Does Contact with Work Centers Shape Immigrants Exploitative Working Conditions, and Other Social and Economic Circumstances?
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This research examines the relationships between contact with work centers, immigration status, precarious employment, and exploitative working conditions. Work centers are non-profit organizations that developed in response to deteriorating wage and working conditions within the lower wage market. Each work center is oriented around the needs of the local community, depending on its unique cultural and economic context. They are intended to support immigrants by providing services like advocacy, organizing, policy making, and serve as intermediaries among low-wage workers, labor markets and employers. Work centers are important because low-wage, precarious, exploitative labor is linked to deteriorating health, low social and economic mobility, violations of worker and human rights, low unionization, and a lack of political voice. Unfortunately, work centers receive little attention from scholars. My study will use 8 semi-structured, qualitative interviews with employers, immigrant workers, and employees at work centers to understand the connection between work centers and the experience of immigrant workers. I will then analyze the interviews by cross-referencing prior notes, to avoid any biases. Studying the services that work centers provide to immigrant workers within the lower wage market can highlight these under researched groups, illuminating how immigrant workers are overcoming individual and structural barriers within the labor market to achieve upward mobility. My project will give us a better understanding of the effectiveness of work center services like legal, social, and cultural resources to improve the working conditions of immigrant workers, and how they can do more to empower workers to advocate and collectively fight for better working conditions, protect their legal rights as workers, and collectively fight for benefits within the lower wage market.

Looking as Political Act: The Oppositional Gaze in Cinematic Realism
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Within the ethnographies, memories, and archives produced throughout a capitalist empire, the ‘gaze’ has generally been used against the subject, creating narratives which entrench the hegemony in defining the subject to accord with the needs of the dominating culture. The term ‘oppositional gaze’ was developed in 1992 by bell hooks in conversation with Laura Mulvey’s Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema: the ‘gaze’ is a scopophilic act albeit with the potential to be a radical method for resistance; the oppositional gaze then refers to ‘looking’ as a defiant act to which the actors reclaim a sense of autonomy over the spectator and turn the gaze back upon their oppressors. What makes the act of ‘looking’ so defiant and how this looking translates to an oppositional gaze is the question this project attempts to answer through a close reading of various media and using an array of methods and theories from such disciplines as film studies, ethnography, and data ethics. I build upon the foundations of hooks and Mulvey while asserting that the definition of ‘looking’ goes beyond visual perception and into the act of understanding and perceiving. I apply these theories of the ‘gaze’ and my own explorations of ‘looking’ to juxtapose Rahul Jain’s Machines (2016) and Chloe Zhao’s Nomadland (2020) in analyzing its application and limitations. With this project, I hope to impel further discussion on the study of the gaze by compiling demonstrations of its application in various media and its disruption of prevailing narratives.
Leaders’ Desire to Use Power for Good: Leadership Strategy for Increasing Gender Equity
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Inequitable work environments can heavily influence women’s professional choices, contributing to a widened gender gap in male-dominated fields. Past work has established that leaders’ desire to use power for good produce better business outcomes, but we examine how leaders’ use of power may influence gender equity in male-dominated work environments. I hypothesize that encountering a male-leader who is motivated to use power for good reduces women’s gender bias concerns. Women participants recruited through the online platform Prolific (N = 98) completed a survey in which they read leadership and team culture evaluations of two male leaders of male-dominated work teams (order counterbalanced). After reading the evaluations, participants rated how much they would worry about gender bias if they worked for each leader. The evaluations were identical except that in the experimental condition, participants read that 95% of the leader’s employees reported he used power for good compared to 43% in the control condition. I analyzed the data with a dependent samples t-test revealing women had reduced gender bias concerns after reading about the leader who used his power for good compared to the control condition. The results suggest that perceiving that a leader desires to use power for good reduces women’s gender bias concerns in male-dominated work environments. Signaling that the use of power for the good of others is a desirable institutional value may help establish gender equity and reduce climate threats. Future work should examine potential interventions that train leaders to better demonstrate their desire to use power for good of others in order to promote gender equity in male-dominated fields.

Impact on Loneliness during the COVID-19 Pandemic Lockdown Based on Age and Household Size
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During the COVID-19 global pandemic, individuals have had to learn to cope with isolation and adjust to new social protocols. In Washington state, a lockdown mandate was issued between March to May in 2020 in response to a surge in COVID-19 cases. This study aims to analyze how King County residents experienced the lockdown and the impact it had on their daily activities, behaviors, and wellbeing. We hypothesize that loneliness increases as a person is more physically isolated from others and also as age increases. The data for this research was collected through an online survey which included the UCLA Loneliness Scale. An additional 16 questions examined demographics and the dynamics within the household including household size, pets, and romantic relationships and how they relate to the person’s experience of loneliness. The survey was distributed through Qualtrics to undergraduate psychology classes and faculty at Bellevue College and South Seattle College and to the researchers’ social circles via email and social media platforms. Participants were residents of King County during the Washington State COVID lockdown and ranged in age from 18 to 65 years old. We aim to investigate if the lockdown measures taken during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic led to a rise in loneliness considering that loneliness has been associated with major public health concerns including mental health problems, chronic physical ailments, and increased likelihood of mortality.

Vanishing the Closet: Audience Reception and Coding of Queerness in BBC’s Merlin (2008)
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Mentor: Janine Slater

This research explores how audiences of the television show, Merlin (2008), engage in the process of queer coding and how this interacts with affirmation of queer identities and representation in media. Unlike explicit representation, queer coding is using signs implying queerness without confirmation. It thus relies on signs, as the extent of congruency between encoded signs and decoded meanings brings queer coding into existence. Historical censorship of homosexuality in media (i.e. the Hayes Code) and social alienation of homosexuals solidified a pattern of only alluding to queerness, often through tropes associating queerness with danger and evil. This practice is also co-opted for profit, as media companies will allude to representation through coding, creating “bait” to increase views while only perpetuating negative stereotypes. Therefore, it is important to address how audience engagement in queer coding interacts with the affirmation of queer identities, while also examining how queer coding represents queerness across gender, race, expression, or other lines of social identity. To answer this I use Stuart Hall’s (2012) theory of encoding and decoding to analyze how audiences interpret and create implicit forms of representation, specifically regarding the queer coding of characters in the television show Merlin (2008). I do so by analyzing audience discourse about queer coding from the popular fan platforms of tumblr, Archive of our Own, Livejournal, Reddit, TikTok, and YouTube as well as analysis of language, costume, and vocalics in referenced episodes of the show. My results speak to how media creators can queer code characters in a positive, affirming way, while simultaneously illuminating any harmful trends possibly in practice. The outcomes of this research could help indicate how media affects the ways people perceive themselves and others (Rogers et al., 2021), and
strategize how to minimize unfavorable depictions of queerness that can instigate bigotry and intolerance.

**Assessing Clinicians’ Intentions to Address Race/Racism with Clients of Color**

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*Yasmin C Garfias, Recent Graduate,*  
*Mentor: Noah Triplet, Psychology*  
*Mentor: Shannon Dorsey, Psychology*

Systemic racism is a widespread issue in America that has an adverse impact on the psychological well-being of ethnic minority populations. Although there is significant research on the importance of addressing racism in psychotherapy and adopting culturally humble interventions, limited studies exist on the frequency with which clinicians ask Clients of Color about experiences of race or racism. Thus, this study examines the percentage of community mental health clinicians who report intent to discuss issues of race or racism with Clients of Color. In this study, surveys were distributed to participants (N = 138) from a statewide Cognitive Behavioral Therapy training initiative in Washington state. Clinicians rated their level of agreement with 11 statements describing their intentions of discussing race/racism with clients on a 7-point Likert-type scale. We will employ descriptive statistics to assess the frequency with which clinicians intend to address issues of race or racism with Clients of Color. The existing limitations of this study include the predominant use of self-report questionnaires after receiving CBT+ (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy) training. Ultimately, our findings can highlight if clinicians initiate discussions surrounding race or racism with Clients of Color, which can inform researchers if more support is needed in the form of resources or additional training for clinicians to effectively approach discussions of race or racism.

**Staying In, Coming Out: TikTok and the Actualization of Queerness during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

*Madison Anne Morgan, Senior, International Studies,*  
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*Mentor: Janine Slaker*

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, life for many people shifted online, with much of their activities circulating on and within social media platforms. One such social media platform that received a significant uptick in users was TikTok, which the BBC reported logged 800 million users and was the most downloaded app of 2020. Occurring simultaneously with this shift online was a phenomenon colloquially termed “queerantine,” which refers to a phenomenon occurring over the course of the pandemic in which a straight-identifying person shifted to identifying as queer. Influenced by theories of compulsory heterosexuality and queer performativity, this study aims to identify how socio-technical affordances of TikTok introduce and circulate symbols and inscribe activities that bear upon an individual’s understanding of their sexual orientation. Taking an ethnographic approach, I engaged in participant observation with content groups over TikTok during 2021 as well as conducted in-depth interviews with individuals who identified as experiencing queerantine. Data was analyzed using qualitative thematic analysis. Additionally, with the aforementioned shift online came minimized exposure to physically and traditionally heteronormative spaces; preliminary analysis has shown that for a number of TikTok users, the decrease — or to an extent absence — of compulsory heterosexuality (aka comphet) on certain spaces of TikTok affected their understanding of their sexuality. Moreover, results speak to how LGBTQIA+ counterpublics on TikTok participate in processes of community identification and formation. This research broadens our understanding of the mobilization of counterpublics and the mediation of content through group-specific spaces and contributes to the growing concern of exclusionary practices of social media sites, which are often critiqued for using algorithms that enforce normative assumptions of user behaviors, echo chambers that can spur segregation between communities and spread information, as well as the geopolitics involved in the cross-national implementation of social media platforms like TikTok.

**Unattached and Uprooted: How Gentrification Aesthetics Affect Belonging Among Urban vs Rural Individuals**

*Quinn S Russell, Senior, Sociology, Psychology*  
*Mentor: Cynthia Levine, Psychology*  
*Mentor: Rachel Song, Psychology*

Gentrification is characterized by the influx of wealthier, highly educated individuals into a neighborhood. As gentrification accelerates in cities around the U.S. we are interested in the effects of this neighborhood upheaval on belonging and how geographical context may moderate this relationship. Specifically, how does urbanity affect a person’s perceptions of the visual changes associated with gentrification and how they feel they belong? As gentrification often facilitates increased development and construction, urban residents may be more familiar with these visual changes and feel more belonging. In contrast, suburban and rural residents may feel the opposite. We collected data from 885 U.S. adults using a within-subjects online survey experiment where participants saw Google Street View photos of gentrifying and stable (i.e., not-gentrifying low-income) neighborhoods. We found that rural and suburban participants felt significantly less overall belonging than urban residents. Moreover, there was an interaction effect such that rural and suburban participants felt even less belonging to the gentrifying neighborhood than the stable neighborhood. These findings suggest that rural and suburban residents may be especially psychologically vulnerable to the visual changes associated with gentrification. As
gentrification proliferates beyond major metropolitan areas, suburban and rural residents may be at increased risk of social displacement.

**Mindful Cancellation: The Psychology Behind Cancel Culture**

*Joel Sitanggang, Sophomore, Psychology, Shoreline Community College*

*Mentor: Diana E Knauf-Levidow, Social Sciences, Shoreline Community College*

As the democratization of online technology continues to grow, the population of the online world continues to develop rapidly, and the virtual world has evolved to be as expansive as our natural world with its own set of unique governing variables. Social phenomena typically prevalent within physical societies manifests within these online communities; one such phenomenon is social ostracism. Exploration into cyberpsychology, a field specializing in the investigations of technologically interconnected human behavior, points to the online disinhibition effect, a theory posited by cyberpsychologist John Suler, as a key contributor behind the rise of social ostracism within the online world. I hypothesize that the psychological mechanisms behind cancel culture are influenced by certain behavioral factors that motivate social standing within peer groups and numerous technological variables prevalent in online social media that exacerbate such behavior. The research method primarily revolves around a rigorous review of the literature surrounding cancel culture and its roots in societal development. Furthermore, results from open-ended interviews with 15 proponents of cancel culture within social media platforms, such as Twitter, provide insight into the behavioral patterns that underlie cancel culture rallies. I found that sociometric status and mob mentality are salient motivators for online citizens to participate in cancel culture; online users ostracise others to appear more upright in comparison while joining the majority of persecutors to cultivate unity within the group. Additionally, I found that online factors, such as asynchronicity and anonymity, further incentivize combative behavior by lowering one’s inhibition and sense of restraint online. Cancel culture could potentially cultivate a future riddled with arbitrary policing and diminished freedom of expression. Understanding the psychology behind such a phenomenon would result in a deeper awareness of the covert psychological effects that plague netizens and could create a foundation for a more mindful online presence.

**Narrow and Broad Representations of Sexual Harassment Victims**

*Sheer Yedidia, Senior, Psychology*

*Mentor: Zoe Ferguson, Psychology*

Previous literature has looked at the way in which we perceive women who come forward with claims of sexual harassment and the factors that can influence these perceptions. This study focuses on comparing narrow and broad representations of who is sexually harassed at work and exploring the effects on perceptions of sexual harassment when looking at women who either fit a typical normative or non-normative gendered characteristic description. As part of a bigger study, the goal is to experimentally broaden the representation of women who experience sexual harassment, taking into consideration subgroup identities and individual characteristics. Participants (N = 512) will be recruited online to ostensibly participate in a study on workplace decisions. Participants will then watch a short training video that I am creating on sexual harassment where the representation of women will be varied by changing the interests they portray and their physical descriptions, and afterwards be presented with a brief ambiguous sexual harassment claim. The claim will feature either a prototypical description or a non-prototypical description of a woman, and after reading through it, participants will take a survey that I administer through Qualtrics measuring their perception of sexual harassment, their punishment recommendation, and the psychological harm they believe the target received. Thus, we predict that sexual harassment will be more likely to be perceived in the narrow representation condition when targets are prototypical rather than non-prototypical, but we hope to “turn off” this effect in the broad representation. So far, I have conducted a pilot test of the materials on mTurk (N = 40 participants) to ensure that our manipulation is working as I designed. An interesting pattern arose such that nonprototypical women were more likely to be perceived to be queer (vs. straight). Implications of this pattern and future directions of the project are discussed.

**Analysis of Loneliness in Participation in Recreational Activities, Spirituality, Work, and School in East King County, Washington During the COVID-19 Lockdown**

*Mudasir Kamran Zubair, Graduate, Bellevue College*

*Mentor: Celeste Lonson, Psychology, Bellevue College*

Over the course of the COVID-19 Pandemic, researchers have examined how people adjusted to the conditions of social isolation. As a follow-up to those studies, we investigated if – in King County Washington State - there was a correlation between people’s new level of participation in work/school, religious, or recreational activities during the March - May 2020 lockdown (in comparison to pre-pandemic levels) and how lonely they felt during that time. My team surveyed 252 King County Residents (aged 18 - 65 years old) over the internet, asking about their level of participation, whether the participant conducted the activity in-person or virtually, and if the participant has done more or less of this activity before the pandemic. We collected participants through snowball sampling, starting with immediate friends, families, and colleagues. We conducted univariate analyses on our responses to the types of activity and loneliness. Based on previous
studies, it was predicted that those who participated in religious and recreational activities would feel significantly less lonely, while those who had engaged in work and school activities would feel significantly lonelier. No significant differences were present in the results except within recreational activity - people who participated at the same level of recreation as they had before the pandemic were significantly less lonely. In comparison, those who participated in recreation at greater or lesser levels during the pandemic. This is important, as it presents that a balanced amount of recreation can alleviate loneliness and its impacts (depression, anxiety, poor mental functioning, decreased motivation, etc.) This study also illustrates that when we can safely move away from social isolation measures, we need to develop and maintain routines and activities that lessen loneliness.