s, there have been experiments on how language influences thought patterns and perception, as well as scientific proof that
people speaking the same language share one set of cultural assumptions and a way of thinking (Inch, Warnick, and Endres 297). Throughout human history, language has always justified itself as a means of “making identity,” and thus has been utilized historically for conquest and assimilation both during wars and during the time of Americanization. Particularly, English built its dominant status of world language not only from the times of colonization and wars, but also from the spread of cultural products that gradually assimilated other cultural identities in the modern times.

For Chinese-American adolescents experiencing the period of identity formation, their “Chinese-ness” and “American-ness” occupies different proportions in their identity. Some completely identify with being Americans and “the only time that [they] feel Chinese is when [they are] embarrassed [they are] not more Chinese” (Lowe 136); some take great pride in their Chinese heritage as it adds to their uniqueness; some find their “Chinese-ness” and “American-ness” coexist and weld into a hybrid identity; and some find it impossible to retain a balance between the two components. What we find here are different levels of identification with “Chinese-ness” and different kinds of acknowledgment towards “Chinese-ness.”

However, these differences are often neglected in other people’s overly simplified and generalized perception about Chinese identity. When we interact with people, we tend to use our previous personal experience
to give us some basic knowledge about a person based on the groups they seem to represent. Because of this conventional and stereotypical way of thinking, these Chinese-Americans constantly live with the feeling of “being caught in between”: being perceived as Asians because of their “non-whiteness”, but feeling unqualified as Asians because of their departure from the language they are supposed to master.

What we often fail to acknowledge is that identity is layered rather than holistic; it is forever changing rather than static. In “The Nature of Cultural Identity,” Lustig and Koester see an individual’s self-concept as “built on cultural, social, and personal identities” (3). Kathryn Sorrells also argues in her book Intercultural Communication that a person’s identity is a combination of something people themselves avow (“avowed identity”) and something they are ascribed to (“ascribed identity”) often with these two parts contradicting each other (78). These ideas challenge the “all-or-none” and “either-or” manner of seeing identity and explain much confusion and disorientations felt by people in Diasporas.

**Language Use as the Criterion of Authenticity**

When Chinese-Americans interact with others, language appears to be an important element for testing the authenticity of a Chinese person. Accused of being “a fake Chinese,” Ang discusses the essentialist and absolute notions of Chineseness adhering to language ability by saying that “‘not speaking Chinese’ has become a personal political issue to me, an
existential condition which goes beyond the particularities of an arbitrary personal history. It is a condition that has been hegemonically constructed as a lack, a sign of loss of authenticity” (30). She also cites Ruth Ho’s claim that, compared with immigrants from countries that share the same European heritage with the US, Chinese-Americans are always far more despised for not knowing Chinese, not only by their fellow Chinese but also by non-Chinese (Ang 33).

The relationship between language and authenticity becomes salient in peer-to-peer communication of Chinese-American adolescents. For these teenagers, different levels of English proficiency of their parents, different levels of emphasis on Chinese in their environment, different frequency of visiting China, etc., all contribute to their different levels of Chinese proficiency. Thus, when they are interacting with each other, the “horizontal” influence argued by Lisa Lowe in her essay “Heterogeneity, Hybridity, Multiplicity: Marking Asian-American Differences” comes across. Lowe cites the interesting interaction between two Chinese-Americans in Diana Chang’s novel The Oriental Contingent, where the two Chinese-American girls, being hypersensitive about nuances in their Chinese proficiency, are constantly afraid of being a “failed Chinese” when interacting. Using this novel, Lowe challenges “a cultural definition of “Chinese-ness” as pure and fixed, in which any deviation is constructed as less, lower, and shameful” (136).
However, a shift of mind never comes easy. The obsession with authenticity has always been a tendency in human nature. However, why does language have to be a testimony for authenticity? Who has the right to say what is authentic and what is not? Furthermore, even if language is something people should adhere to in order to be “authentic” similar to the questions R. Radhakrishnan raised in his essay “Ethnicity in an Age of Diaspora,” why can’t somebody be “Chinese” without having to be “authentically Chinese”? What is the difference and how does it matter? Moreover, why does “unauthentic” come with such a negative connotation? Must there be a hierarchy of “authentic” and “unauthentic” in people’s minds? If we totally overthrow “authenticity,” can we still celebrate the core values of each culture?

Conclusion

Lustig and Koester argue, “most components of your identity become important only when they are activated by specific circumstances” (5). The realm of language use, because it is ubiquitous in everyday life, has been one of the most evident and problematic issues for people in Diasporas. Chinese-Americans who cannot speak Chinese are constantly surrounded by the guilty and disoriented feelings of being unable to identify, both by themselves and by outsiders, as neither completely Chinese nor fully American. But can there be another path? Returning to the audition for Chinese drill instructors in the introduction of this essay, how can we...
make everyone feel more comfortable interacting given this dynamic? Based on her Chinese heritage and her own multicultural trajectory, Ang claims that the solution should lie in acknowledging and celebrating hybridity. To describe her argument more vividly, Ang uses the metaphor of “the living tree”: we should recognize and acknowledge the “branches and stems” and break with static and fixed conceptions on the “roots.” (44) That is to say, to get rid of stereotypical and conventional definitions of “Chinese-ness” and embrace fluidity, hybridity and in-between-ness of “dia-sporic Chines-eness.” Such a way of thinking might not be conventional and comfortable, but we must to resist our convenient reduction of “Chines-eness” as some fixed, over-simplified, and seemingly natural indicators, such as language.

Finally, to quote Ang’s claim about understanding hybridity in diasporic identifications: “hybridity marks the emancipation of the diaspora from ‘China’ as the transparent master-signified of ‘Chines-eness’: instead, ‘Chines-eness’ becomes an open signifier invested with resource potential, the raw material for the construction of syncretic identities suitable for living ‘where you’re at’” (Ang 35). There will come a time when “not speaking Chinese” is not perceived as laden with guilt or shame. There will come a time when hybridity will no longer be seen as problematic and abnormal, but as common, valued, and celebrated. However, how we should get there is a more complex question that remains to be answered.
Works Cited


Buffalo. Photography by: Robert A. Kaufman
FROZEN GIFTS

THEA E. CALITRI-MARTIN

Late October moonlight exposes
Graffiti by Jack Frost
Spider webs of white on fallen leaves
Sparkling renditions of constellations

Thin sheet of ice across a puddle
Faintly criss-crossed by Art Deco lines
Tapped delicately by the toe of a boot
Fractures into miniature ice flows

The edges of a hollow left by an absent stone
Where geometric bars of white have started to form
A crunchy cluster of frost crystals
Weaving a circle around a crater

Sleet-glazed branches blaze
Prisms splintering the morning light
Please wind, play your music gently
On these stiff and fragile chimes

Fingerling icicles shine delicately
Young and fresh, they taste of fantasy
But mature, they are elephant legs
Threatening to drop thick poundage
Sudden thaw sends icebergs slipping
Down the metal roof onto the steps
Blocked front door foreshadowing
Larger pile-ups beside the river

A once smooth snowbank is now black crusted
    Jagged, eroding crystals
    Melting into damp spring
    The skeleton of winter bowing out

    The run-off has frozen
    Little wavelets now lie still
    Shining across the road
    A shame to mar their surface with sand
I first noticed her on my way to work
About ten years ago
Standing by the side of the road
At seven fifteen in the morning

Keeping company with the maples
That lined the meadow’s edge
Too old to be tapped
They gave her sparse shade

I watched for her every day
Intuiting her story
She was always looking
In the same direction, down the road

Her posture was uncompromising
She wore a shawl clutched close
As if she had been about to walk
Down the hill for a hundred years

She showed her face in profile
Sharp nose, hair in a bun
A teacher, like me
Greeting the fresh challenges of morning

In winter her head and shoulders
Bore white weight without concern
In spring and summer she ignored
Disturbances of manure spreaders and haying

I found in her unyielding stance
A spirit reaching through generations
The passage of time could change but
Not erase her purpose, or mine
Buildings. Photography by: Amy Millios
“Sovereign is he who decides on the exception” (Schmitt 5).

Carl Schmitt’s Political Theology was written in 1922, seven decades before the development of the internet. With the advent of global communication, the sovereign manipulation of information has created a potent state of exception. The illusions of liberalism fall victim to Schmitt’s Political Theology as sovereign exceptions become more prevalent. In the Digital Age, sovereign is he who manipulates the multitude.

The American president has increased his sovereignty using networks of communication. The contemporary American population has become dependent on dictatorial authority. This dependency leads to an increase in visible sovereign presidential action. As Schmitt denotes in Political Theology, “if such action is not subject to controls (checks and balances)… then it is clear who the sovereign is. He decides whether there is an extreme emergency as well as what must be done to eliminate it” (7).
The American Sovereign

The most prominent modern global sovereign figure is the President of the United States. He commands the most capable military of the last remaining superpower. He has the ability to command technology and control information using tools such as the NSA (National Security Agency) spying program and the Patriot Act. He can manipulate the Western media’s dominant message using envoys and the “bully pulpit.” The technological advantage gained by the American sovereign due to his command of government capital, as well as his ability to define the multitudes use of technology through government manipulation of law and message, is unparalleled. The president commands secrecy: he can leak secrets at will and prosecute others who do the same. As sovereign, he controls the exception of secrecy. He controls the narrative. He can silence critics using the Espionage Act, which allows him to prosecute anyone who leaks the information he commands.

The American president is the protector; he uses secret methods of violence such as the drone program, torture, and detainment. He decides on the exception, based on security, without checks and balances. He has the ability to destroy the world with his command of the American nuclear arsenal. He has been able to manipulate the liberal concept of law
(liberty) by deciding on the exception. He can deny basic liberties found in the Bill of Rights, as well define exceptions in the Geneva Conventions: policies on torture, detainment, and assassination. These cases of exception are decided upon based on protectionism, and acted upon in practice. President Barack Obama states, “The president’s highest priority is to keep the American people safe” (WH). The modern American sovereign is a Hobbesian Leviathan who commands his kingdom using technology to manipulate the multitude.

Schmitt’s theory of sovereign power warns us that the sovereign can adapt to any contemporary design to gain more authority. In the Digital Age, the sovereign can, and does, manipulate information through defining the exception. Modern technology allows for an increase of Western ‘theo-secular’ control. Our information sharing world is based on more, rather than less, consolidated control. The position of the sovereign is above the secular, or allows him to use the secular, because of his ability to decide (define and act) on the exception by controlling information and technology. The control is based on liberal constitutional concepts that replace the sovereign of the king and dictator, with the sovereign of ‘an enlightened’ presidential figure.

The American sovereign masks his autocracy with “ordinary day to day jurisprudence” which forms an illusion of liberalism. The execution of presidential sovereign decision-making is seen as a “disturbance” rather than usurpation, because it maintains “order in the juristic sense… even if
not of the ordinary kind” (Schmitt 12). Contemporary Western political power structures enhance the public’s acceptance of such “disturbances” by dominating the multitude through the use and control of information technology. These “disturbances” are often crafted in the form of religious analogies, or secular concepts.

It is estimated that the United States has conducted over 500 drone strikes under the Obama administration. These numbers are taken from journalist reports because of the program’s secrecy. The number of deaths is estimated at 2,379 people, of which 88% are non-combatants. These strikes occur in many nations; including Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia and others not known due to the secrecy of the program (Newsweek). Regardless of exact figures, the United States acknowledges it is conducting these attacks and then killing foreign nationals without a declaration of war or public permission from foreign governments to operate drones where the attacks occur. This is a part of the realm of secrecy, which allows the sovereign to decide. Several United States citizens have been targeted without due process. The United States acknowledges that it has killed four U.S. citizens overseas with the secret program (Baker).

The Patriot Act and the NSA spying program display cases of the exception within the constitutional framework of liberalism. In these cases, sovereign authority has suspended constitutional (legal) protections through the use of exception. The exception is protected by control (secrecy). We now know that the NSA gathers huge amounts of informa-
tion which can be manipulated by authority. This manipulation is done with collaboration from new age producers such as Google and various other global cellular phone and internet companies. Liberties such as Fourth Amendment protections, and fundamental ethical liberal considerations of privacy, are suspended by the sovereign under a veil of secrecy.

America developed an extra-legalized form of torture (water-boarding), as a secret policy. When discovered, the policy of torture was continually justified as an exception due to the sovereigns mandate to defend the people.

**Liberal Eschatology**

President George W. Bush was able to use his command of information to form a manipulation of the multitude that led to the invasion of Iraq based on eschatological (theological) design. A design partially constructed from images of Old Testament fire and damnation (nuclear holocaust). The president was then able to alter the original premise of the invasion from the threat of “weapons of mass destruction” to an exercise in nation building: a creation of Iraq in a Christian democratic image. What Talal Asad may refer to as secular exceptionalism. The eschatological design of ‘Last Judgment’ transitioned to the design of ‘Salvation.’

The President of the United States used the threat of nuclear holocaust to initiate a sovereign decision through manipulation of contem-

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1 The Oxford English Dictionary defines eschatology as “The department of theological science concerned with ‘the four last things: death, judgment, heaven and hell’.”
porary medium: through his sovereign control of the information placed in the media for public consumption. The decision was thrust upon the world using the presidential position of knowledge (all knowing), which is understood because of the United States’ domination of the economically based technological realm. The president’s knowledge is displayed to the world with the release of graphic secret images. President George W. Bush, an Evangelical Christian, pushed the narrative of “good vs evil” and justified his authority by playing heavily on his sovereign position as the protector. His electoral victories in 2000 and 2004 were secured in part by the Rove strategy: a mobilization of the evangelical base. After 9/11, Bush stated to the world that the “evil doers” are to be brought to justice (judgment), and the world is to conform to this decision. “You are either for us, or you are against us.” This is American exceptionalism: the will of a nation, or nationalism, expressed and acted upon directly by the sovereign. A sovereign who decides who is evil and which nations will be targeted or spared. It is the globalization of American executive sovereign authority. It displays both layers of the Schmitt’s concept of sovereignty; the president is deciding on the exception as a matter of fact in terms of what the exception is, and he is making the decision on what action will be taken in regard to the exception he has made. As sovereign, he is both defining, and acting upon, the state of exception without checks and balances. In the words of Jürgen Habermas in his work *The Future of Human Nature*, “the language of
retaliation… had an old testament ring to it” (102). The “bully pulpit” was used to increase control of the multitude using technology. The president’s ability to manipulate technology to provide a message, combined with his ability to decide on the exception in releasing of classified material, was sovereign.

The exception for the invasion was attacking the nation of Iraq without direct provocation. A new doctrine coined as “preemptive war.” The exception was created partially by promoting a climate of fear: the looming danger of an Iraqi “weapons of mass destruction” program that could kill millions of Americans. Various envoys of President Bush reinforced his sovereign position by spreading this message (gospel) globally, using the technology of the Digital Age:

President Bush, Vice President Cheney, Condoleezza Rice, Donald Rumsfeld, Colin Powell and George Tenet, to name a few leading figures, built support for the war by telling the world that Saddam Hussein was stockpiling chemical weapons, feverishly developing germ warfare devices and racing to build a nuclear bomb (New York Times).

On September 7th and 8th of 2002, a major information push for war using modern technology allowed the sovereign to manipulate, rather than inform, the multitude. On 07 September 2002, Dick Cheney on Meet the Press stated, “That he [Saddam Hussein] is in fact actively and aggressively seeking to acquire nuclear weapons” (MSNBC). Cheney warned that the first “smoking gun” of the Iraqi “nuclear weapons industry” may be a
“mushroom cloud” (CNN).

This eschatological warning of possible world destruction was issued using the Western media. The sovereign control of secrecy was paramount. By referring to “information” (secrets held by the sovereign) that only the president can legally release for public consumption, the cherry picked specifics of the Iraqi weapons program were fed to the multitude. The public was warned that the Iraqi’s were procuring “yellow cake uranium” and “aluminum tubes” to “enrich uranium.” The President could discuss publically what others in the intelligence community could not. In October of 2002, the United States Senate approved the Authorization for Use of Military Force against Iraq Resolution. A 77 to 23 vote approved the invasion of Iraq, even though the opposing party (Democrats) had control of the Senate (WAPO). Sovereign was he who manipulated the multitude.

President Bush also utilized the global media bias discussed by Talal Asad in his work Formations of the Secular; “Finally, the mass media, increasingly owned by corporate conglomerates and often cooperating with the state, mediate the political reactions of the public” (4). Bush was able to use his messengers and his bully pulpit to gain the advantage of “manipulation of the message,” partially through the natural bias of the secular media. Secretary of State Colin Powell was dispatched to the United Nations (UN) to present evidence of Iraq’s weapons program on February 2, 2003. The presentation involved the release of classified satellite imagery, which Powell proclaimed were mobile Iraqi weapons laboratories (U.S. State).
Powell gave the brief to convince the UN as well as the American public that the Iraqi weapons program presented a clear and present danger.

This information later turned out to be false. The trucks were not weapons labs. Iraq did not have current nuclear or chemical/biological weapons programs. Still, the sovereign’s ability to control the message through divulging secrets (all knowing) gave him a control of information that manipulated the multitude. This is an example of the manipulation of global law based on the exception produced by targeted information sharing. Powell performed before the public and the United Nations using the release of classified information (mobile weapons labs) to manipulate the multitude. The threat of annihilation from a “rogue state” was displayed using the technology controlled by the “legitimate state”: using satellite imagery as well as secret information, released to the legitimate (legal) world order (United Nations).

Although the information was false, that did not stop the sovereign from using this authority to manipulate the narrative in order to decide on the exception. Even though the information was false, the manipulation of the information was effective in allowing the sovereign to create, and decide on, a state of exception. The claim of sovereignty over knowledge worked. The sovereign’s ability to manipulate the multitude using his control of knowledge allowed him to lawfully engage in a “pre-emptive” war. At both the federal and international level, President Bush decided on the exception by commanding information.
Operation Iraqi Freedom’s (OIF) justification was then transitioned from an invasion constructed on the design of protectionism to the design of expansion. The salvation properties of Christian based ideals (enlightenment) were to bring the occupied nation of Iraq new freedom. Bush stated, “Freedom is on the march.” Under the auspice of Western theocratic concepts of love and protection, the United States would bring salvation to the people of Iraq. This transition occurred during De-Ba’athification, which was managed by Paul Bremer, the sovereign’s envoy (messenger). The eschatological message was transferred from the reckoning of a last judgment apocalypse to the concept of a new earth. The sovereign passed judgment to avoid damnation and bring a new awakening. These messages were very clearly understood by the sovereign’s evangelical base, as well as ensconced in other parts of the American psyche because of Christian theocratic underpinnings in our concept of self and state. Americans who did not recognize the religious undertones of the message could certainly recognize the secular liberal democratic righteousness of “a free and stable Iraq.” The Western process of nation building depends on a secular liberal democratic design, which regardless of debated Christian underpinnings, serves to form its own position above the non-secular in the New World Order.

Those who attempted to thwart the President’s will were summarily neutered. Using the ability to control information, Bush margin-
alized and silenced critics of the war. For example, Valerie Plame was exposed as a covert operative to block a narrative that countered Bush’s eschatological design. Jürgen Habermas warns about the destructive use of theocratic tendencies in his work *The Future of Human Nature*:

> Orthodoxies exist in the Western world as well as in the Middle or Far East, among Christians and Jews as well as among Muslims. If we want to avoid a clash of civilizations, we must keep in mind that the dialectic of our own occidental process of secularization has as yet not come to a close… We do not want to be perceived as crusaders of a competing religion or as salespeople of instrumental reason and destructive secularization (102/103).

Habermas believes the West has a genealogical dependence on religion, but that religion is subservient to, and should be supportive of, enlightened concepts. It is our obligation to use religious concepts as a form of common language for ethical unification rather than division. We have not done this. We have used ‘theo-secular’ design to create war.

**The Case Against the Lowest Common Denominator**

We have a choice, and that choice is reason. We are not guided by divine providence. Bush’s theocracy is a metaphor in history. The metaphor is not explanatory of a definitive historical connection to theological political designs. Hypotheses that attempt to prophesize what choices will be made, how choices will be made, and where reason or economy will lead us, are fundamentally flawed. The design of such theories is flawed.
According to Hans Blumenberg, the use of connection through metaphor, as is displayed in this paper in support of Schmitt, is not relevant to a serious study history. In the words of Blumenberg, “A metaphor is after all a rhetorical artifice, nothing serious and certainly nothing that can lead to any sort of knowledge… Political Theology is a metaphorical theology” (19, 101).

Blumenberg surmises that the “political theologian” is guilty of picking and choosing what represents his designs, while avoiding or modifying that, which may counter his designs. When we try to demonstrate a form of construction or deconstruction that lends itself to a narrow interpretation, which places theology (or anything else) as the foundation of the modern historical, we become guilty of cherry picking. We see in everything a correlation which can be explained by religion, or economy, or cultural conflict, etc.

Truth has a formation, which is more complex than simplistic designs. It involves human influence and reason; yet we too often run to the lowest common denominator of our own belief: Marxism, theology, free market manifesto, etc. When we find the one thing that influences all, we fool ourselves with the arrogance of our preferred design, believing that our reason is superior to others. Blumenburg cites an entry in the journal of Soren Kierkegaard to demonstrate the absurdity of rigid theoretical foundations:
Honest, well-intentioned people have snatched up the lost packs and bundles and carry them panting after the Christians, but the latter pay no attention to their cries, thinking they have everything that belongs to them. Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Fichte, Saint-Simon, every new theory—socialism, communism—all are only trying to restore abandoned Christianity! (120).

**Conclusion**

“The modern age is crypto theological” (McGillen). As Hans Blumenberg points out, there are serious flaws to any philosophy that attempts to break down political formations into a lowest common denominator.

That does not mean that these theories are not potent indicators for what we see developing globally. *Political Theology*, just like the *Communist Manifesto* or *Wealth of Nations*, serves as a way to understand valuable indicators, rather than foundations, or mere metaphors. The answer is interdisciplinary.

The ominous and potent sovereign warnings of Schmitt are ever-present, as demonstrated. The power of the sovereign to control the exception is increased when combined with the sovereign ability to command the dissemination of information. When we allow the sovereign to control us, he will. The more we understand our condition, the more apt we are to avoid the trappings of *The Leviathan* and move forward in an effort to stop the cycle of violence that currently ensnares us. With every new age comes a new possibility.
Works Cited


FULL COURSE MEMORIES

MARY ANN R. HUNT

Crossing the St. Lawrence River onto the island of Montreal I can see Mont Royal standing like a sentry behind the sky scrapers, like a backdrop on a stage. The mountain’s edges have worn down over time. From a distance they almost blend into the sky. It’s been standing guard over the island long before the river ran with trade, before the French trappers, even before the Algonquin Indians settled in this strategic location between the Atlantic Ocean to the north and Lake Champlain to the south.

I always approach the city from the southeast, from my home in Vermont. My bridge, Pont Jacques-Cartier, is just one of several bridges onto the island. After brushing by the Old Port, the bridge dumps me right in the center of downtown, very near to where our first apartment was nearly 20 years ago. My former husband and I had stored our car to save on expenses so I spent most of that first year tackling the city by foot or metro. I know these streets. As charming as the Old Port is, with its warehouses now converted to boutiques, galleries and restaurants, I will bypass it this time. The narrow cobblestone streets are inhabited by artists and buskers, and it is as alive as it was 300 years ago when this part of the
city was within the fortification walls that no longer stand. A well trained eye or amateur archaeologist would recognize crumbs of them here and there. But this is a day trip. I am on my own, and with a mission: to restock my pantry and satisfy cravings.

I have tried to return to Montreal at least once a year since we lived there for a couple years almost two decades ago. We were just starting out; he was a student at McGill and I had an appetite for exploration. Since I had grown up in a very monochromatic neighborhood in the Midwest, both visually and culturally, the only other place I had experienced so many cultures in one location was on a family trip to Epcot Center’s International Village in my early teens. But in Montreal diversity is not confined to neat villages, it is everywhere. We soaked up each experience the city offered us. Picking up a dinner of simple baguette, French cheese and Hungarian salami spiced heavily with paprika, we looked forward to every day and the arrival of our first child. Not yet burdened by family responsibilities, we spent days following exotic aromas and new musical beats. Every turn revealed something new to us: a brightly painted mural, a shocking sculpture, or a bilingual child playing peek-a-boo. We satisfied our wanderlust by trying the foods of the various ethnic groups present on the island. And everywhere we went there were others walking, appreciating, drinking coffee, laughing and smoking with friends. Like the cafés bulging with customers, our future was full with possibilities.

Now when I return I usually have a specific agenda that I carefully
plan to recapture the flavors of that time in my life. I consume some of the city while I am there, but the mission is to bring enough back with me to spic my very different current life with the comfortable, familiar flavors of what is still my favorite city in North America; the first place I made a home for my own small family. The route I take is generally the same each time. Even when I am staying for the weekend or longer, I still take this same route. If I am staying for more than one day I might throw in a couple other treats for myself, like a trip to the Musée des Beaux-Arts or a stop at the underground mall that runs for city blocks downtown. As I approach the city I always ponder whether I should shake it up, do it in reverse, go way off my usual routine, find something new and eat somewhere other than at my favorite old haunts.

But this route works well for me; I have adjusted it over the years to be the most efficient path: designed for collecting the most ingredients, with the least amount of backtracking and zig-zagging. I use my familiarity with the neighborhoods to procure strategic parking locations. I start on Boulevard Saint-Laurent, what used to be known as “The Main.” It was the seam of the English speaking and French speaking sides of the island; a thread that weaves the neighborhoods together. It has remained a place where different populations mingle, and as one of the major arteries serving the island, it has retained the imprint of many of the later waves of immigrants that have settled in the neighborhoods along it. As I navigate the one-way side streets, it takes me only a second to translate the parking
signs from French to English. Although I never acquired the language skills to be fully conversational, I am competent with street signs, directions and numbers. Able to conjugate verbs and traverse tenses my children—we later added another child to our clan—have much better conversation skills than me. They often get frustrated when we are in Montreal together and I attempt to speak. They jump in to save me and possibly themselves from the embarrassment of association. But when it comes to French food vocabulary, I am the reigning champion in my family. A couple years of grocery shopping and eating your way through a city will do that to you. I manage to find a spot in one of the many residential neighborhoods of connected triplexes that is roughly between my starting point on Saint-Laurent and Rue Saint Denis where I will finish this leg of trip.

My first stop, Vielle Europe, is the quintessential practical stop for anyone who appreciates Old World flavors. Your nose is immediately hit by the moldy aroma of cheese. True to the deep French roots of the province, you can grab a baguette immediately upon entering and then peruse a variety of cheeses, sausages (cured and uncured), mustards, olives, and many imported sweets things. After living the first year near the English speaking campus we moved to the French speaking side of the city, and this little shop was on my way home from the café where I worked waiting tables. I spent a large portion of my tip money there, buying the most simple and delicious dinners. After working the lunch shift and with a newborn at home, I had little to no energy left for elaborate meal preparations.
Montreal always took care of us, especially where food was concerned. *Vielle Europe* also carries a wide array of coffee beans, and this is where I pick up a small supply of my children’s favorite chocolate bars. Many years ago, after tasting several varieties, we came to the unanimous decision that the Swiss’ reputation as the world’s best chocolatiers was some sort of public relations hoax, because the title clearly belongs to the Belgians. So I add a conservative several bars of *Cote d’Or* to my basket, heavy on the milk chocolate and hazelnut fondant.

Where the Saint-Laurent brushes up against the Portuguese neighborhood you see—and smell—a take-out restaurant that serves primarily slow roasted chicken seasoned heavily with paprika, garlic, and lemon. A bakery nearby sells *Pasteis de Belem*, little tarts with a sweet custard filling; small enough to allow you to indulge with minimal guilt, and sweet and rich enough to satisfy a craving, and a side street houses an unremarkable bar with old men smoking and playing dominoes.

Further along, there is the usual long line of costumers outside Schwartz’s deli, a mecca for every fan of Montreal’s renowned smoked meat. In the evenings when the nightlife is in full swing, I remember seeing lines a block long for one of their sandwiches. Not only did we live in this neighborhood, but it also conveniently housed several of the popular bars and nightclubs. We may have frequented a few of them. But smoked meat has never really appealed to me. I am saving my appetite for shish taouk at Amir’s.
By the time I turn on to Boulevard Mont Royal, which runs perpendicular to Saint-Laurent and I reach my next shopping stretch, Rue Saint-Denis, my arms are heavy with bags. Rue Saint-Denis will eventually take me back in the direction of the car, and Amir’s is right about where I begin this segment of the trip. There I set the bags down and recharge with Lebanese chicken, flavored with yogurt and spices wrapped in a warm pita with pickled beets, onions, and creamy garlic sauce. Saint-Denis is more of a boutique and café street than a practical shopping street, but there are some jewelry and colorful, ethnic clothing stores that I enjoy browsing. One of the advantages of doing this mission sans famille, is that there is no one along to be visibly impatient with me as I browse my favorite non-edible indulgence, the bath product store Fruits and Passions. But even there I am drawn to the fruity and spicy scents. Picking up a café au lait for a little extra injection of energy, I am nearly back to the car. Piling my wealth of flavors into the trunk, I get in and drive up Saint-Laurent, heading west. One would think that being a one-way street would facilitate a steady traffic flow, but with so many cars double and triple parked it feels like an artery that is 80% blocked by plaque.

En route to the Jean-Talon market and Little Italy, I make a quick stop at Fairmount Bagel. I buy at least three dozen. They freeze well and will be a good incentive to get up in the morning in a couple months. They only take cash in the simple narrow store where a team of at least a dozen bagel
bakers are boiling and inserting bagels on long paddles into their special ovens. They are open 24 hours, and friends who lived in that neighborhood (the Anglo-Jewish version of our neighborhood), reported that like Schwarz’s deli, the line out the door grows just after bar closing time. It’s a quick stop, so I risk a very questionable parking spot a little too near a corner. In my car the aroma of garlic and onion battles the scent of the pear and peony.

From there I drive towards Jean-Talon market, passing under the arch announcing my arrival to Montreal’s Little Italy. Walking through the market, it is not uncommon to hear people speaking Arabic, Italian, eastern European languages, and some African dialects too obscure for me to recognize. I think I love this market more than any other place in Montreal. After we moved from Montreal to Vermont, we made it a point to take our children to Jean-Talon specifically to expose them to the energy and variety that we did not have at home; the shades of skin, colorful clothes, dingy Arab grocery stores, and spicy foods.

The main square of the market has a roof, but is open at the sides and it houses the fruit and vegetable vendors that are typical of markets everywhere. I can get fruits and vegetables at the farmer’s market at home, so I hone in on the Arab stores on the periphery, with their olive bars and spicy merguez sausage. If I am going to risk tangling with border patrol guards it will be for the merguez. We discovered this spicy North African sausage in Montreal and sampled the offerings of many stores, but Al-Khair
on the corner of Jean-Talon and Henri-Julien is believed by connoisseurs
to be the best in the city. My former husband had read the reviews—yes,
there are reviews of, and websites devoted to, merguez—and this small
grocery store just off the market square proudly advertises its title as “La
meilleure merguez en ville” in its window. Al-Khair carries lamb and beef,
spicy and mild versions of merguez. Using my stellar vocabulary, less
impressive number pronunciation and no verbs I order 4 kilos of the spicy
lamb variety. This usually raises a couple of dark eyebrows on the other
side of the counter. If this were a comic strip, the thought bubble above
his head would read, “Why is this fair-skinned, blond woman who can barely
speak French ordering enough sausage to feed a Bedouin tribe?” Here, I must
confess that I rather enjoy the attention I receive for being such a curiosity.
Growing up a northern European mutt in the heavily Germanic populated
Milwaukee, I looked pretty much like everybody else and did not garner
any special attention. Perhaps this is one of the admittedly shallow and self-
gratifying reasons I gravitate to the Mediterranean or Mediterranean popu-
lations wherever I find them. The warm weather and flavorful, fresh food
only intensifies this attraction that borders on being a vice. The man behind
the counter coyly decides to practice his English on me, which is about as
good as my French. With a hand gesture to his mouth he warns me, “It’s
spicy?” Exhausting my conversation skills, “Oui, je le préfère piquant!” I raise
my eyebrows in response and add a Cheshire cat grin. I can play coy too. I
also pack a couple containers full of spicy olives and buy some of the spicy
red pepper paste, Harissa. And since good pita bread is rare and expensive at our local Co-op grocery store, I also add a half of a dozen bags of reasonably priced pita bread to my overflowing basket. After another stop at the car to free up my arms and place the precious sausage in the chilled cooler brought along specifically for this purpose, it is time to head to my favorite spice store, Épices Anatol. Chatting with the owner over the virtues of real versus artificial almond extract a couple years ago, I learned that he is not from Turkey as I had always assumed, but from the Greek island of Crete. He and his male staff (family members?) are always very chatty with me as they scoop and weigh my choices: sesame seeds, whole cumin and coriander seeds (the flavor is much stronger when ground fresh at home), mild and spicy, yellow and green curry powder, the house spice blend for kefta (lamb meatballs grilled on skewers served on pita with garlic sauce, parsley and onions) and the deep, reddish-purple Za’atar. His raised eyebrows say, “Why is this fair-skinned, blond woman buying Egyptian Za’atar?” Without making him have to verbalize it, I volunteer, “We dip warm pita bread in olive oil and then Za’atar. My kids love it.” Za’atar gets its distinctive color and slightly sweet tart flavor from sumac. He is impressed.

Next door is my usual last stop, Marché Milano. Wandering the aisles of cheeses, fresh pasta, olive oil and vinegars in this truly Italian grocery store, I use this stop to fill in any gaps in my culinary shopping trip. I am inspired to pick up some fresh gnocchi and Italian coffee, which will pair well with the Fairmount bagels. All of my senses have been stirred.
Some people might think that a 3 ½ hour drive (each way) just to do grocery shopping is a bit extreme. They have probably never tasted merguez or shish taouk. The trip is a reminder of the great variety in the world; and of the time in my life I learned to enjoy it. It is a relief to know the flavors of the city are still as strong as they were then, even though they are now fused with the landscape and with my memories. And as I begin to work my way through the traffic and off the island, I inhale deeply the mingling scent of coffee, garlic, cumin, and a hint of pear. My mind wanders to planning the next few meals, strategically plotting how to stretch my precious Montreal cargo. For weeks to come, each nourishing meal will be seasoned with vignettes of my past, allowing the present to reach its full potential.
Untitled. Photography by: Jennifer Cormack
MISSING

ELIZABETH DUNPHEY

It was sometime in the 50’s that my sister disappeared
All we had was the grainy video footage
A girl with auburn hair (how she detested that red hair!) and long white legs
Spinning cartwheels on the beach, in Nantucket.
The picture of her birthday party I kept in a box
She sits at the table with that thunderous shiny hair over her yellow dress,
surrounded by handsome 14 year old boys.
She hated dresses and liked Motown and Wilhelm Wagner.
Our Lola
A misfit, a tomboy.
A big hearted girl, with a smile like America.
Don’t ever pluck your eyebrows mom said.
Don’t stay too long in the sun.
Get fresh air every day, even xmas, it puts roses in your cheeks.

Wherever she went, I know Lola lived

I could feel her life, in my own heartbeat, sometimes in summer.

The milk box with her high school photo turned men’s heads

A redhead bombshell

With the virtuous but saucy look.

That was her problem

Too pretty to be ignored

With a hot, heated, sultriness in her blue eyes.

Come back, I said at night

Rocked to sleep

You are missing, Lola

But I know you are somewhere.

I will let you be

I will stop searching

For you in crowds

You ran from the lech men

Who desired too much

And you ran from us

Who never knew you.

But where you run, your life is it’s own to live.
I heard a strange sound through the vent of my parent’s guest bathroom. I rubbed the sleep out of my eyes and tried to clear my head. Then I heard it again. I got down on the floor and put my ear to the grate. There it was, “Help,” in a muted tone, almost like a kitten’s meow. I jumped up and ran to get Mom.

“Get me the hell out of here,” Grandpa growled when the two of us came into his room.

“Dad, just wait a minute and I’ll help you,” Mom said with the same tone I used when my kids tried to crawl up on the kitchen counter. She had just changed his sheets a couple of hours ago before she went to bed, and now they were soaked again.

“The bed rails are there to protect you, Dad. Why can’t you understand that? Remember how you fell and we had to take you to the emergency room? You can’t get up alone anymore.”

She reached down and pulled the latch on the left side. The metal gate crashed against the metal frame; a sound like gunfire shocked the stillness of the sleeping house. Before she could get the right side down, Grandpa was already trying to swing his legs over the edge. “How’d you do that so easy?” he mumbled, embarrassed, as though he should have been able to open it himself.
As we helped him sit upright on the side of the bed, he reached out and brushed the hem of Mom’s pajama sleeve. “It’s pink,” he said, touching it as though it were a petal. Ignoring him, she pulled back his blanket and we saw that he was naked. His narrow shoulders seem to curl in on themselves like an empty shell. Mom pulled one of Grandpa’s white t-shirts from the drawer along with a fresh adult diaper. I put the shirt over his head and together we worked his arms through the sleeves. He flinched at my cold hands. His skin felt like Kleenex. Mom bent down, threaded his feet through the holes of the plastic diaper and pulled it up his wasted legs as far as she could.

“Now stand up Dad,” she coaxed. Using both hands, he managed to raise himself up enough for her to pull the diaper over his hips. Then the two of us moved him into his motorized recliner. Mom noticed his feeding tube was tangled inside the diaper. She reached through the top working to free it. He tried to brush her hand away. I wondered if he did that because it was uncomfortable, or was he remembering that he was the one who used to change her diapers.

“How do you want to try to go back to sleep, or do you want to watch your show?” Mom asked. He was still processing the question when she decided for him. She picked up the remote control and called up the DVR recordings: 42 episodes of *Law and Order: Special Victims Unit*. She picked one and pushed play.

“I’ll never understand why you like this,” she said, turning the sound up. What was it about the gruesome stories that entertained him when nothing else could anymore, not even his beloved Dallas Cowboy football games?
Grandpa obviously didn’t know how to answer. He just kept rubbing his eyes, confused again, probably thinking if he could just clear his vision this would all make sense. Mom picked up the lap blanket on the floor and covered his bare legs.

“Good night Dad. I love you,” she said.

“Me too Grandpa,” I added.

As we were walking out the door, I heard him ask, “Where’s Dave?” in full voice, not the whisper we’d grown accustomed to.

Mom turned. “Dave?” she asked. Grandpa’s face took on an angry scowl. “Major David Dewhurst, best damn pilot in the 386th Bomb Group,” he said, lips quivering, spit trailing from the corner of his mouth. I watched it run down his chin and drip onto the chair’s woolly arm. I wanted to go back to bed and sleep. I wanted my visit to end so I could go back to my husband and kids in New Hampshire. I didn’t want to see him like this. How must it feel for Mom? Did she still see him standing tall, her Dad, a World War II bombardier who rarely missed his target in 79 missions over German occupied France, Belgium, and Holland, one with Edward R. Murrow riding along? Did she still see him as the responsible provider, a product of his West Texas, dust bowl childhood, whose careful management of money was helping to support all of them now? Did she still see him as the man who used to put up her long, dark hair in ponytails before elementary school?

Mom took a step towards Grandpa and put her hand on his. “You remember, Dad. David died right after the war. Remember that drunk driver killed him?”
He seemed to hear her because his face turned and looked through the TV. Were the dots connecting for him? Did he remember coming home from the war, David’s death, marrying Grandma, selling insurance all those years? Did he know where he was? Was he lonely sitting in this room all day? Mom tried her best, but she had Grandma to take care of too. Grandma’s dementia made her constantly angry at Grandpa, and he said he didn’t want her in his room talking crazy.

“Now remember Dad, if you need to go to the bathroom, don’t get up. Remember what the nurse said? You ring this bell and I’ll come help you.”

After Mom left the room, I watched Grandpa feel around for the button on his lift chair. Slowly he tilted backward, the slow buzz of the motor drowning out the voices on the television, until he was staring at the dingy, off-white ceiling. Maybe the bumpy, irregular pattern reminded him of how the earth looked from the air. Then he glanced at the brass bell and closed his eyes.

*Dedicated to my grandfather, Colonel Albert Hill. RIP.*
Sunset Over the Hop. Photography by: Farah Salam
IN MEMORIAM

To honor the MALS professors who recently passed away. Your life and lessons will never be forgotten.

George Demko (1933-2014)

Professor Demko was an internationally renowned geographer and strong believer that education could change one’s life. Demko served in the Marine Corps during the Korean War and earned a Purple Heart for bravery. Using his knowledge of geography, population, and demographics of under-developed countries, he worked on projects for NASA, the World Bank, and the United Nations. He rose to the position of Director of the Rockefeller Center for Social Sciences at Dartmouth College for which he served from 1989 to 1994. While at Dartmouth, Dr. Demko created the Prague Foreign Study Program, a study abroad program between Dartmouth and the Czech Republic’s Charles University. He received the Gold Medal of Charles University for his contributions to geographical knowledge and was also Fellow of the American Geographical Society. His unwavering belief in education and international intellectual cooperation made Professor Demko an invaluable addition to the MALS department.

Classes Taught in the MALS Program
From 1995 – 2008:

MAL 194 International Development: An Interdisciplinary Perspective

MAL 225: The Spatial Diffusion of Democracy

MAL 307: A Global Landscape of Development & Well Being
Peter “Pano” Rodis (1959-2014)

Professor Rodis was a believer in compassion; while at Dartmouth he co-developed a groundbreaking program extending compassionate-care education to the medical students he instructed at the Geisel School of Medicine. This work resulted in a specific program developed in 2012, in which select medical students, called “Rodis Fellows,” are mentored in the research and practice of compassion-centered medicine. His impressive tenure at Dartmouth expanded from 1988 to 2014, where he taught in the English Department, the Education Department, the Thayer School of Engineering, the Geisel School of Medicine, and of course, the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Program. From 1996 to 2014 “Pano” worked as a psychotherapist and psychological evaluator in his private practice. His therapy work focused on youth in local schools as well as with adults. Dr. Rodis changed the lives of hundreds of individuals and families in the Dartmouth community and the Upper Valley.

Classes Taught in the MALS Program
From 1991-2012:

MAL 202: Literacies & Their Culture – Dartmouth/Nebraska Lit. Project

MAL 273: Fat Boys, Nipple Rings and Dying Young: Cultural & Psychological Perspectives on Children’s Health

MAL 286: Figuring & Disfiguring Powers: An Introduction to Disability Studies
**Brock Brower** (1931-2014)

Brock Brower was a journalist best known for his profiles of White House occupants and famous personages of the 1960s and 1970s. His multifaceted career included working as a novelist, a TV writer, and a speechwriter for the U.S. attorney general. He left his mark on American literary history with five published novels, the best-known being *Blue Dog, Green River* (2005), and *The Late Great Creature* (1972), which was a finalist for the National Book Award in 1973. Brower was a loyal Dartmouth alum (Class of 1953), and began classes at Harvard Law, but left upon receiving a Rhodes scholarship to study for a Master’s at Oxford University. He came back to Dartmouth to teach journalism for MALS in 2000, using his experience writing for *Esquire, The New York Times,* and *Harper’s,* to guide future journalists on their path.

**Class Taught in the MALS Program**

From 2000-2006:

MALS 224: Periodical Journalism
Master of Arts in Liberal Studies

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