

**INTERPRET THE WORLD AND CHANGE IT:
OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO POSITIVE SOCIAL CHANGE**

by

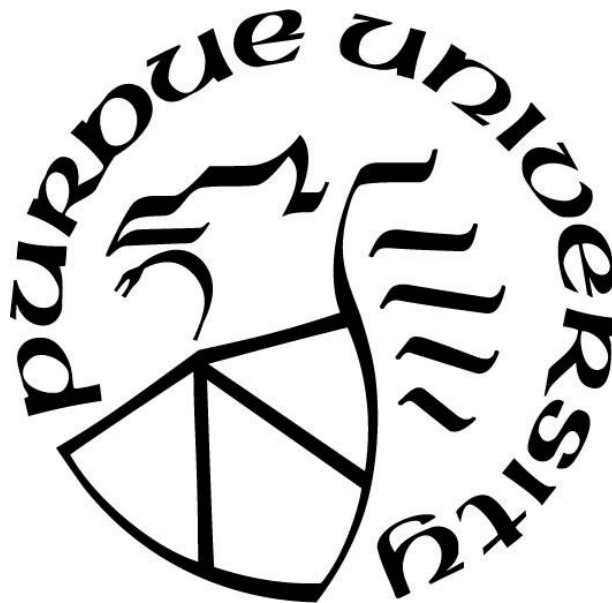
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A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Purdue University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts



Department of Communication and Creative Arts

Hammond & Westville, Indiana

May 2023

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This work is dedicated to everyone who believes that change is necessary, and is hopeful that there are others out there who are willing to come together and take action alongside of them.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Immense gratitude to the support of the John S. Tuckey Award and Purdue University Northwest for making so many integral parts of this research possible. Sincere appreciation for my family for unwavering belief in me, with special acknowledgement of Christine, George, and Kaitlyn Vasilko; Chuck and Veronica Peters; and Steve Vukusic. Genuine admiration for Alicia Napules, Amie Goulet, Azamat Baigaliyev, Dallas Milligan, Daniel Gyekye, Elizabeth Carey, Florence Jackson, Glen Williams, Jasmine Flowers, Jennifer Birchfield, Joshua Balcerak, Kale Wilk, Kayla Hofferth Ooms, Leonard Powell, Lillian Knapik, Nerissa Fezler, Nicolette Rucki, Noelle Long, Roman Watts, Sydney Smith, Tyler Judon, Wendy Adjei, Wesley Smith, Xavier Allison, and Zhuldyz Nurmaganbetova for each teaching me something invaluable as we worked through the graduate program together in the Purdue University Northwest Department of Communication and Creative Arts. Earnest thanks to Dr. Lee Artz, Dr. Kim Scipes, and Dr. Rhon Teruelle for serving on my graduate committee, guiding this project, and encouraging me to challenge myself. Each one of you opened my eyes and expanded my perspective at instrumental parts of my academic journey. Because of the knowledge I have gained, I know that each day is a new opportunity to create new meaning in the world. I am grateful for the existence of this possibility, and I hope this research sparks a cycle of change through new questions, continued discovery, and strengthened collective action.

The title of the work, *Interpret the World and Change It*, is an adaption of a quote from Karl Marx's "Theses on Feuerbach."

Special thanks and acknowledgment to the late Judith Heumann, who believed in this project, spoke at the Global Collective Action Seminar, and passed before this work was complete. Judy has inspired countless numbers of people to work together for equality and change, and her words at the Seminar were an incredible inspiration.

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ABSTRACT

Countless individuals are joining together in action against conditions antithetical to enhancing life for all people and the planet, and opposing the destruction of their world; yet, the world is facing global social and environmental devastation sparked by the growing economic divide, increasing power wielded by the capitalist elite, diminishing individual freedom, and heightening environmental mutilation (Bowers, Ochs, Jensen, and Schulz, 2010; Scipes, 2022a; Scipes, 2022b; Teruelle, 2012). Global collective solidarity that includes participatory decision making is necessary to begin to address these challenges and increase equality and social justice (Artz, 2019a; Artz, 2019b; Conner and Zaino, 2014; Scipes, 2022, Teruelle, 2012; Thomson and Holland, 2002). Just as mass media can define cultural conventions and propagate global ideology, higher education outlets have comparable behavioral influence; further, they are crucial components of actualizing visions of social change and innovation (Artz, 2022a; Artz, 2022b; Bajwa-Patel, Hazenberg, and Rivers, 2015; Cooper, 2021; Lavigne, 2018; Patrick, 2020). Psychological empowerment is an equally crucial component of citizen participation (social movements), and requires a cognitive component of critical awareness and resource mobilization (Christens, 2012). The process of hegemony and capitalist elite cultural imperialism can severely threaten this mobilization; thus, consideration to the construction of reality must be given (Barthes, 1991; Lears, 1985; Totu and Yakin, 2014). This study examined these theories in conjunction with three hypotheses set to test how social change is perceived as a concept around the world. The hypotheses were tested in two parts; for the first, a survey was administered to university students around the world, and for the second, a virtual, global collective action seminar was carried out and participants were surveyed following their experience. The results were coded and analyzed, and conclusions were made about universal barriers to collective action, universal influencers of awareness of the need for social change, and universal motivators for action.

Keywords: hegemony, social change, collective action, semiotics, rhetoric

INTRODUCTION

“Our world is in peril and paralyzed... we are gridlocked in colossal global dysfunction” (Macias, 2022).

When reading that statement, one must acknowledge the existence of media framing, partisan politics, the rhetorical process of the enthymeme, and the construction of meaning as this research will further illustrate; however, evidence shows that the above description of the world is both an accurate label of our past as a society and our present at the time of this writing, as well as a prediction of our future should we continue to reinforce the meanings that currently exist. This thesis was created at a time when the world was facing a new level of global social and environmental devastation sparked by the growing economic divide, increasing power wielded by the capitalist elite (including both corporate and governmental elite), diminishing individual freedom, and heightening environmental mutilation unlike levels it has previously faced (Bowers, et al., 2010; Scipes, 2011; Scipes, 2022a; Teruelle, 2012).

Social change from below has been evident in movements around the world (Artz, 2018; Bonilla-Silva, 2022; Felt, Dumitrica, and Teruelle, 2018; Scipes, 2022a; Scipes, 2021), but it is not yet enough. The state of the world that informed this thesis was defined by horrifying environmental conditions; scholars have argued that if no significant actions are soon taken on a global level,

the beginning of the extinction of humans, animals, and most plants will begin in the year 2100, less than 80 years from now... The reality is that humanity collectively is facing a global climate crisis. And our politicians — of BOTH parties — and our other social and religious leaders have failed us so far (Scipes, 2023).

A world facing an increase in heat of more than two degrees Fahrenheit since the 1880s— amidst many other forms of environmental destruction— is cloaked in the backdrop of rapidly melting glaciers in the Arctic, Antarctic, and Greenland, higher ocean levels, increased frequency and severity of wildfires, increased flooding, and much more globally (Scipes, 2023).

Intensifying this is the environmental and cultural impact of the United States’ action of sending more than 500,000 Americans to war on Vietnam, killing hundreds of thousands,

directing a contra war against the democratically elected Nicaraguan government under the fear of Soviet military expansion... bringing ‘shock and awe’ to Iraq again in 2003 ostensibly to preempt ‘weapons of mass destruction,’ Barrack Obama launching weekly drone attacks around the Middle East, killing hundreds of civilians, and Obama and Donald Trump deporting hundreds of thousands (Artz, 2021).

Since the inception of the Covid-19 Pandemic, the world has suffered more than 684,030,221 cases and 6,832,014 deaths (Worldmeter, 2023). In 2020, the worst infestation of desert locusts in history swarmed Eastern Africa, and devastated crops and grasses in areas where 51.2% of people face severe food insecurity. Many of the effected communities were already trying to recover from the prolonged drought of 2017 and the severe flooding of 2019. An explosion at Beirut’s port (which was fueled by 2,750 tons of abandoned ammonium nitrate), became one of the largest non-nuclear accidental blasts to date, killing more than 190 people and displacing more than 300,000 (World Vision, 2023).

In 2022 and 2023, the war between Ukraine and Russia came to fuel the largest displacement crisis Europe has seen since World War II. The exodus of refugees has surpassed 7.8 million,

up to 17.7 million people need humanitarian aid and protection...at least 5.7 million children have been impacted by the conflict,...and around the world, significantly more people are struggling to feed themselves than before the COVID-19 pandemic..In 2022, rising food prices driven by the war, persistent drought and extreme weather, conflict, and ongoing impacts of the pandemic have escalated the spread of hunger...Today, 50 million people in 45 countries face starvation (World Vision, 2023).

A 7.8-magnitude earthquake struck Turkey and Syria; as of February 24, 2023, the death toll surpassed 49,000 (The New York Times, 2023). Researchers are predicting famine in Baidoa and Burhakaba, “where at least 300,00 people are already living under “catastrophic” levels of food insecurity” (World Vision, 2023).

Simultaneously, the U.S. expands its record of destruction; to date, it has intervened in more than 33 countries, interfered in 81 elections around the world, and attempted to kill leaders in more than 50 countries (MacAskill, 2017; Peat, 2020; Pilger, 2022), all while neo-liberal economics have devastated the US standard of living while wreaking havoc on the rest of the world, channeling “resources away from the national population to the managers of the US

Empire” and fostering an environment where social services and the educational system can be attacked, mass shootings can proliferate, and inequality can blossom (Scipes, 2023).

Scholars argue these issues cannot begin to be addressed without a global perspective, referencing the power of global collective solidarity that includes participatory decision making in increasing equality and social justice (Artz, 2019; Conner and Zaino, 2014; Scipes, 2022, Teruelle, 2012; Thomson and Holland, 2002). And more than a global perspective, mass participation in collective action is necessary to spark change and create new meanings in society (Hall, 2013; Marleku, 2012). But how has the devastation brought on by the events cited above (and many, many more that were not listed) impacted the world’s stamina to fight for change? And how has the simultaneous brutal division affected patterns of organization for long-lasting change (Lardieri, 2018)?

The concept of hope must be considered. Scholars argue that

the idea of hope, nowadays, typifies conventional discourse, and 'seems, at best, a nostalgic remnant of the 1960s'. In other words, the tradition of utopian impulses and radical imaginings appear to be in decline in today's society, with some of the blame directed at people's apathy and lack of motivation. One could argue that meaningful social change, although remaining on the minds of many, has become somewhat difficult to conceive. Jameson (1994, xii) poignantly suggests that we find it easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism. Further, escaping what Cazdyn (2006) simply refers to as 'the system' appears to have been made impossible. These types of statements illuminate the increased difficulty in conceptualizing an alternative to the existing state of things (Teruelle 2012).

Yet, Teruelle (2012) asserts that new ideals may flourish most when “institutional arrangements appear unchangeable,” and communication scholars assert that new meaning is always possible to create (Chandler, 2022; Hall, 2013) which reaffirms the importance of research that illustrates current barriers and universal motivators of positive social change. Collective action facilitates increased public understanding, and the opportunity for more greatly informed decisions and civic participation, which leads to higher motivation to correct injustice and embark on transformative, cultural, and organizational change (Bajwa-Patel, et al., 2015; Conner and Zaino, 2014; Dawes and Larson, 2011; Furlong and Cartmel, 2011; Powers and Allaman, 2012; Walsh, 2012).

This thesis examines theories such as semiotics, the construction of meaning, and more in conjunction with hypotheses tested to determine how social change is perceived as a concept

around the world through the administration of two global surveys and the conduction of a virtual, Global Collective Action Seminar. Both the quantitative results and the codes from the qualitative results were analyzed and used as the basis of not only new conclusions, but also recommendations to break down barriers against positive social change. The literature review, surveys, and analysis allowed for new determinations about universal barriers to collective action, universal influencers of awareness of the need for social change, and universal motivators for action.

Other studies (see Allison, 2013; Arches, 2013; Bajwa-Patel, et al., 2015; Brake, 2013; Brynner, 2012) that have attempted similar evaluations have not done so on the same global survey scale, by including the range of ages in participants, or with the same breadth of foundational theories as this research.

The sections of this report are divided as follows: *Literature Review, Methods, Results, Discussion, Conclusion, References*, and appendices. When reviewing this writing, it is crucial to consider the rationale laid out in this introduction in conjunction with each section, and conduct personal reflections around inquiries framed in ways such as *what have my perceptions on this topic been? What have been the perceptions of others that I have noticed? What ways can I use this information to spark positive change? What additional questions should have been asked?* These questions may redefine our world.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A Call to Action

To explore barriers to, and universal interpretations of, collective action for positive change, extensive literature on social change, social order, and the construction of meaning should be considered. Not only will this literature provide important framework for the analyzation of the two global surveys of this project and the creation of a global seminar, but it will also illustrate a basis for the perceptions of social change that currently exist. Along those lines, a constant reflection of personal perceptions of the concepts presented in this review will help facilitate the most productive read, for research suggests that *any group of individuals* may be social actors who may assign and present new meaning for change (Maleku, 2012). Though this review will reveal that the processes of change are much more complex, consideration for this is foundationally important to the rationale of this work.

This review is divided into four sections, *Social Change*, *The Construction of Meaning*, *Social Order*, and *Cultural Constraints* with eleven subsections, the totality of which are essential subjects to consider when evaluating this project.

Social Change

Conditions

To begin, a foundation of social change must be established for this research. Scholars cite *social innovation* as the “changes in the cultural, normative or regulative structures [or classes] of the society which enhance its collective power resources and improve its economic and social performance” (Rivers, et al., 2015). And *social change* as: “any action ‘whether progressive or regressive, and whether “effective” or not, in changing particular outcomes” (Rivers, et al., 2015).

Expanding the rationale laid out in the Introduction, *positive* social change will be defined for this research as a combination of the above scholarly definitions *with the addition* that it must be an action that enhances life for the majority of the people and the planet in ways that begin to repair the oppression, mutilation, and destruction referenced herein. Equality is an antinomy when inequality exists for even one person.

Now that a definition of social change has been asserted, the pace of social change must be explained. Similar to the cyclic theory, which illustrates changes in human society as a series of stages (growth, development, and decay) in a cycle, the dialectic theory also explains social change, though does so in a way that is more accurate when social movement scholarship is considered (Bitzer, 1968; Fominaya, 2010; Griffin, 1952.; Moser, 2017; Simons, 1970; Therborn, 2014). It offers that an agitation occurs when a contradiction is created, and provides a looser timeline for the occurrence of change, describing the cycle of change as something gradual with sudden leaps. For example, a bud (i.e., the exigence) may exist for many days without a set timeline of when it will open, but then one moment when the conditions are right, it blooms; simultaneously, the bud represents a cycle of change: seed, sapling, tree, buds, flowers, fruit, seed. (Ruder, 2015; Sewell and Woods, n.d., p. 1; Trotsky, 1939). This theory is a strong representation of society's dominant views as an evolutionary cycle; the views progress in one direction until an urgent exigence is created and the conditions of the rhetorical situation allow for mobilization. Then, a new petal of meaning opens and a new degree of change is fought for. Lievrouw (p. 149) builds on this by stating that a movement mobilizes by gathering the legacy of preexisting social structures and reorienting them to new, transformative goals, and Moser (2017, p. 1) asserts that movements must "recast and reconstruct" to create a new world; thus, movements that build on the legacy and resources of previous movements increase the change of substantial impact.

Yet, beyond the act of mobilization, scholars (Melucci, 1989; Melucci, 1995; Scipes, 2011) argue that understanding the processes that lead to the emergence of mobilization are of critical consideration. A movement, much like dominant meaning, must first be constructed. Collective action is an interactive, social process just as the dominant understanding of a semiotic sign. Individuals must first come together over a social issue, decide to work together and challenge it, and create a collective identity; then they must take action to challenge a part of the current social order; each member must emotionally commit to those actions irrespective of risk. Once those steps have been taken, a cycle will form where more interest in the cause will be sparked, additional individuals will come together, and a more inclusive collective identity will be created; then and only then, can a movement erupt (Melucci, 1989; Melucci, 1995; Scipes, 2011).

Along the lines of eruption or budding, dialectics also serve to explain the cycled connection between capitalism's economic laws and the social world, such as in production, the environment, family, labor, education, etc., and how it hinders equality and fair treatment within

them (Ritter, 2022; Ruder, 2015; Trotsky, 1939). This understanding is crucial for the existence of social progress; to maintain control, the capitalist class distorts consciousness in any way possible (Sewell and Woods, n.d. p. 1). The cycle of inequality transcends borders as capitalistic norms of production become dominant (such as low wages, centralized control, English language dominance, etc.) (Artz and Kamalipour, 2003, p. 8). But, in spite of the significant negative impacts of capitalism, change is possible through collective action, mobilization, and organization (Croteau and Hoynes, 2019, p. 370-371). Lievrouw stated that the process of social change requires the reprogramming of the cultural codes of communication networks, and that mediation is a continuous process of countless small adaptations. The speed of the process of change depends on the extent to which people find different ways to remediate their communicative expressions, interactions, and relationships over time (p. 149, 234).

But what material conditions make social change necessary? Bitzer's conception of a rhetorical situation is instrumental here. Bitzer (1968) determined that rhetoric occurs when a situation requires it; specifically, a situation with an exigence, a rhetor, an audience, and constraints. Though social movements "don't just happen" (Christiansen, 2009; Therborn, 2014) and in fact require multiple stages of development, the possibility that "every audience at any moment is capable of being changed in some way by speech" (Bitzer, 1968, p. 3) is of critical consideration for this research. Rhetoric comes into existence "for the sake of something beyond itself" (Bitzer, 1968, p. 3); its function is to produce actions that stimulate change; it serves to alter reality through discourse, and thus requires the specific components (exigence, rhetor, etc.) identified. A rhetorical situation is comprised of objects, people, relations, and events that spark its "utterance" (Bitzer, 1968; Griffin, 1952; Simons, 1970). The need for an exigence to spark a movement ties in with dialectic theories; social change, and movements that spark it, will ebb and flow. The rhetorical situation also correlates to principles of Historical Materialism. To reference Voloshinov,

"A word... is a product of the living interaction of social forces" (Collins, 2000, p. 44) Historical Materialism demonstrates that *words* mean nothing until they are related to a material condition; the process of social relations and the existence of material conditions form meaning in society, and facilitate the need, and the demand, for change.

In line with these theories, in 1974, a French feminist theorized that the stakes of feminist struggle were not about equality, but about life and death—for humans and the planet. Concepts

of ecofeminism center on the idea that the patriarchal system's claim over women's bodies and the natural world destroys both, and that feminism and environmentalism must bring an overthrow of not just male power, but the system of power itself (Bruell, Carmichael, and Jenkins, 2012; d'Eaubonne, 2022). These findings can be generalized in a way applicable to all positive social change, solidifying the necessity of challenging Manifest Destiny, and reaffirming the importance of drawing from other movements' legacies (Agyeman, 2013; Bruell, et al., 2012; Dunlap and McCright, 2008; Hall, 2009; Lerche, 2021).

Despite the relevance of these theories to progressive social movements as a whole, the rhetorical appeals, structure, organization, and strategies of collective action must also be considered. The organizational stage of a social movement, just like the stage of mobilization, is crucial (Christiansen, 2009; Cox, 2013; Williams, 1995). With strong organization, shared experiences and common threads can be recognized among varied progressive movements, allowing collective identify, successes, and impact to be maximized. Recognizing this collective exigence is the key to progressive change.

Processes

To an exigence, there are many possible responses. One example, *agitation*, is described by Bowers, Ochs, Jensen, and Schulz as based on lateral deviance as a dispute over the dominant value system (2010, p. 7). This definition can be applied to the rationale outline in the Introduction of this research: the agitation behind a movement that could respond to the horrid global conditions described could be a mobilization against a dominant power system that does not allow the majority of people and the planet to survive under fair conditions, and an attempt to replace that power structure with a structure that does. The rhetoric that would be used by movement represents the *instrumental behavior* described by scholars (Bowers, et al., 2010, p. 1). Outside of the using ethos and pathos in mobilization speeches and statements, the movement employ the rhetorical strategy of solidification through publications, creation of positive terms, and consciousness raising, all of which would fall into the instrumental behavior category (Bowers, et al., 2010, p. 29). Rhetorical acts of persuasion in social movements and activism vary extensively; actions that may bring success with one audience may “alienate others” (Simons, 1970), but despite the extraordinary rhetorical dilemmas facing those advocating for change or acting as leaders,

effective communication in social movements is based in culture, evidence, and emotion (Barker, 2013; Fominaya, 2010; Griffin, 1952; Johnston and Klandermans, 1995; Simons, 1970; Thompson and Holland, 2002).

To exercise that effective communication, the values and beliefs of a population must be understood. Scholars cite that individuals' values

tend to be consistent with those of their families and communities, being embedded in collective identities, responsibilities, and stories. While adults are to a greater or lesser degree able to control aspects of their social worlds, young people must negotiate competing values across and within the boundaries of home and school. It is in their challenges to and endorsements of moral authority that the complexity and intensity of their moral labour can be identified. It is also here that it is possible to understand young people as contributing to processes of interpersonal and institutional change and continuity. The figure of the 'teacher' stands at the centre of moral discourse. The way in which young people engage with this figure differs dramatically between the more public aspects of school life and the more private aspects of home life (Thompson and Holland, 2002).

Collectively, an individual's ability to alter their beliefs and take risks such as acting outside of the social scripts that have been set or the dominant motivation for consent are impacted by discourse connected to "the questioning of moral authority, the need for the legitimization of power and authority, and the levels of responsibility for their own moral development." School, family, peer groups, religious affiliations, environment, and the media all impact these discourses, and the possibility that individuals will trust others, work collectively, and act as moral agents (Thompson and Holland, 2002).

Correlated to the ability to take these risks is the behavioral component of psychological empowerment (Christens, 2012; Farr, 2004; Fedi, Mannarini, and Maton, 2009; Fogel, 1993; Foster-Fishman, Cantillon, Pierce, and Van Egeren, 2007; Foucault, 1982; Fowler and Christakis, 2009; Gergen, 2009). Active participation in community and democratic decision-making processes have been connected to psychological empowerment. Research has concluded that there are positive associations between the intrapersonal component of psychological empowerment and community activism; intrapersonal empowerment unfolds as "individuals are socialized through their participation in empowering community settings" (Christens, 2012).

However, interactions within the category of psychological empowerment have complex relationships with community activism moderated by socioeconomic status; the correlation of

transformative power, which must be exercised collectively through organization, can't be ignored (Christens, 2012; Farr, 2004; Fedi, et al., 2009; Fogel, 1993; Foster-Fishman, et al., 2007; Foucault, 1982; Fowler and Christakis, 2009; Gergen, 2009). Transformative power can be described as “the power to...”; it is the opportunity to act more freely, specifically as a collective with the aim of altering structural conditions and dynamics within “social, political and community contexts.” Thus, in other words, it can be defined as “a mechanism for increasing well-being at the individual and collective levels” (Christens, 2012). The successful development and conduction of transformative power depends on relational network dynamics.

Relational components of forms of power, such as oppression, domination, exploitation, coercion, violence, and liberation, also play a role in maintaining the distribution of resources and opportunities; Scholars have found that oppression shapes cultures in ways that form “dialectically dependent beings (the oppressed and the oppressors)” (Christens, 2012; Farr, 2004; Fedi, et al., 2009; Fogel, 1993; Foster-Fishman, et al., 2007; Foucault, 1982; Fowler and Christakis, 2009; Gergen, 2009).

Motivation is also a significant impactor of engagement with practices of social change (Bajwa-Patel, et al., 2015; Conner and Zaino, 2014; Dawes and Larson, 2011; Furlong and Cartmel, 2011; Powers and Allaman, 2012; Walsh, 2012). The motivation may be both extrinsic (such as volunteer work where participants receive acknowledgement and benefits for participation at school or work) and intrinsic (such as through an individual's personal connection to a social issue or economic situation).

The terms “flow theory” and “interest theory” are of significance to this research, as they explain that an institution of higher education plays roles in “extrinsically driving youth social innovation and raising awareness of social problems that may engage students in social innovation” (Bajwa-Patel, et al., 2015).

Motivation has also been correlated to self-efficacy by scholars, as individuals have identified that a lack of support from others have held them back in seeking social change (Bajwa-Patel, et al., 2015). Perceptions of support may also be impacted by both the economic and non-economic resources an individual has access to, as resources, such as economic support to drive social change; lack of economic support as a hindrance in the ability to engage in social innovation has been identified as a common perception, and social, cultural, and class capital have been termed as crucial in perceptions of capability (Bajwa-Patel, et al., 2015; Conner and Zaino, 2014;

Dawes and Larson, 2011; Furlong and Cartmel, 2011; Powers and Allaman, 2012; Walsh, 2012; Williams, 1995). Digital technology provides a new sense of belonging that allows individuals to participate in collective action more freely, as studies have shown that they do not feel as constrained by perceived barriers support (Bajwa-Patel, et al., 2015).

But how exactly are these perceptions formed and senses of support defined?

The Construction of Meaning

Representation

Hall (2013) and Marleku (2012) provide relevant explanations of “representation,” a crucial component in the process of the construction of meaning; Marleku asserts that meaning is a *social* construction, citing how humans produce meaning through language (sounds, written words, images, music, objects and more) to provide *representation* (p. 1), a dominant accepted by a large group. Both Hall and Marleku further this by identifying the “constructionist theory” of representation, claiming that there is no meaning that can just be “found” in the world; instead, it must be constructed and produced (p. 2). Hall expands this with the assertion that individuals form “conceptual maps” from systems of representation (both mental representations and language), and that those belong to the same culture share similar conceptual maps.

Maleku’s (2012) writing suggests that *any group of individuals* may be social actors by assigning meaning to a representational system of concepts and signs **and** getting consent for that meaning. While this is *possible* even with a group of two, a wide reach is necessary to transition from an inside joke understood among friends to a meaning dominantly accepted by the masses. It takes significant power to be heard; thus, media (especially mainstream news media and mass entertainment media) can become models of beliefs, values, and behaviors of society, as they are so widely consumed (Maleku, 2012).

Mainstream media have an alarming amount of power (Croteau and Hoynes, 2019; Maleku, 2012); not only can they wield rhetoric as a sword that defines how the world should be socialized (e.g., consumers are trained to regard representation portrayed by media as what is acceptable, preferred, and necessary for a “successful” life), but they may also represent, omit, and marginalize exclusively who and what they want to. The material conditions of society, such as the unequal distribution of resources between mainstream and alternative media and the fact that most citizens

(due to the relations of production) do not have the time to question what they are consuming, let alone produce their own media, make it possible for mainstream media to earn consent for hegemony *and* the meanings that they construct (Artz, 2022; Artz and Kamalipour, 2003).

But media, material conditions, and hegemony will be further detailed later in this review. What is imperative for the context of this research is to consider that theories about the construction of meaning suggest, when applied, that communication in the setting of higher education communication may impacts civil rights, class, economics, and social order in society. This inference about higher education will become pivotal when interpreting the selection of the survey sites of this project, and the methods of testing the hypotheses. Littlejohn, Foss, and Oetzel (2021) have asserted that communication is multifaceted; through the lens of semiotics, every way that a university conducts operations (programs offered, extracurriculars, hiring practices, and more) is a sign that communicates. As a social process, communication effects the construction of identity and meaning; thus, it is possible for higher education communication to affect the construction, reinforcement, and modification of social order in society. Further exploration of the rhetorical processes of the enthymeme, the composition of social order, and the conditions that create culture and cultural constraints are necessary to understand how the results of higher education communication may in turn affect social change.

Enthymeme

It must be noted that a “proposed” meaning would have no power in society without mass *consent*; Brock’s description of the “enthymeme” as a rhetorical algorithm asserts that through this lens, the audience is “mutually engaged” in the construction of meaning with the speaker (Brock, 2014, p. 2). The enthymeme is a process that positions those attempting to construct meaning to *lead an audience to consent to the desired meaning*. An enthymeme such as “*global warming is leading to the destruction of the natural environment*” may lead an audience to finish the construction of meaning with something like, “*global warming must be stopped*.” Signal words, like “destruction” from this example, help reinforce where the speaker wants audience to go with their interpretation and construction.

This is highly relevant to this study, as the structure of higher education is full of enthymemes. When curriculum and programming that is framed to help students earn high income, excel above others in their fields, and compete is considered, relevant inferences can be made

about the meanings that students may construct about class, working collaboratively, helping others, caring about society as a whole, and uniting for social change.

A relevant aside is that enthymemes may be used to propose and gain consent for oppressive meanings. Consider the presence of stereotypes in entertainment media. Scholars (West, 2008) asserted that stereotypes are “activated so frequently through media exposure” that they often occur unconsciously in real life encounters. The danger lies in the institutionalization and internalization that can follow, and comes with added risk for minority groups, as they face fewer positive and “realistic” representations to counteract the negative (West, 2008, p. 288). The additional depths of media (as means of producing meaning, explanations, ideology, and definitions of race (Hall, 2021) call to light an imperative inquiry: if meaning is a social construction (Hall, 2013; Marleku, 2012) and the capitalist elite (though owning the means of production) has power over the construction of society, what motivation does the elite have for constructing these particular oppressive meanings?

When the requirement of *mass* consent for dominant meaning, and the mutual engagement of the enthymeme as a rhetorical process are both considered, this calls to a second level of crucial inquiry: why would an audience (that is arguably more oppressed than the creators of the media in question) mutually engage in the construction of the oppressive meanings cited by West (2008)?

Hall’s (2021) work reinforces the expansion of West’s theories by defining “inferential racism,” which naturalizes representations of situations relating to race and enables them to be formulated in a way that does not bring into “awareness the racist predicates on which the statements are grounded,” and rests on the assumption that “blacks are the source of the problem” (p. 20). In the absence of this awareness, it is easier to earn consent for oppressive meanings, especially since they are largely misunderstood or not understood at all. Hall argues that media racism such as this correlates with the concept of the portrayal of “adventure” in media, which is “synonymous with the demonstration of the moral, social, and physical mastery of the colonizers over the colonized” (2021, p. 21). West furthers this by asserting that black media images are derived from historically constructed conditions such as structural inequality, including racism and sexism (2008, p. 297).

On top of this, further incentive for consent lies in factors such as the entertainment value media may elicit through the currency of comedy, satisfying viewers who want to be entertained, even though, for example, they’re also invoking the image of blacks as clowns (Hall, 2021, p. 22).

Portraying blacks and other minorities in lead roles, despite oppressive content, is another incentive for consent when lack of representation in media is considered. The capitalist elites have considerable reason to produce these messages as well. Though offering small concessions via simply having minority representation and offering entertainment, the underlying meanings of these programs reinforce a social order of inequality; since power depends on the social position of control, an unequal, divided mass population would be unlikely to unite enough to challenge the hegemony of the elite. It takes many to create new meaning, and with each new block of entertainment media wrapped in minimal concessions and underlying, inferential racism, we take one step farther away from change. Arguably, institutions of higher education have comparable ability to establish and reinforce social order through the signs that comprise their structure, as additional literature will show.

Semiotics

Semiotics is the study of signs and their perception. It is a science that examines the role of signs as part of social life (Chandler, 2020). The application of semiotics is instrumental in understanding both how messages are communicated and how the interpretation of those messages affects their impact, both of which are heavily correlated to how social change is approached and understood.

Most semiotic theories connect to Roland Barthes' theory of myth. In *Mythologies*, Barthes explains that myth is a type of speech (Barthes, 1972, p.107), but is more than oral speech or written language; if they mean something, objects such as images, ads, or acts can be considered speech, and in actuality, no communication is devoid of myth completely (p. 131). Myth is not defined by the object of its message, but by the way the message is conveyed, i.e., the way framing and *distortion* are woven into the message (p. 107-109). Understanding myth allows objects to be separated from the dominant assignment of meaning, which results in a loss of the innocence associated with assimilation to that cultural constraint. In the context of intentional advertising, myth is often used to imply things like proficiency, patriotism, or diversity.

To put this example into the context of higher education, as that is the setting in which the surveys for this work were carried out, the billboard advertising of universities can be considered. The students often featured on university billboards are an example of myth. Referencing Purdue University Northwest (PNW) as a specific case, void of myth, PNW's ads would communicate

only that there are a variety of male and female Hispanic, African American, and Indian students on the billboards, along with the denotation of any verbiage included. But with the presence of myth, the fundamental signification is that PNW promotes diversity and inclusion (see Barthes, 1991, p. 114). Charles Sanders Peirce's theories broaden the interpretation of all components of communication as signs. According to Peirce, too, everything is a sign; individuals think through signs, use them to communicate with others, and assign meaning to anything in the environment. Even if it was not intentionally created as a sign, as long as something has the potential to be interpreted, it can be a sign (Totu and Yakin, 2014, p. 4).

Valentin Voloshinov's Historical Materialist theories focus on the "language of real life," i.e., acts of speaking that reveal dimension, shifts, and growth, along with the social columns beneath the developing uses. To recall Voloshinov's writing once again: "a word in the mouth of a particular individual person is a product of the living interaction of social forces." Signs then, can indicate a change in social culture; to understand a sign's meaning, you must comprehend the meaning of the history around it (Collins, 2000). Voloshinov's theories allow the semiotic component of this analysis to be complete and not partial, as it prompts the consideration of not only what signs universities are conveying and where myth is involved in those signs, but also assesses the complete messaging in comparison with historical facts.

Crucial for this research, semioticians assert that individual consciousness both forms and is *formed* by language, which is "nurtured on signs" (Barthes, 1991; Collins, 2000; Totu and Yakin, 2014). Signs function as assignments of environmental meaning. Noting that anything and everything can be a sign that communicates. In the context of higher education, the programs universities offer, marketing used, extracurriculars promoted, policies enforced, faculty governance, and more are all signs that communicate.

Semiotic scholarship has demonstrated that humanity, when acting collectively, has the ability to construct reality through the power of the "sign." The assignment of environmental meaning is made possible only by consent for these assignments, and is reinforced or altered through interpretations and various methods of communication (Barthes, 1991; Totu and Yakin, 2014, p. 4). Language and meaning therefore, are constantly "under construction;" (Collins, 2000; 1973, p. 6). Signs surrounding family, school, the workplace, and media have been identified as some of the most significant in determining perception and worldview (Drew, 2022).

The theory of symbolic interactionism emphasizes human interaction “in the creation of self and society” (Littlejohn, et al., 2021, p. 438), illustrating how the mind is a “backdrop of social interactions,” where individuals are continuously engaged with negotiating meanings and interpreting symbols while reacting to situations. This theory highlights the value of understanding semiotics, representation, and rhetoric together when considering how social order is established through the construction of meaning (Blumer, 2009; Littlejohn, et al., 2021, p. 438-439).

Social Order

The Establishment

When the concept of social order is considered, it is relevant to synthesize Bitzer’s (1968) breakdown of the rhetorical situation with theories of semiotics, representation, and the construction of meaning (Lears; Scipes); together, these theories propose how societal inequality may be reinforced or modified, and in this context, they suggest that institutional settings of higher education may perpetuate societal inequality and systemic oppression.

Looking deeper into social order as a concept, Scipes’ (2010; 2022), expanse outside structural models of society offers further explanation. Going beyond the traditional principles of intersectionality, Scipes asserts “polyconflictualism,” a processual paradigm that “focuses on the *processes* by which a social situation develops within a particular social order,” highlighting that when oppression is analyzed, for example, “all forms of oppressive relations and their interactions” should be considered, for both the social response *and* the social order are relevant factors. “The social structure that exists in any social order is one that has developed over time via historical processes since the respective social order was established” (Scipes, 2011; Scipes, 2022).

The historical processes in terms of this analysis would be the structure (including cultural constraints) of the institutions surveyed for this research, and the impact of the higher education process on the way students interpret, form, and communicate “signs” in turn. The social response would be the consumption of the universities’ messages, consent to hegemony, *or* rejection of the content. Gramsci’s discussion of “spontaneous philosophy” and the *human* experience of history being “absorbed and shaped by each individual” (Lears, p. 570, 593) in explanation of the development of ideology further supports the validity of this inference. Lears explains how

Gramsci began the groundwork of broadening Marxist definitions of ideology, citing how Gramsci believed ideology was more than “a system of beliefs that reflects specific class interests;” spontaneous philosophy is comprised of

1. language itself, which is a totality of determined notions and concepts and not just of words grammatically devoid of content; 2. "common sense" [conventional wisdom] and "good sense" [empirical knowledge]; 3. popular religion and, therefore, also in the entire system of beliefs, superstitions, opinions, ways of seeing things and of acting, which are collectively bundled together under the name of "folklore" (Lears, p. 570).

Gramsci asserted that a class or a group is both impacted by the “economic sphere” it develops in, *and* values and experiences it is exposed to; from this, a group will “refashion” the philosophy and develop a worldview (Lears, p. 571). The resulting worldviews cement into “historical blocs,” which are key components of hegemony, according to Gramsci:

The idea of historical bloc departs significantly from notions of class embedded in the Marxist tradition: it promotes analysis of social formations that cut across categories of ownership and nonownership and that are bound by religious or other ideological ties as well as those of economic interest. A historical bloc may or may not become hegemonic, depending on how successfully it forms alliances with other groups or classes. The keys to success are ideological and economic: to achieve cultural hegemony, the leaders of a historical bloc must develop a world view that appeals to a wide range of other groups within the society, and they must be able to claim with at least some plausibility that their particular interests are those of society at large (Lears, p. 571).

Inequality

It is crucial to note that hegemonic groups may offer select accommodations or concessions to subordinate groups to ensure their hegemony may be maintained (Artz & Kamalipour, 2003; Lears, p. 571). The hegemonic culture of the elite serves their interests at the expense of the subordinates; yet, “ruling class domination is not static or “closed,” it is a constant process of “counterhegemonies” and “live options” (Lears, p. 571-590);

hegemony is a process of continuous creation which, given its massive scale, is bound to be uneven in the degree of legitimacy it commands and to leave some room for antagonistic cultural expressions to develop (Lears, p. 271).

Gramsci's writing on the reconstruction of the human experience as "being shaped by each individual" (p. 593) is critical when the possibility of positive social change is contemplated. Furthering this, Lears asserted that:

the maintenance of hegemony does not require active commitment by subordinates to the legitimacy of elite rule. Less powerful people may be thoroughly disaffected. At times they may openly revolt through strikes, factory takeovers, mass movements, and perhaps the creation of a counterhegemony. But normally most people find it difficult, if not impossible, to translate the outlook implicit in their experience into a conception of the world that will directly challenge the hegemonic culture. The problem is partly one of language...Gramsci realized that every language contains the elements of a conception of the world. vocabulary helps mark the boundaries of permissible discourse, discourages the clarification of social alternatives, and makes it difficult for the dispossessed to locate the source of their unease, let alone remedy it. Consent, for Gramsci, involves a complex mental state, a "contradictory consciousness" mixing approbation and apathy, resistance, and resignation...For Gramsci, The State, which is usually thought of as political society-i.e., a dictatorship or- some other coercive apparatus used to control the masses in conformity with a given type of production and economy-[is] a balance between political society and civil society, by which I mean the hegemony of one social group over the entire nation, exercised through so-called private organizations like the Church, trade unions, or schools." The state, in other words, is "hegemony protected by the armour of coercion" (p. 593).

The role of language that Gramsci highlights demonstrates the importance of understanding how students around the world perceive and define social order and social change.

Cultural Constraints

Capitalism & Class

Bourdieu has asserted that regardless if a "class" or a group has an occupational basis or a genealogical basis (such as in pre-capitalist societies), "groups are not found ready-made in reality... they are the product of a complex historical work of construction on society" (1987, p. 8). Arguably, this is simply another tier in the construction of language/meaning, as "a word... is a product of the living interaction of social forces" (Collins, 2000, p. 44), and the process of social relations and the existence of material conditions forms meaning in society.

"Urban manifestations of class difference" are described by Cook (2011) as distinctions between classes identified by "education, dwellings, and consumer products." To apply these

concepts to the context of this study and the structure of higher education, curriculum and programming derived from the expectations of a capitalistic society constructed from the characteristics of the “American dream” (individual success as shown by careers, possessions, and spending) reinforce economic inequality while simultaneously normalizing consumerism (Artz, 2022; Artz and Kamalipour, 2003).

These examples align with Bourdieu’s theory, as he describes “collectives” as having an economic and social base (whether they are “classes” or occupational groups), and as being “symbolic constructions oriented by the pursuit of individual and collective interests, especially the specific interests of their spokesperson” (p. 9).

In other words, it is in the interests of the institutions to reinforce capitalistic ideas, consumerism, and social class constructions to maintain their own hegemony.

Other scholars have looked deeper into Cook’s reference of “consumer products,” examining how identity and social class may be shaped or reinforced by “nutritional discourse,” which has the power to “reproduce and increase social and cultural capital,” and facilitate an “otherness” from lower classes (Wills, Backett-Milburn, Roberts, & Lawton, 2011). For example, consider the way that “gourmet” food is contrasted with “fast” food, and the purported correlation of class in both categories. The structure of higher education can be logically proposed as similar when academic programs and institutional brands are purportedly contrasted through the lens of economic.

It should be noted that Bourdieu has also asserted that agents are both “classified” and “classifiers” (p. 1). In other words, students may be treated as objects (classified by the college they attend and ostracized if that college or their academic program is not widely acceptable to society), *and* students may also actively construct the reality around them as classifiers by establishing a new identity for themselves.

Bourdieu expands this discussion by comparing the subjectivist and objectivist stances on social class to pose the question of whether classes are a social construct or are real existences of reality, citing “point of view” as both a subjective vision, *and* a view taken from a very specific point in society (determinist) (p. 2). Along these lines, a student’s class is constructed based on their position in society (e.g., a young, American engineering student), but the representations are carried out based on the specific constraints of societal reality (e.g., what courses are required of *engineering* students? What are the constraints involved with being a *young* student? Did the

student have encouragement and support to go to school?). Both the subjective and determinist points must be confronted when new meanings of class are proposed.

Filters such as class are manufactured to create artificial justification of who gets to speak, what they get to say, and how loudly they get to say it (Adichie, 2009; Littlejohn, 2021, p. 441). Foucault's work with discursive formation adds a relevant layer to the discussion, with emphasis on his exploration of "bio power" as a way of introducing a break into the domain of life that is under power's control. At the core of this scholarship, it is understood that the state makes decisions based on what is best for the state, and what is best for the state is centered on *eliminating competition for the state*; the state acts to answer the question of: how do we control and regulate things (Foucault, 2020; Littlejohn, 2021, p. 441)?

"For something to live and thrive, something else must be extinguished and killed" (Foucault, 2020). Thus, when "the state" is viewed as the hegemonic elite, an elimination of competition would take the form of the silencing of any threats to that hegemony. Foucault's scholarship illuminates the rules that control the form of a society in its respective era, paroled by discursive norms. Understanding that power is a function of discourse, not an innate human trait or characteristic (Foucault, 2020; Littlejohn, 2021, p. 442-443), is integral when power dynamics must be dismantled to create positive change.

Structural Barriers

Erving Goffman explained the presentation of self as a theatrical process, citing everyday situations as a stage and people as actors "who use performances to make impressions on an audience." The management of their performances, according to Goffman, aligns with a script that has already been established; the script itself is established by the material conditions of society (e.g., culture, gender expectations, hierarchy, economics, and more), and defines "social norms" (Littlejohn, et al., 2021, p. 74). In many cases, these scripts function as cultural constraints that hinder social change.

For example, looking through the lens of media, there are varied social scripts that must be followed. Entertainment media content in the United States is generated by converging industries, transferred between platforms and across borders, and spanned over a myriad of technologies and geographies (Sigismondi, 2020). The U.S. entertainment industry is regulated by agencies like the FCC, the Department of Defense, and the U.S. Congress, but the industry

holds significant power over the U.S. political economy; media expanses are subject to regulation, but deregulatory policies have become more prevalent, due in part to entertainment industry lobbying, which correlates with Artz' examples of neoliberalism (Artz, 2022, p. 20; Sigismondi, 2020, p. 19-22). Indian Transnational Media Corporations are increasingly representative of "the success of neoliberal restructuring of global capital," which allows them to traverse borders in the pursuit of profit-driven joint ventures and partnerships, thanks to the Indian government's adoption and legitimization of neoliberal social and economic policies (Artz, 2022, p. 59). Though China's government regulates industrial production, its recent adoption of neoliberalism and private enterprise has made it welcoming to joint ventures and transnational capitalism; collectively, China is a rising world power (Artz, 2022, p. 109-110). Latin America is one of the largest media markets in the world, with a population (625 million) 1/3 larger than 27 EU countries; its media forms and norms are heavily influenced by colonialism; however, through media outlets like TeleSUR, democratic, alternative models of media globalization, which illustrate the "protagonist role of social movements, people, and community," exist (Artz, 2006; Artz, 2022, p. 149-150). And "European transnational co-productions incorporate cultural content, post production decisions, and local labor from cross-border media partners;" these processes allow partners to combine their resources and dip into national subsidies and tax credits to increase production and marketing budgets. Motivated by larger audiences and profits than nation-specific ventures can bring, governments and agencies have facilitated the European move to transnational media (Artz, 2022, p. 193-194).

The social scripts in the setting of higher education hold significant relevance for the possibility of social change. In the context of motivation for consent to meaning, it should be noted that the ramifications of going against a social script may outweigh the need that drives an exigence. For example, a faculty member may lose their job if they do not consent to the proposed meaning of the university. If a scholar is undergoing the tenure process, teaching off the tenure track, or enduring a large course load, they may be hesitant to speak out about an exigence, or risk their livelihood given the constraints of a capitalist society. Research shows that these constraints in higher education directly impact "the consciousness of society (Bone and McNay, 2006; Kuntz, 2012; Walker and Fongwa, 2016; Williams, 2016).

Recognizing all of these structural barriers is necessary when trying to understand positive social change, for an exigence in the realm of rhetorical situation will always be subject to *cultural*

constraints. To have a chance to create change, this must be considered, as social actors must be able to imagine ways to confront and overcome these barriers in order to be successful.

Without imagination, not only is one 'locked up in a very narrow range of roles and expectations', but thinking through and knowing and desiring radical improvements becomes improbable, and for Tsiolkas, destructive to the self" (Teruelle, 2012).

Capitalist Cultural Imperialism

In discussion of cultural imperialism, Artz references a Demont-Heinrich's example, which defines the concept as an "optic for concentrating on domination and production which imposes dominant ideology" (2022, p. 24). From here, Artz notes that Demont-Heinrich's definition becomes blurred through critiques of "geographically-based cultural flows" and the conclusion that culture is created through the "hegemonic outcome of global, political, and cultural power configurations" (2022, p. 25). Though Demont-Heinrich's definitions have merit via fragments of dominant ideology and hegemony concepts, evidence that a dominant ideology that is imposed on a non-dominant ideology is entirely "pure" and representative of **one** culture alone must be presented.

Global entertainment media analyses provide an appropriate foundation for which cultural imperialism can be explored, given the role that entertainment media can play in the construction of societal meaning, closely related to the enthymemes found in the structure of higher education. A 2022 study (Vasilko) found that when ten different films with themes of higher education from the U.S., India, China, Latin American, and Europe were analyzed, regardless of if the prominent location of the film in question (U.S. media, Indian media, Chinese media, etc.), education was portrayed as being correlated instrumentally with success (financial, personal, societal, or all of the above). Several different countries collaborated on several of the films (e.g., France, China, the U.S., Germany, and the UAE were all involved with the film *Valerian and the City of a Thousand Planets* alone, not including the relations of board members from the nine different corporations connected to the film that span across the globe). Further, each film analyzed had at least four corporate collaborators. In light of the expanse of transnationalism from these examples, it is not possible to trace the origin of this theme of education as a concept to any one culture

individually. There was much stronger evidence to support a *redefined* definition of cultural imperialism as a vessel facilitating consent for the hegemony of the corporate elite.

Acknowledging the extensive combination of many cultures from the examples referenced, cultural *hybridity* is more apt a representation of the impact of global entertainment media than cultural *imperialism*. Author Peter Burke describes cultural hybridity as a global trend of the mixing or hybridization of multiple cultures, a phenomenon he cites as occurring with “increasing frequency” and including “intense cultural encounters of all kinds” (2009). The dark side of cultural hybridity is shown in Artz’ (2022b) description of “capitalist interlocks” (p. 85), which shows how global transnational media exclude a significant number of people and their “unprofitable cultural expressions and concerns” (p. 85). Examples from entertainment programs like *Sabado Gigante* that have the chief aim of homogenizing audiences toward “consumption of mass-produced cultural goods,” and decreasing cultural “uniqueness” by creating a “sanitized” global commercial culture (Sánchez, Cramer, & Prieto, 2003, p. 131) take the severity of this concept further. Barret (2022) highlights this process as the empire’s “dispossession of the many for the benefit of the few.”

Similar to the fact that action and animated movies are easier to dub and distribute in different languages around the world, capitalist transnationalism desires a monolithic culture that can be easily branded and consumed. The global survey carried out for this research enables exploration into the possibility that higher education brands a similar monolithic culture that naturalizes inequality and creates barriers to social change. Harris (2022) stated, “today, global capitalism is a closely woven integrated world system, no longer a collection of nation states serving their own internal economies,” nodding, even indirectly, to how the sanitized culture of multiple regions around the world is driven by a monolithic corporate cultural imperialism. Harris quotes Marx and Engels to further illustrate the insatiable spread of capitalist transnationalism:

The bourgeoisie has, through its exploitation of the world market, given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country... in a place of old wants, satisfied by the production of the country, we find new wants, requiring for the satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes (Harris, 2022).

The more widespread a sanitized, capitalist culture becomes, the more difficult it will to both distinguish any “pure” or “authentic” elements of culture around the world (if either can be defined) and modify or reject it due to the hypnotics of themes of hyper-individualism,

subordination, and division, and the restraints of hegemonic consent. Theoretically, if transnationalism could be shifted from an aim of bottomless capitalism to a democratic, global connector of cultural nuance and social movements, activism, and community, it would be a true asset to the growth of global society. Further consideration of this possibility is *crucial*, especially with consideration of one last variable from this study that has not yet been emphasized: the concept of education.

The Media

Media, as has been illustrated throughout this literature review, is a significant influencer of the construction of reality. But what *reality* is created when dominant media frequently distorts or misrepresents the truth? If the distortion is accepted by the masses' consent and becomes the hegemonic meaning, does it become truer than physical reality? "Great is truth, but even greater from a practical point of view is silence about truth" (Dorset Eye, 2021).

This Aldous Huxley quote symbolizes that the things that are not discussed are often the most important part of a story. Research around this quote connects to a larger conversation about omission of vital facts in the mainstream media, specifically in the coverage of war. A startling percentage of U.S. mainstream media has a pro-war, pro-corporate bias, coupled with an alarming history of omission when it comes to reports of military conflict. Some of the most egregious examples of this include the U.S.—North Korea conflict (specifically, the framing of Pyongyang's nuclear activity as purely offensive); media coverage of the U.S. invasion of Iraq (such as the prolific misinformation surrounding weapons of mass destruction); and most recently, the war in Ukraine (few sources explain the U.S.' role in precipitating the conflict through the 2014 coup in Kiev) (Blum, 2008, p. 196-197; DiMaggio, 2008, p. 164 & 226; Dorset Eye, 2021; World Socialist Web Site, 2022).

The latter presents a unique case, as reports are labeling it the "first social media war," and citing a flood of misinformation and a deluge of coverage unlike any war in history. This coverage stands to have significant impacts on technology, the sociopolitical climate, and society; in many ways, it already has (Mittal, 2022; Suciu, 2022). Thus, networks' muzzling of the news can be highly dangerous, but there are still possible outlets for truth. Scholars like Leah Lievrouw write of the power that new and alternative media has to impact society, as media audiences are now *also* "media participants" (p. 1). The ubiquity of new media effects even those who do not actively

use it. It is paving the way for greater accessibility to more information against the digital divide through the unique fact that consumers can also be creators, and the existence of space to interact and *question* (Lievrouw, 2011, p. 12). Without offering multiple perspectives, mainstream media poses a dangerous expectation that we all see the world one way. Without alternative media, (acknowledging that alternative media may get it right or wrong and should still be subject to critical evaluations), we would have no outlet to counteract that dominant expectation, to ask questions, to attempt mobilization of social change, and to challenge power structures that don't foster global respect of all people and care for the planet. illustrates the importance of diverse reporting in the media for all issues.

Croteau and Hoynes write of the role media plays in shifting and influencing the way the world is viewed (2019, p. 190), citing also the impact of economics and hegemony on the media (in the respect that many sources' primary audience is advertisers, and even politicians, i.e., those who are powerful, both financially and otherwise) (2019, p. 105). Croteau and Hoynes state that media is made up of a series of social relations, such as technology, industry, content, economics, audiences, and more (2019, p. 371).

Drawing from Bell Hooks, audiences need to exercise an "oppositional gaze" when consuming *any* media by critically examining, challenging, and deconstructing (p. 288) what they encounter (West, 2008). Because ultimately, media has the ability to define cultural conventions through its signs, enthymemes, and additional rhetoric. It plays a role in propagating global ideals and behaviors of individualism, consumerism, and subordination to hierarchy and authority (Artz, 2022, p. 218). Educational institutions spark comparable metacognition and behavioral influence (Cooper, 2021; Lavigne, 2018; Patrick, 2020; Teachers College, 2018), heightening the relevance of a global study of college student's perceptions of the world and social change.

Synopsis

This review illustrates the complexity of positive social change as a process; the construction of meaning, social order, cultural constraints, and the relevant correlating components of each have been shown as essential factors to consider when the current structure of the world and its exigences are evaluated. Recognizing that the "situation" as an individual concept is just as important as the material conditions that make it possible, it is time to consider this instant study

as a launch point for nuanced analyses of the change needed to solve varied and specific problems across the globe.

METHODS

Following the examination of the literature indicated, a two-part project was conducted. Three research questions were established for the project based specifically on the rationale for this study, which was established in the introduction, and literature on social change, the construction of meaning, social order, and cultural constraints, which was used as foundational for the framework of the study design. The research questions were set as follows:

1. How is social change perceived as a concept around the world?
2. Are there universal barriers to collective action/positive change?
3. What are universal influencers of awareness of the need for social change and universal motivators for action?

From here, three hypotheses were generated.

To explore the research questions, three hypotheses were set and tested via global, virtual surveys and a global seminar. The population that would be surveyed and the way that the measurement would be conducted was given careful consideration in conjunction with the rationale and the Literature Review. Surveying university students around the globe was selected in light of the *global* peril of the world, the role of *mass* consent in creating new meaning [change], and the impact of *higher education* communication on civil rights, class, economics, and social order in society, which in turn directly influences social change. It is important to note that institutions of higher education are not the only sites where meaning can be mass constructed; dominant meaning may be created in workers' unions, the military, through the media (as has been discussed), and any site at which groups of individuals interact and face exposure to enthymemes, rhetoric, and any framing that may cultivate perceptions (Littlejohn, et al., 2021). Institutions of higher education were chosen as sites of study for this research because of the barriers to influence higher education presents for many of the pillars of society. In order to pursue research, publish writing, or work in dominant roles in the areas of health, politics, economics, law, education, and much more, a higher education degree (or multiple degrees) is required; thus, understanding the enthymemes presented by institutions of higher education and examining the meanings that these institutions construct is necessary when attempting to understand how to alter the dominant, oppressive messaging behind the current social order.

The decision to not set a specified standard of measurement that must be reached in order for findings to be validated or one or multiple hypotheses to be supported was consciously based on the literature identified on dialectics and social change, which found that there is not standardized period of time for change to occur. To recall Lievrouw's writings in synthesis with dialectical theories cited in the Literature Review, the speed of the process of change depends on the extent to which people find different ways to remediate their communicative expressions, interactions, and relationships over time (2011).

Further, at the time of this writing, there is substantial discourse around the effectiveness of standardized testing in the educational setting. Compelling arguments have been made that suggest standardized testing is not a sufficient measurement of progress or predictor of future performance (Huber, Cohen, and Staub, 2022; Hunter, and Schmidt, 2004; Small, 2017). Considering the limitations identified, the rationale of this project that supports the necessity of as few barriers as possible, and the setting of the surveys as sites of higher education which may arguably be impacted by similar factors to those that facilitate the ineffectiveness of standardized testing in educational settings, it was concluded that a set standard of measurement was antithetical to the purposes of this research. The aim with the hypotheses tests were to identify similarities among perceptions of social change around the world in as much nuance as possible, both qualitatively and quantitatively, with hopes that the findings will serve as a foundation for further exploration, deeper questions, and increased collective action for positive change.

The three hypotheses were set as follows, and tested in two parts:

1. There are universal perceptions of social change that include its difficulty.
2. There are universal barriers to collective action and positive change.
3. There are universal influencers of need, and universal motivators of action.

Part One

To begin to test the hypotheses in Part One of the project, Survey One was created using Qualtrics software. Qualtrics was selected because the software allows participants to elect to take it in their preferred language, which was essential for the global feedback this research required. Participants were able to choose from twenty-one different languages (Qualtrics, 2023). The

questions were designed to capture participants' perceptions of collective action and social change (See Appendix A: Surveys, "Global Engagement Survey One").

For the survey population, a goal was set to administer the survey to students at 30 universities randomly selected from 6 continents of the world at a total of 5 universities per continent. Fifteen universities were randomly selected from Ashokau's (see <https://ashokau.org/campuses>) global Changemaker Campus list. The selection was randomized by selecting every second university from their already randomized list. If the selection produced a result that exceeded the 5 university per continent protocol, the university positioned to the right of the original university on the list was chosen. This method was also invoked when, upon the PC making contact with a university, the university decided not to participate in the study or not to respond in the designated time period.

To ensure the results were not skewed by studying universities that have earned the Changemaker designation, the remaining 15 universities were selected by entering the search term "universities on the continent of X" into a search engine and selecting the third result that populated. If this method produced a university that had already been selected through the Ashokau random selection, the third result was selected, and so on. This was also employed when, upon the PC making contact with the university, the university decided not to participate in the study, or chose not to respond. Additionally, this method was employed when all of the Ashokau selections were exhausted.

University participation was solicited from November 2, 2022, when Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was received (IRB-2022-1098) until March 14, 2023. When universities were selected and outreach was carried out, a standard recruiting material was provided in several stages, which included the initial inquiry messages, survey dissemination instructions, and a dissemination script for universities to use when disseminating to their students (see Appendix B). Since the survey was created for college *students* around the world, the Dean of Students or equivalent personnel at each respective university was the first point of contact for initial participation inquiry. That individual received the description of the research outline in Appendix B, along with the request to disseminate in a way that gave every student at the university in question an equal opportunity of taking the survey. The personnel of first contact did one of the following: denied to participate, disseminated the survey to the student body, outlined additional approvals that needed to be obtained, unique to the university in question (for which cases,

approvals were pursued and gained in turn), provided guidelines for the PC to reach out to every faculty member instructing at the university so that they could have equal opportunity to disseminate the survey via their courses, or forwarded the request to whom they felt was a more appropriate authority. From the start of outreach and data collection to the completion of these processes and the closure of university outreach and data collection, no student was hand-selected; all participants were completely randomized, and a matter of chance, separate from the fact that six continents of the world were deliberately included.

When data collection was ceased, the quantitative responses were analyzed and organized into graphs, and the qualitative responses were analyzed for themes via qualitative coding. The themes identified were then quantified and organized into tables. The tables are listed under *Results*, and the corresponding code book under Appendix C in this report.

Part Two

A virtual, Global Action Seminar was organized simultaneously while Survey One was being disseminated. Critical examinations of literature on social movements, capitalism, equality, engagement and more revealed that increased access to information and heightened awareness are crucial proponents of making positive change that enhances the life of all people and the planet possible. Accordingly, the objective of the Seminar was to stimulate awareness for societal issues, spread knowledge, and create a platform where collective action could be sparked. The seminar was open to speakers and attendees from anywhere in the world; to reduce barriers to access, there was no fee for attendance. Efforts were made to create an inclusive space of learning, reflection, and communication.

Often at conferences, only the perspective of one area of a discipline is included (for example, conferences where presenters are all academics, or all organization leaders); thus, with this seminar, speakers from as many different backgrounds as possible (scholars, students, activists, community organizations, publishers, editors, artists, and more from all over the world) were recruited to speak. Graduate committee members Dr. Lee Artz, Dr. Kim Scipes, and Dr. Rhon Teruelle provided some contact information for potential speakers; speaker recommendation requests were sent to each university that was randomly selected for Survey One; supporters of social change whom were identified through the literature review of this project were invited, and

every individual who agreed was asked to invite three additional people to speak. Thus, the Seminar speaker list was a collaborative effort spanning around the world.

Twenty-eight presentations were scheduled for the seminar on issues related to race, human rights, environment, and positive change from many different perspectives. The full list of speakers and topics can be seen in Appendix D. Attendees were recruited through public posting (both digital and physical) around the world. All students, activists, workers, artists, community members, and individuals were welcome, period. Speakers were encouraged to recruit and challenge each attendee they invited to also recruit ten people. A promotion reflection platform was created and shared with all speakers via Google Docs, which allowed speakers to journal about their recruitment attempts.

Judith Heumann's "Being Heumann: An Unrepentant Memoir of a Disability Rights Activist," and Erin Suzuki's "Ocean Passages: Navigating Pacific Islander and Asian American Literatures" were selected as texts that represented the mission of the Seminar (relating to increased awareness, social movements, and/or social change); the first 100 attendees who registered to attend the Seminar were entered into a drawing for a copy of one of the books, and the first 50 who registered were entered into a drawing to receive a podcast equipment bundle (to encourage participatory engagement in media creation). The marketing materials can be seen in Appendix F.

A Seminar program (See Appendix D) was created and distributed to all speakers and attendees, which included a comprehensive session map, and a call to use the information that would be encountered at the Seminar as tools to ask more questions, connect with others, and come to realize individual power to make a significant impact by uniting with others, and to take action for change. The program theme centered around the sentiment that I hope that every day is another opportunity to break through barriers, many that we in humanity create ourselves, and begin to make a difference. If we are able to pause frequently to discover that we are fighting for the same things in many cases, we could increase collaboration and accomplish much more.

Following the Seminar, a post seminar survey, Survey Two (See Appendix A: Surveys, "Global Engagement Survey Two"), was administered to the Seminar participants. The survey was administered to every Seminar participant via the email address that each participant provided when they registered for the Seminar to ensure that all participants had an equal opportunity of taking the survey.

Participants had from February 22, 2023 to March 14, 2023 to take the survey. When data collection was ceased, the qualitative responses were analyzed for themes via qualitative coding. The themes identified were then quantified and organized into tables. The tables are listed under *Results*, and the corresponding code book under Appendix C in this report.

RESULTS

Global Engagement Survey One

Out of the 30 requested universities, 13 distributed the survey to their students for a distribution rate of 43%. Out of the 150 total student participants requested for the survey, 121 participants elected to participate in the survey for a response rate of 81%. A full list of survey questions can be found under Appendix A. For the quantitative questions of the survey, charts are listed accordingly below. For the qualitative questions of the survey, tables that detail the results are included accordingly. Each table depicts the number of participants that answered each question (indicated by A for *answered*), the total percentage of participants whose answer supported the code in question out of the total number of participants that completed the survey (indicated by T for *total*), and the total percentage of participants whose answer supported the code in question out of the total number of participants *who chose to give a written response for the question* (indicated by S for *sample*). The corresponding codebook can be found under Appendix B. It is relevant to note that participants did not have to answer any questions they did not wish to in the survey, and did not have to provide additional written feedback on questions that included the option for written feedback.

Question 1

100% of participants consented to take the survey.

Question 2

The following universities were all represented by the respondents in the survey: Brown University, US (United States of America); Central Queensland University, AU (Australia); City University of Hong Kong, CN (China); Fatima Jinnah Women University, PK (Pakistan); George Mason University, US; Karlstad University, SE (Sweden); Linnaeus University, SE; Louisiana State University, US; Luleå Tekniska Universitet, SE; Purdue University, US; Stockholm University, SE; University of Cape Town, ZA (South Africa); University of Stirling, UK (United Kingdom).

Question 3

The following academic disciplines were all represented by the respondents in the survey: accounting, art, aviation, biology, business, climate change, communication, computer science, creative writing, cultural studies, education, English, film, gender, history, humanities, liberal studies, linguistics, literature, mathematics, music, nursing, philosophy, political science, psychology, social sciences, sociology, speech language and hearing, statistics, theater, TESOL.

Question 4

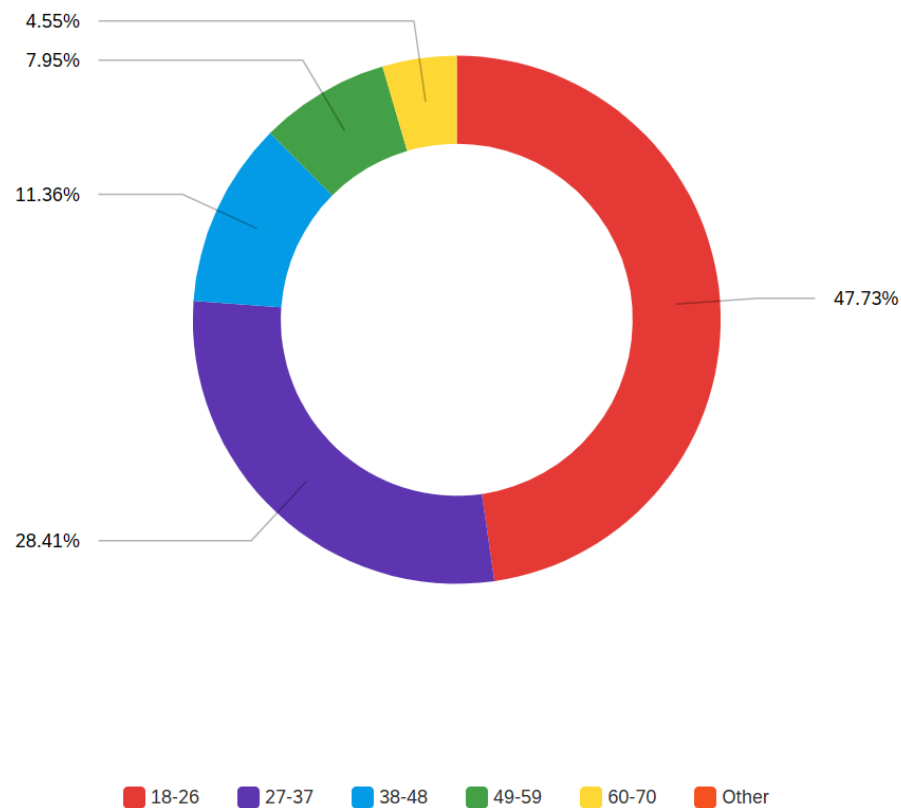


Figure 1: Age Ranges of Participants

Question 5

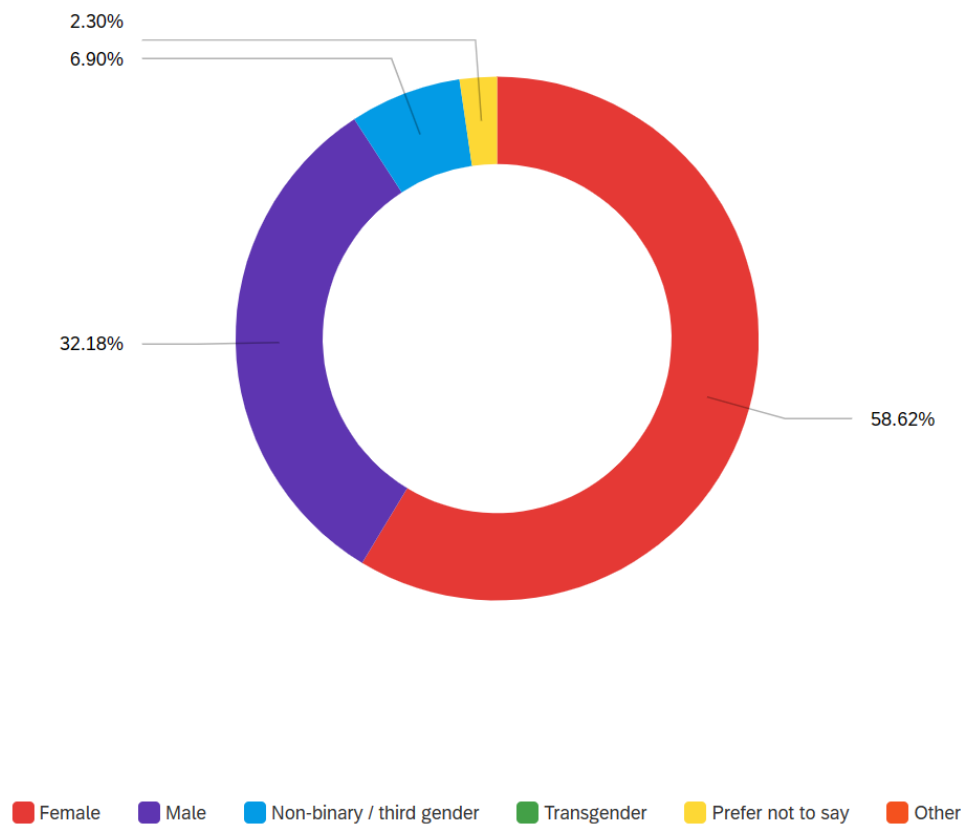


Figure 2: Gender Identification of Participants

Question 6

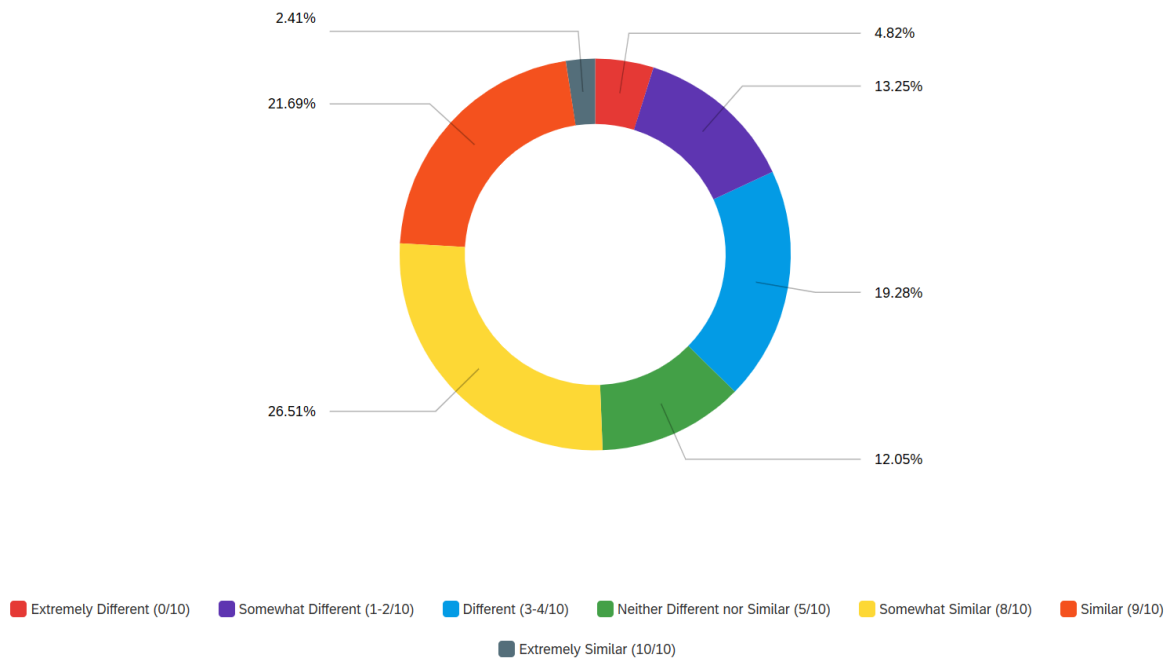


Figure 3: Alignment of Participants with the Views of their Culture/Region

Question 7

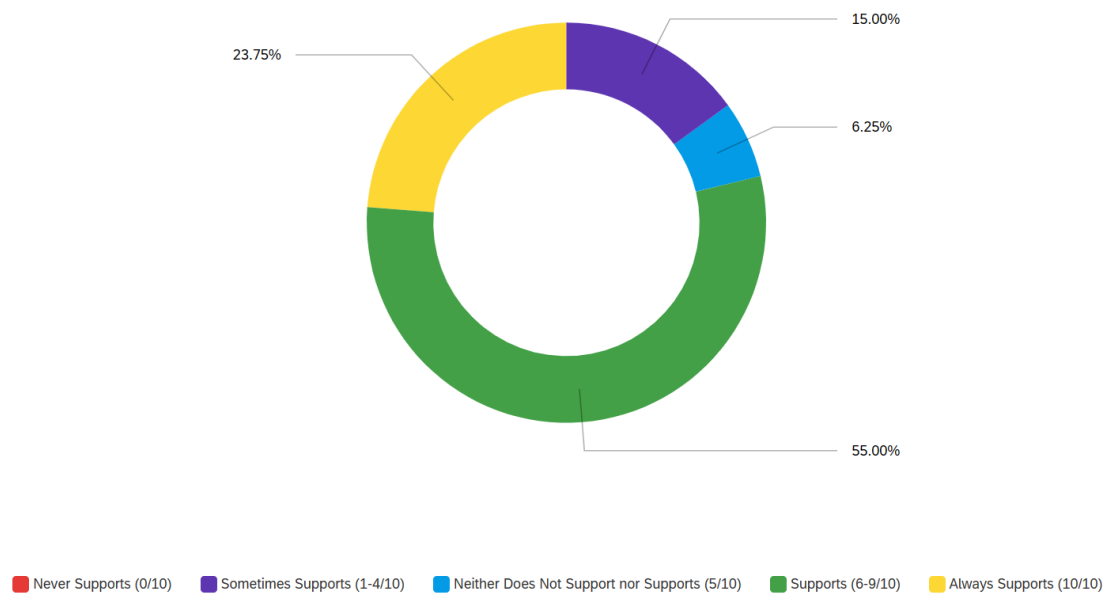


Figure 4: Participants' Perception of their Region's Support of Free Speech

Question 8

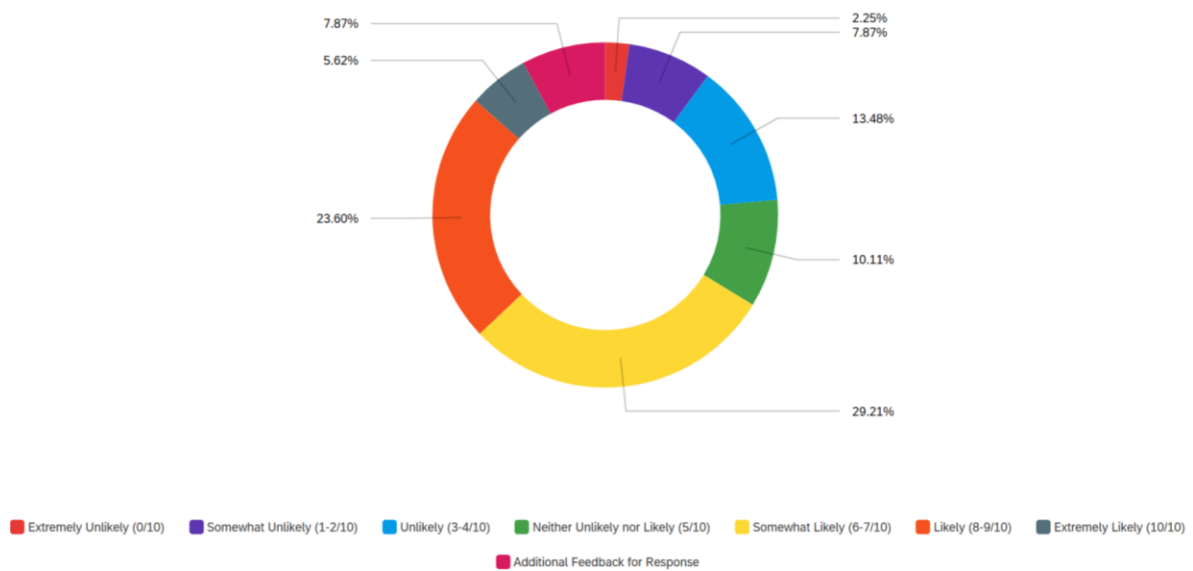


Figure 5: Participants' Perception of the Likelihood of Collective Action for Positive Change

Table 1: Survey One, Question Eight Codes

Question 8: Qualitative Responses	
Code: Universal Perception of Difficulty: Difficult	7 A 6% T 71% S
Code: Universal Perception of Difficulty: Possible	7 A 6% T 71% S

Question 9

Table 2: Survey One, Question Nine Codes

Question 9: Qualitative Responses	
Code: Positive Conditions for Many	68 A 7% T 12% S
Code: Inclusion	68 A 21% T 38% S
Code: Open Mindedness	68 A 18% T 32% S
Code: Understanding	68 A 12% T 22% S
Code: Control	68 A 13% T 24% S
Code: Hope/belief/support	68 A 9% T 16% S
Code: Unity	68 A 14% T 21% S
Code: Growth	68 A 22% T 40% S

Question 10

Table 3: Survey One, Question Ten Codes

Question 10: Qualitative Responses	
Code: Constant	8 A 5% T 75% S
Code: Occurring, but Negatively	8 A 4% T 63% S
Code: Slow	8 A 3% T 50% S

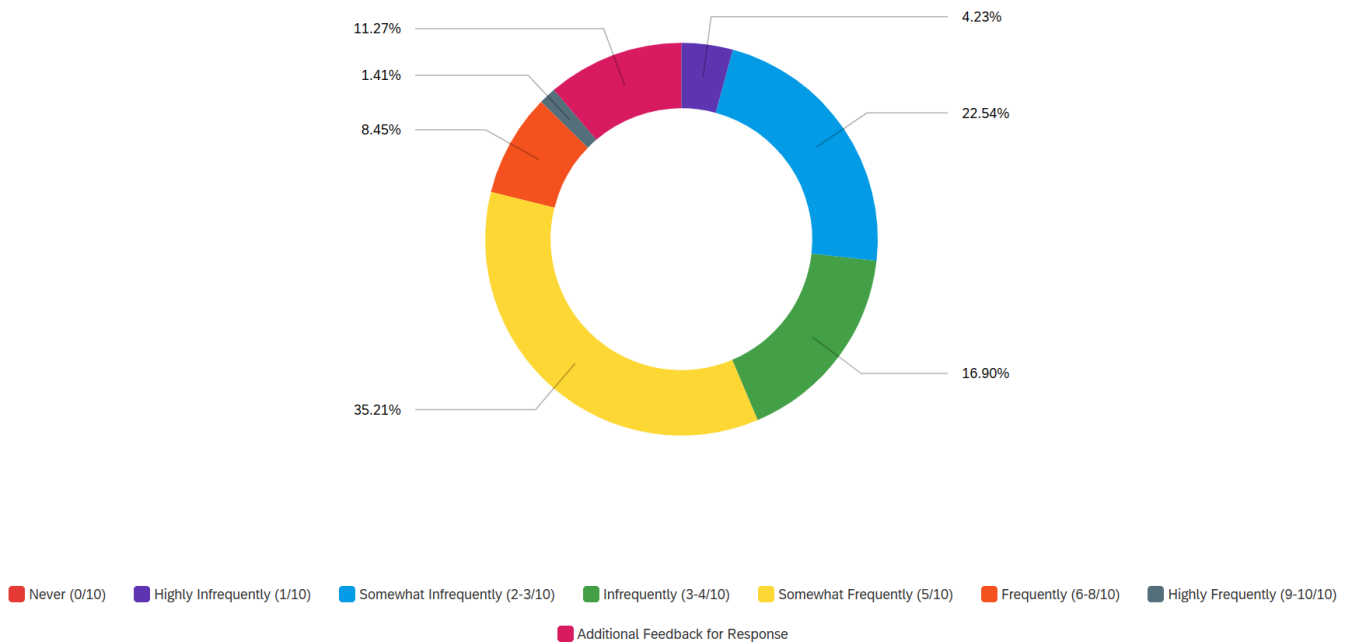


Figure 6: Participants' Perception of the Frequency of Positive Social Change

Question 11

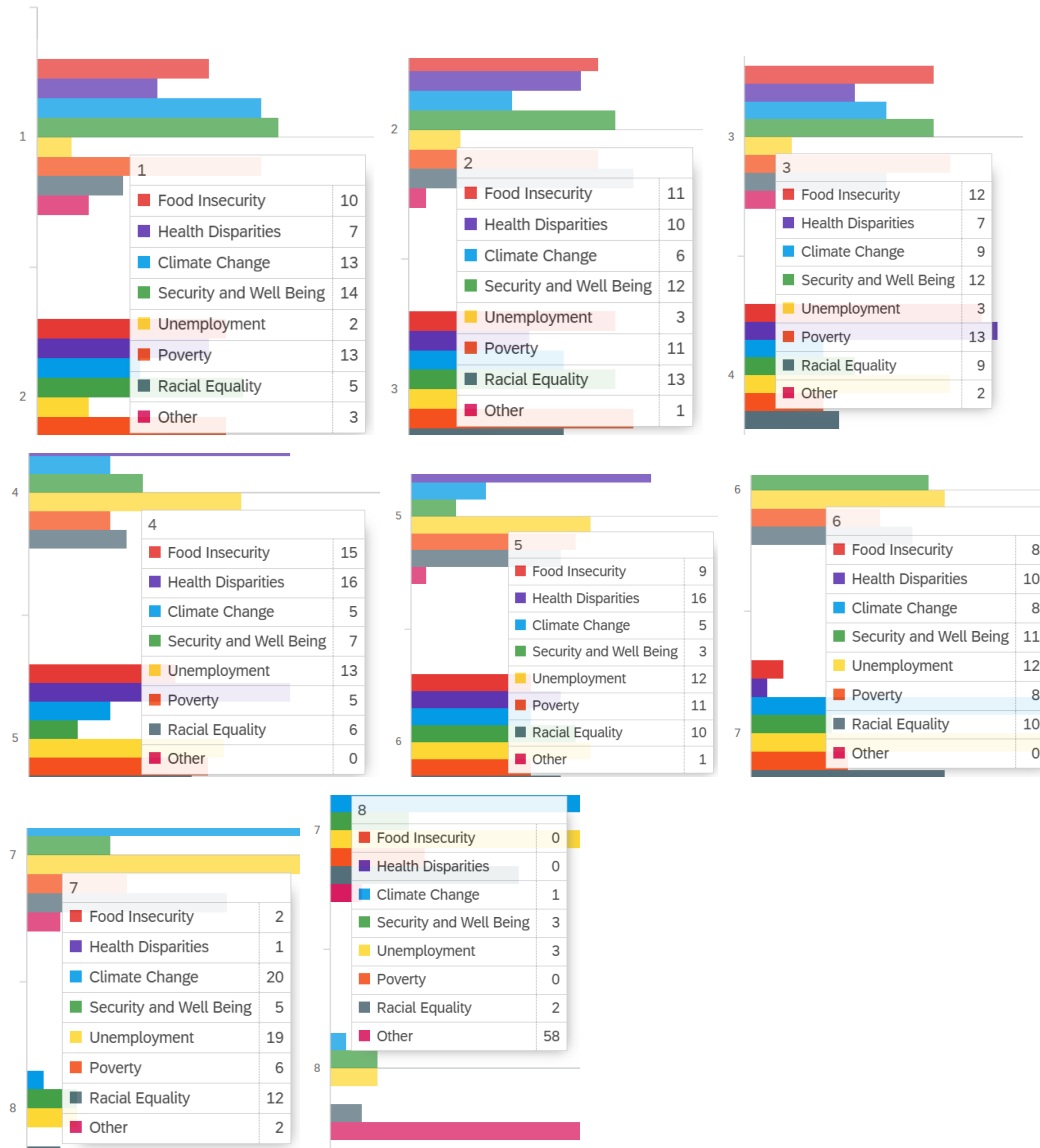


Figure 7: Motivators of Collective Action

Question 12

Table 4: Survey One, Question Twelve Codes

Question 12: Level of Agreement										
	# of level 1, strong disagreement	# of level 2	# of level 3	# of level 4	# of level 5	# of level 6	# of level 7	# of level 8	# of level 9	# of level 10 strong agreement
<i>I feel more inclined to take action if others are involved.</i> 55 A	5 4% T 10% S	3 2% T 5% S	1 1% T 2% S	1 1% T 2% S	5 4% T 10% S	5 4% T 10% S	8 7% T 15% S	9 7% T 16% S	5 4% T 10% S	12 10% T
<i>I feel more highly motivated to take action if an issue has wide public support (for example, an issue may have wide public support if it is supported by large groups of people, or is supported in the media, etc.).</i> 54 A	6 5% T 11% S	4 3% T 7% S	5 4% T 9% S	4 3% T 7% S	8 7% T 15% S	4 3% T 7% S	9 7% T 17% S	8 7% T 15% S	3 2% T 6% S	3 2% T 6% S
<i>I feel comfortable going against the opinion of the majority.</i> 56 A	3 2% T 4% S	2 2% T 4% S	2 2% T 4% S	4 3% T 7% S	5 4% T 9% S	6 5% T 11% S	8 7% T 14% S	8 7% T 14% S	7 6% T 13% S	11 9% T 20% S
<i>I feel comfortable standing up for what I believe in.</i> 56 A	3 2% T	1 1% T 2% S	1 1% T 2% S	2 2% T 4% S	5 4% T 9% S	7 6% T 13% S	5 4% T 9% S	11 9% T 20% S	10 8% T 19% S	15 12% T 27% S
<i>I am more likely to advocate for other's needs than my own.</i> 56 A	4 3% T 7% S	2 2% T 4% S	1 1% T 2% S	1 1% T 2% S	10 8% T 19% S	7 6% T 13% S	9 7% T 16% S	10 8% T 19% S	8 7% T 14% S	4 3% T 7% S

Question 13

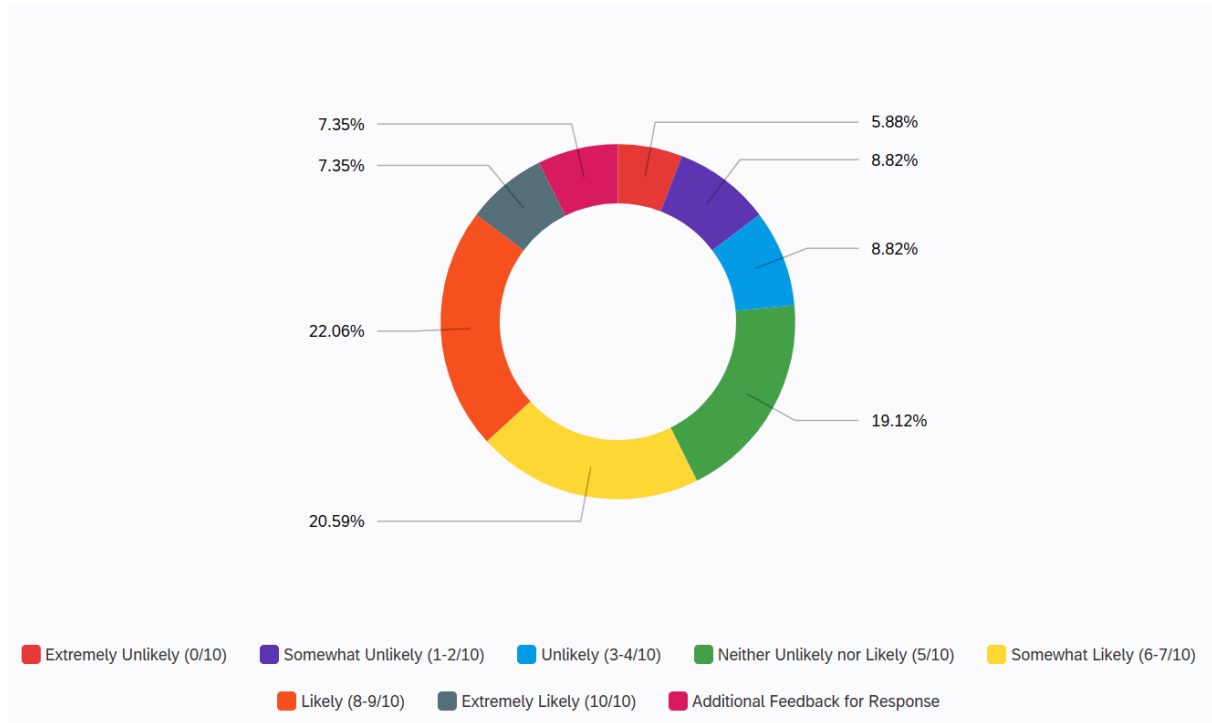


Figure 8: Likelihood of Participants' Participation in Collective Action for Positive Change

Table 5: Survey One, Question Thirteen Codes

Question 13: Qualitative Responses	
Code: Too Difficult	3 A 2% T 60% S
Code: I would like to do More	1 A 1% T 20% S

Question 14

Table 6: Survey One, Question Fourteen Codes

Question 14: Barriers to Participation						
	# Level 1, Most Severe	# Level 2	# Level 3	# Level 4	# Level 5	# Level 6, Least Severe
Money/Finances 48 A	6 5% T 13% S	9 7% T 19% S	11 9% T 23% S	4 3% T 8% S	4 3% T 8% S	7 6% T 15% S
Time Restraints 52 A	12 10% T 23% S	10 8% T 19% S	10 8% T 19% S	5 4% T 10% S	2 2% T 4% S	2 2% T 4% S
Heath 44 A	3 2% T 7% S	4 3% T 9% S	12 10% T 27% S	11 9% T 25% S	5 4% T 11% S	6 5% T 14% S
Risks to Reputation 50 A	6 5% T 12% S	7 6% T 14% S	4 3% T 8% S	5 4% T 10% S	13 11% T 26% S	6 5% T 12% S
Risks to Safety 49 A	10 8% T 20% S	8 7% T 16% S	7 6% T 14% S	7 6% T 14% S	6 5% T 12% S	4 3% T 8% S
Other 18 A	See Below					
Question 14: Themes from Responses to “Other						
Code: Lack of Support			18 A 7% T 50% S			
Code: Fear			18 A 2% T 20% S			

Question 15

Table 7: Survey One, Question Fifteen Codes

Question 15: Barriers to Social Change					
	# Level 1, Most Severe	# Level 2	# Level 3	# Level 4	# Level 5 Least Severe
Unequal Distribution of Power 54 A	6 5% T 11% S	9 7% T 17% S	11 9% T 20% S	4 3% T 7% S	4 3% T 7% S
Individualistic Mindedness 52 A	12 10% T 23% S	10 8% T 19% S	10 8% T 19% S	5 4% T 10% S	2 2% T 4%
Political/Ideological Differences 44 A	3 2% T 7% S	4 3% T 9% S	12 10% T 27% S	11 9% T 25% S	5 4% T 11% S
The Desire to Achieve Power 50 A	6 5% T 12% S	7 6% T 14%	4 3% T 8% S	5 4% T 10% S	13 11% T 26% S
Other 18 A	See Below				
Question 15: Themes from Responses to “Other”					
Code: Structural Barriers			16 A 4% T 31% S		
Code: Faith/Morality Barriers			16 A 2% T 19% S		

Question 16

Table 8: Survey One, Question Sixteen Codes

Question 16: Additional Comments	
Code: Commitment to Change	15 A 2% T 13% S
Code: Desire for More Information	15 A 2% T 13% S

Global Engagement Survey Two

Out of a sample of 85 participants surveyed, 50 participants elected to participate in the survey for a response rate of 59%. A full list of questions can be found under Appendix A. The following table depicts the number of participants that answered each question (indicated by A for *answered*), the total percentage of participants whose answer supported the code in question out of the total number of participants that completed the survey (indicated by T for *total*), and the total percentage of participants whose answer supported the code in question out of the total number of participants who chose to give a written response for the question (indicated by S for *sample*). The corresponding codebook can be found under Appendix B.

Table 9: Survey Two Codes

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5
Belief Gained: 37 A 40% T 54% S	Perception Changed, Positive Social Change Support: 40 A 42% T 53% S	The Importance of Positive Social Change: 36 A 38% T 53% S	Value of the Initiative: 37 A 70% T 95% S	Interest in Furthering Efforts: 35 A 38% T 54% S
No Belief Gained: 37 A 2% T	Perception Changed, Increased Belief in Positive Social Change: 40 A 28% T 35% S	Value of Different Perspectives: 36 A 40% T 56% S	Lack of Value of the Initiative: 37 A 0% T 0% S	
Understanding Gained: 37 A 40% T	Perception Unchanged: 40 A 26% T 33% S	Confidence Gained: 36 A 20% T 28% S		
Perception of Difficulty: 37 A 40% T	Perception Changed, Negative Opposition: 40 A 0% T 0% S	New Knowledge: 36 A 50% T 69% S		
	Knowledge was Gained: 40 A 38% T 48% S			

Global Collective Action Seminar

32 speakers committed to presenting at the 2023 Global Virtual Collective Action Seminar. Of those 32 speakers, 30 presented for a presentation rate of 94%.

25 individuals committed to moderating either a session or multiple sessions at the 2023 Global Collective Action Seminar. Of those 25, 20 moderated a session or multiple sessions at the Seminar for a participation rate of 80%. It should be noted that there were 31 sessions total, all sessions had moderator assignments secured before the start of the seminar, and only 2 sessions had to be self-moderated, which means that individuals out of the 20 participant moderators stepped up to moderate additional sessions.

133 individuals registered to attend the 2023 Global Virtual Collective Action Seminar. Out of those 133 individuals, 85 participants attended the Seminar for an attendance rate of 64%. Out of those 133 individuals, 35 elected to engage with the pre-seminar session preference survey for an engagement rate of 26%. Out of the 85 participants who attended, 12 engaged with the Zoom Whiteboard interactive for an engagement rate of 14%, and 7 engaged with the interactive forum for a participation rate of 8%.

DISCUSSION

Synthesis of Results

Looking first at hypothesis one, that *there are universal perceptions of social change that include its difficulty*, evidence to support the postulation is found in the answers to Question 8 of Survey One (See Appendix A for a full list of survey questions); participants were asked their perception of how likely collective action for positive social change is. They answered both quantitatively by selecting from a scale of likeliness, and qualitatively by elaborating with a written response. The highest percentage of responses (**29.21%**) indicated that participants felt it was only “somewhat likely,” with **13.48%**, **7.87%**, and **2.25%** of participants indicating that they felt collective action for positive social change is “unlikely,” “somewhat unlikely,” and “extremely unlikely” respectively. Thus, more than half of the participants who answered Question 8 (**52.81%**) had a level of uncertainty about collective action for positive social change.

The qualitative codes identified from the qualitative responses for Question 8 reinforced this. **71%** of participants who answered qualitatively showed that they felt collective action for positive social change was difficult to achieve. Building on this further, the quantitative responses from Question 10 of Survey One indicate that a majority of respondents (**35.21%**) who answered that question perceive that social change in a general sense occurs “somewhat frequently,” but the codes developed from respondents’ qualitative feedback for Question 10 shows that participants define social change as occurring “slowly” (**50%**) and “negatively” (**63%**), with statements such as, “Progress is slow but being made,” and, “A lot but for the worse.”

Additionally, the codes created based on the qualitative responses to Question 13 of Survey One help expand the picture of participants’ perceptions of social change; **60%** of participants that answered question 13 qualitatively indicated that they felt participating in collective action for social change was “too difficult.”

To further understand this, it is relevant to refer back to literature on the role that media plays in the construction of meaning in society.

“Consent for dominant social relations can be constructed in media images attractive to diverse subordinate groups” (Artz, 2015, p. 125). Not only does this highlight the role of dominant news media and popular films in promoting cultural hegemony, but it also sparks a larger call for

recognition of the impact this can have on consumer's understanding of the world. Calling back to Lievrouw, consider once more how media and culture production are directly interwoven, and culture, due to its sense-making qualities, is highly powerful; it influences our awareness and informs the construction of understanding (2011, p. 128). Chomsky and Herman's "media news people" example (p. 2) from their discussion of the propaganda model is a crucial representation of the danger of pervasive media portraying dominant themes (even though their work centers largely on news media); the filters of the propaganda model have become so natural that consumers believe that they can interpret the content objectively (p. 2), when in truth the interests of the hegemonic elite are being reinforced (Artz, 2015, p. 124). Media (both news and entertainment) communicate themes of dominant social relations.

With over 78,000 transnational companies identified in 2008 alone, any dominant "American" media produced today is most likely created by a company with board members, investors, and joint venturers from multiple countries (Artz, 2022, p. 29). India's Reliance Jio's top investors include Facebook and Google (p. 66); China's Alibaba Pictures co-produced several of 2017's top films with partners such as Wanda Media, Warner Bros, Paramount, Netflix, and Disney (p. 129).

Thus, Artz' claim that, "TNC's have no national allegiance. Their only allegiance is to capitalist class owners and shareholders from two or more nations seeking profits from commodities produced and sold in multiple nations" (2022, p. 32) is well supported, and Kimberley's (2022) definition of "decolonization" can perhaps illustrate cultural imperialism in a way more applicable. Kimberley wrote of colonization synonymously with Barthes' theory of myth (1991), illustrating that *decolonization* represents a political and psychological process of separation from media/government attempts to indoctrinate a population (i.e., manufacture hegemony). Along these lines, Kimberley stated that "decolonized people know ... that corporate media are also compromised," and that consumers should be wary of narratives that are spread repeatedly, much like a mantra designed to shape behavior (2022). Referring again to the Literature Review, the cultural imperialism of the global corporate elite is an apt description, calling to light the need for new terminology to define this phenomenon as scholarship deepens.

Artz' findings have additional relevance to this hypothesis, as he identified several themes that are communicated in dominant or popular transnational films: *lurking danger*, *Heroes Need Special Skills*, and *Authority and Hierarchy are Necessary*, which facilitate a fear and distrust of

others and the world, a belief that “ordinary” individuals are incapable of making change, and a perception that the current social order should not be challenged, respectively (Artz, 2022).

Meaning is established by gaining mass consent (Marleku, 2012); entertainment and news media have the opportunity to gain mass consent for meanings antithetical to collective action for positive social change by presenting enthymemes (Brock, 2014) such through the themes listed above.

Clearly, there is definitive evidence to support hypothesis one; further, the evidence of participants’ perception of difficulty of positive social change supports hypothesis two, that *there are universal barriers to collective action and positive change*. Consider the frequency that entertainment media communicates ideals that promote a consent to order and hyper individualism. Consider the frequency that mainstream news media communicate themes of insurmountable peril, danger, and fear. If these are the dominant themes receiving mass consent by mass consumption, how likely is it that the majority of the citizens of the world will believe that social change is possible, that they are capable of affecting it, and that the current social order should even be questioned? The fact that the survey responses of this study came from students around the globe adds another layer of significance to the findings in conjunction with these theories.

The codes created based on the responses to Question 14 on Survey One also support hypothesis two. **23%** of the participants who chose to answer the question labeled “Time Restraints” as the biggest barrier to their participation in collective action for social change. Time Restraints and “Risks to Safety” tied at **19%** for participants’ second most significant barrier to participation in collective action for positive change, with “Health” dominating both participants’ third and fourth most concerning barrier to participation in collective action for positive social change at **27%** and **25%** respectively. “Risks to Reputation” were participants’ fifth most significant barrier at **26%** and “Money/Finances” ranked as the sixth most severe barrier at **15%** (see the Results chapter for the full chart).

For Question 14, participants had been asked to rank barriers to collective action for positive social change on a scale of 1-6, with 1 being the most severe. Relevantly, **20%** of the participants who decided to answer question 14 placed Time Restraints somewhere on the scale, making it the most placed barrier out of the six options (one of which included “other,” and allowed participants to name any barrier they could define. “Other” was the least placed barrier selected, affirming the relevance and universality of the barriers selected for the Survey One.).

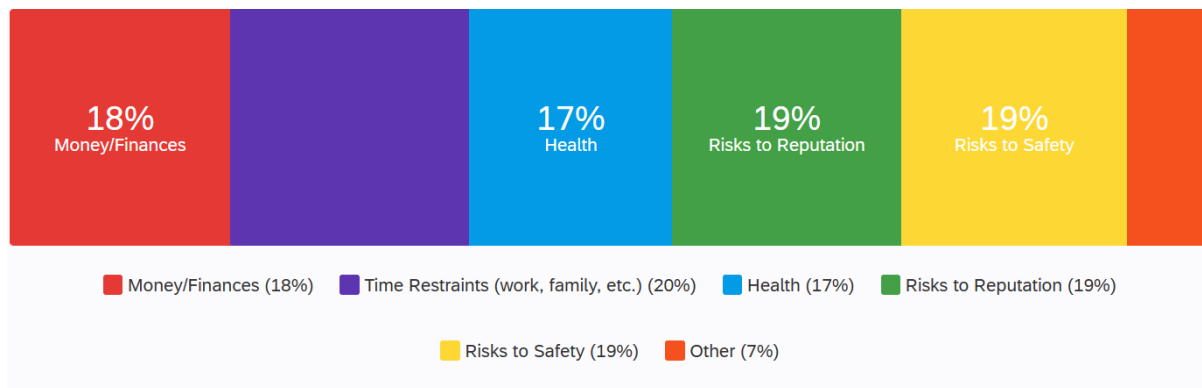


Figure 9: Participants' Ranking of Barriers to Collective Action for Positive Change

Several theories outlined in the Literature Review provide important background for these results. Referring once again to Scipes, “the social structure that exists in any social order is one that has developed over time via historical processes since the respective social order was established” (Scipes, 2011; Scipes, 2022).

Scipes’ (2010; 2022) theory of polyconflictualism suggests the importance of understanding the “*processes* by which a social situation develops within a particular social order,” highlighting that when oppression is analyzed, for example, “all forms of oppressive relations and their interactions” should be considered, for both the social response *and* the social order are relevant factors. Thus, what role does global social order play in the responses associated with Question 14?

Gramsci would lead us back to the role of “language” in spontaneous philosophy to further explain this, elaborating on how class factors into the social order Scipes described:

The idea of historical bloc departs significantly from notions of class embedded in the Marxist tradition: it promotes analysis of social formations that cut across categories of ownership and nonownership and that are bound by religious or other ideological ties as well as those of economic interest (Lears, 1985).

In other words, the “class” that impacts a “social situation” is defined by much more than economics alone. It is significantly impacted by ideology and the relations of production. The following passages from the Literature Review chapter are of crucial relevance here.

the maintenance of hegemony does not require active commitment by subordinates to the legitimacy of elite rule. Less powerful people may be thoroughly disaffected. At times they may openly revolt through strikes, factory takeovers, mass

movements, and perhaps the creation of a counterhegemony. But normally most people find it difficult, if not impossible, to translate the outlook implicit in their experience into a conception of the world that will directly challenge the hegemonic culture. The problem is partly one of language...Gramsci realized that "every language contains the elements of a conception of the world." vocabulary helps mark the boundaries of permissible discourse, discourages the clarification of social alternatives, and makes it difficult for the dispossessed to locate the source of their unease, let alone remedy it. Consent, for Gramsci, involves a complex mental state, a "contradictory consciousness" mixing approbation and apathy, resistance, and resignation...For Gramsci, The State, which is usually thought of as political society-i.e., a dictatorship or- some other coercive apparatus used to control the masses in conformity with a given type of production and economy-[is] a balance between political society and civil society, by which I mean the hegemony of one social group over the entire nation, exercised through so-called private organizations like the Church, trade unions, or schools. The state, in other words, is "hegemony protected by the armour of coercion" (Lear, 1985).

Significant capital is required to own the means of production. The wages owned by workers who sell their labor around the world seldom allow for the purchase of the means of production, and further, the low wages demand a time commitment to labor that makes it difficult to have the time or energy to do much beyond consuming meanings already created and giving consent to hierarchy and domination through that consumption. Factor in the constraints of "Risks to Reputation," "Health," and "Safety," and the barriers to participation in collective action for positive change seem insurmountable. All of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs are threatened by these barriers (Cherry, 2022).

The significance of the relations of production as barriers to action are clear when the covid-19 pandemic is considered; during the pandemic when shutdowns and shelter in place orders created new barriers while simultaneously eliminating restraints on time, reflection on inequality and movements for change intensified around the world (Dorsey, Bradach, and Kim, 2020; Feldman, 2020; Nardini, Rank-Christman, Bubnitz, Cross, and Peracchio, 2021).

There was something really powerful about what the pandemic did for humanity—it created a real sensitivity to our own frailty. It gave people an opportunity to reflect on their own vulnerabilities (Nardini, et al., 2021).

Thus, material conditions that spark thinking against the foundation of an individualistically dominated world are beneficial to social change. However, when the literature formerly referenced, which asserts the role of media and higher education in gaining consent for

messages of class, hyper-individualism, and consumerism is considered, these findings suggest an additional level of urgency. Urban manifestations of class difference are described by Cook (2011) as distinctions between classes identified by “education, dwellings, and consumer products.” To apply these concepts to the context of this study and the structure of higher education, curriculum and programming derived from the expectations of a capitalistic society constructed from the characteristics of the “American dream” (individual success as shown by careers, possessions, and spending) reinforce economic inequality while simultaneously normalizing consumerism (Artz, 2022; Artz and Kamalipour, 2003).

But hope can be found in the responses that support hypothesis three, that *there are universal influencers of need, and universal motivators of action*. The codes generated from the responses to Question 9 of Survey One, where participants were asked to define positive social change in their own voice by using a phrase or a term, **40%** of the participants who chose to answer the question described it as “Growth,” suggesting it should encompass progression, and a participant may be motivated to join in collective action for growth. **38%** described it as “Inclusion,” suggesting that it be a positive social change that allows *all* people and the planet to be supported, and a participant may be motivated to join in collective action for inclusion, and **32%** described it as “Open Mindedness,” suggesting the change should include diverse perspectives and open spaces for those perspectives to be shared, a participant may be motivated to join in collective action for the stimulation of those spaces and the recognition of those perspectives.

In a conversation about democratic, societal change, Dr. Deepa Majumdar, Professor of Philosophy, scholar of Neoplatonism and Indian thought, and pioneer of the Race, Racism, and Anti-Racism speaker series at Purdue University Northwest, noted that while conversations about diversity are important, an even greater focus should be placed on what people around the world have in common, such as factors like the pursuit of shelter, food, peace, humanity, and happiness. Arguably, when a culture is generalized for purposes of marketing and consumption, the nuance of culture, a soft spot where commonalities can be identified, is lost.

Thus, questions that enable an identification of shared needs and motivations around the world are crucial; if they are identified, collective action centered around them can be stronger and more greatly supported by social actors around the world. Along these lines, the responses to Question 11 of Survey One are just as crucial as the shared motivators identified in Question 9. In

Question 11, participants were asked to rank eight different world issues on a scale of 1-8 with a rank of 1 indicating it is perceived as the most severe; one of the possible world issues that participants could rank was “Other,” which allowed them to indicate that what they perceive as a severe world issue is not listed among the choices. “Security and Wellbeing” was the dominant rank in place 1, with “Poverty” and “Climate Change” tied as the second dominant themes for place 1. “Racial Equality” was the dominant rank for place 2, and “Poverty” was the dominant theme for place 3.

This sparks urgent questions. If citizens from across the globe can come together and agree that issues such as poverty, racial equality, and climate change are some of the most pressing issues at this time, then why do our world leaders not devote more resources and energy into solving those issues? Studies claim that approximately

“1 percent contribution from the world’s billionaires would provide more than enough resources to end extreme poverty today” (Kharas, 2021).

Figure 1. What global development problems could be funded by 1 percent of billionaires’ wealth?

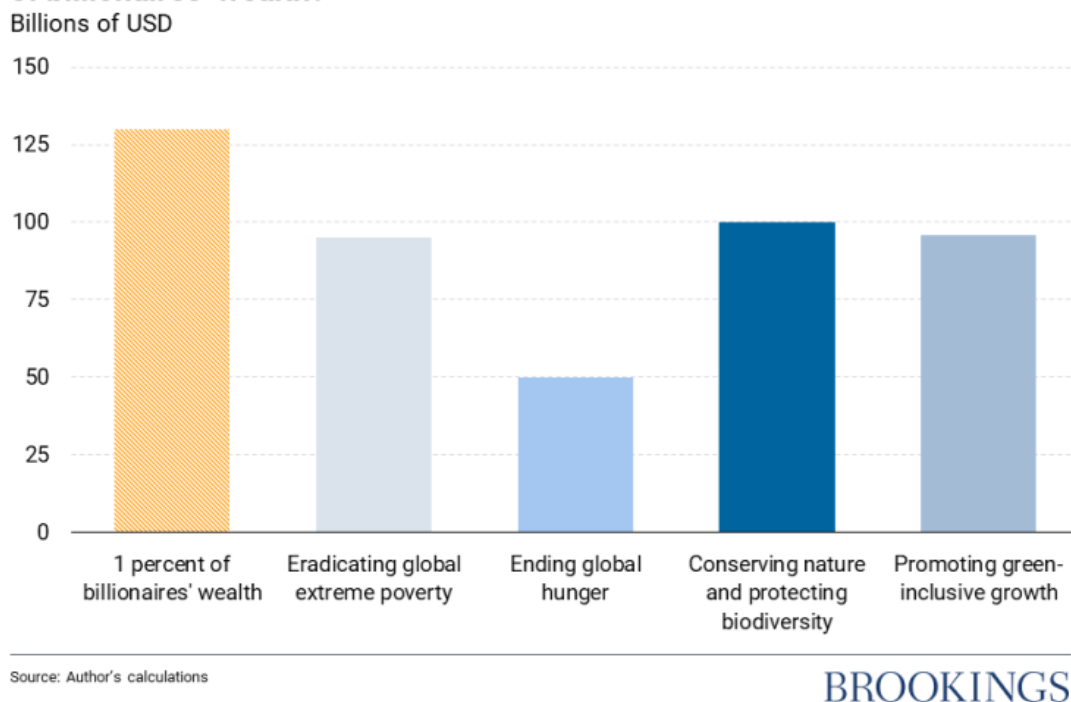


Figure 10: Problems Funded by the Wealth of the Elite
Credit: Kharas, 2021

These facts bring to light once again the role of capital and the relations of production in the current structure of society. If all the citizens of the world who believe in the universal needs that were identified came together for collective action for change, what could they accomplish? If they refused to purchase the goods that allow the world's billionaires to maintain their hegemony until those billionaires made a difference in these issues, would that make an impact?

This correlates to the findings from Question 15 of Survey One, where participants identified the severity of various barriers to positive social change. "Individualistic Mindedness" dominated respondents' ranking of the most and second most severe barrier to positive social change. "Political and Ideological Differences" dominated the ranking for the third most severe barrier to positive social change, with an "Unequal Distribution of Power" coming in second for rank three. "Political and Ideological Differences" also dominated the fourth most severe barrier to positive social change, and "The Desire to Achieve Power" dominated the fifth most severe barrier to positive social change.

To quote a passage from the Literature Review Chapter, Recognizing all of these structural barriers is necessary when trying to understand positive social change, for an exigence in the realm of rhetorical situation will always be subject to *cultural constraints*. To have a chance to create change, this must be considered, as social actors must be able to imagine ways to confront and overcome these barriers in order to be successful.

Without imagination, not only is one 'locked up in a very narrow range of roles and expectations', but thinking through and knowing and desiring radical improvements becomes improbable, and for Tsiolkas, destructive to the self (Teruelle, 2012).

Thus, it is crucial to use research like this to understand what structural barriers exist (such as inequality and the constraints of the relations of production in a capitalist dominated world), but also imperative to engage the imagination in ways that allow the contemplation of how those barriers may be used to leverage positive social change, such as through the cogitation above.

Powerful constructors of worldviews, such as the media, (Croteau and Hoynes, 2019) may influence consumers into constructing polarizing and divided meanings that prevent them from realizing what they have in common with others in the world. Since media is made up of a series of social relations (technology, industry, content, economics, audiences, and more), this can create barriers to social change (Croteau and Hoynes, 2019, p. 371). But, outlets such as higher education have an equally powerful influence on the construction of meaning, as this research shows. If

higher education outlets led initiatives to help students deconstruct myth in the ways described by Barthes (1991), more of these barriers could be broken down.

Understanding myth allows objects to be separated from the dominant assignment of meaning, which results in a loss of the innocence associated with assimilation to that cultural constraint. In the context of intentional advertising, myth is often used to imply things like proficiency, patriotism, or diversity.

Recommendations

In light of the severity of the rationale of this project, this thesis would be remiss without the inclusion of recommendations based on themes that emerged from the survey results. Each recommendation listed herein is a direct response to findings from this study, and is reinforced by literature.

❖ 1. Global Media Literacy Curriculum

- When asked for additional written feedback about positive social change and collective action, participants chose to provide responses from which two dominant themes were derived: “Commitment to Change” and the “Desire for More Information,” where, with the latter theme, respondents indicated that they have interest in increased access to information on social change, social issues, and collective participation.

Higher education’s role in the construction of meaning has been well supported throughout this research. Equally as it could be a place that reinforces the current social order, which includes oppression, domination, hierarchy, suffering, and inequality, higher education could also be a place that stimulates critical thinking, innovation, and humanity, as institutions could provide an important counterargument to dominant world narratives of oppression, subordination, division, and hatred. But when structures that communicate the opposite (e.g., knowledge constrained by the authority of capital) are paired with messaging that says education is the key to capital, domination, and personal happiness, even the *existence* of the possibility of change is threatened. While these oppressive meanings largely benefit higher education administrators when hegemony (both personal and institutional) is considered, students and organizers must consider avenues that

would give those controlling higher education institutions motivation to consent to new structures that promote the critical thinking, care, and innovation needed to counter the peril of the world.

❖ 2. Mandated Higher Education Courses that Stimulate Critical Thinking

- The full set of findings for Survey Two (see below table, reproduced from the Results chapter) indicate that efforts such as the Global Collective Action Seminar spark consideration for social change, collective participation, the value of diverse perspectives, and more.

Table 10: Survey Two Codes

Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5
Belief Gained: 37 A 40% T 54% S	Perception Changed, Positive Social Change Support: 40 A 42% T 53% S	The Importance of Positive Social Change: 36 A 38% T 53% S	Value of the Initiative: 37 A 70% T 95% S	Interest in Furthering Efforts: 35 A 38% T 54% S
No Belief Gained: 37 A 2% T	Perception Changed, Increased Belief in Positive Social Change: 40 A 28% T 35% S	Value of Different Perspectives: 36 A 40% T 56% S	Lack of Value of the Initiative: 37 A 0% T 0% S	
Understanding Gained: 37 A 40% T	Perception Unchanged: 40 A 26% T 33% S	Confidence Gained: 36 A 20% T 28% S		
Perception of Difficulty: 37 A 40% T	Perception Changed, Negative Opposition: 40 A 0% T 0% S	New Knowledge: 36 A 50% T 69%		
	Knowledge was Gained: 40 A 38% T 48% S			

If institutions of higher education around the globe all mandated at least one course where students had the opportunity to interact with similar concepts, the dominant global messages of subordination, hierarchy, oppression, and hyper-individualism would be challenged, as scholarship (Rivers, et al., 2015) suggests that

the role of universities in driving social change and encouraging the young to be social innovators lies within the transformative educational experiences (Bynner, 2012) that universities can bring to bear in driving ‘positive youth development’ (Arches, 2013; Lopez, 2014). A university-led focus on increasing levels of social and cultural capital, particularly amongst students from disadvantaged backgrounds, could therefore offer a powerful method of enabling social innovation. Finally, harnessing the power of technology was seen as important in engaging young people in social innovation in the 21st century.

Research has shown that principles for changemaking can be embedded in learning and teaching practices to stimulate learners in the development of the “five Cs”: “1. Competence for physical, social, cognitive, emotional, vocational, and civic work 2. Connections to others 3. Character and integrity 4. Contribution (opportunities for) 5. Confidence.” Experiences link this in higher education can both support social participation and support students’ persistence (Rivers, et al., 2015).

❖ 3. Global Collective Courses

- The virtual, Global Collective Action Seminar demonstrated that technologies such as Zoom, can connect global audiences. Zoom eliminated any barriers in language, because of the feature that allows participants to each select captioning in their preferred language. Additional features, such as the Zoom Chat, Breakout Rooms, and Whiteboard allowed for enhanced engagement.

Recommendation 3 speaks directly to literature that cites the role of resources in collective action; a 2015 study (Rivers, et al., 2015) found that in regards to collective action for social change,

the issue of resources was also seen as crucial by the participants, with some young people discussing the need for economic resource to drive social change. The perception that a lack of economic resource hinders the ability to engage in social innovation supports prior research by Blanchet-Cohen and Cook (2014) ... As Mesch (2012) argued, the fast dissemination of information and the social networks that can be built through digital technology undoubtedly have a social influence, and the young people cited examples such as the Arab Spring (as discussed by Allison, 2013) as examples of digitally-led social change. Cahir and

Werner (2013) argued that digital technology provides young people with a sense of belonging that they do not feel they have in a ‘de-embedded’ and post-materialist world. Therefore, it is vital for a university that wishes to drive social change on its campus and in its local and global communities to find ways to engage students with digital technology. Digital technology could provide the platform that allows young people to reconcile their own moral biography with relational, collective action.

What if every university in the world came together to make it possible for every student in their programs to take one virtual, global course that connected them with students from universities around the world and encouraged them to engage as peers with one another through curriculum of positive social change? If more than **50%** of those who attended the virtual, Global Collective Action Seminar gained new understanding as these results show, imagine if 50% of students from global classes gained new understanding. What would the world look like?

Limitations and Future Research

Despite the fact that all three hypotheses were supported by the results of this research, there were still limitations and challenges associated with the project. Outreach for participation for both Survey One and Two required considerable persistence; many universities did not respond until after the third or fourth attempt to make contact. When responses were received, the PC queried about the best method of communication (e.g., email, phone call, etc.); every university that responded to the query stated that email was the best form of communication, in the respect that via that method, the quickest response would be received. They stated that it is becoming increasingly difficult for them to keep up with phone calls and messages, and that it would be highly probable for months to pass before they could return a call.

Many universities, upon responding, declined because they felt their students were suffering from survey fatigue. Interestingly, more of the universities randomly selected from the changemaker list cited survey fatigue than universities randomly selected outside of the changemaker list. Other universities declined because there was no personal incentive for students to take the survey, such as prizes; only the opportunity to inform research aiming to increase understanding around social change. Some of the universities that participated reported that when they disseminated the survey opportunity to students, students inquired if any prizes would be offered. Some universities requested that their students confirm receipt of the advertisement for

the participation opportunity; those universities stated that few students confirmed receipt until the third time the

Relevantly, the registration survey for the Global Collective Action Seminar, which allowed the first 100 registrants to be entered in a drawing for a book or a podcast bundle, received a much quicker response rate with fewer attempts to follow up. Thus, the decision not to offer an incentive that could resonate beyond altruism may arguably be a limitation of this research; however, offering a reward incentive for Survey One or Two seemed antithetical to research that strove to increase understanding of positive social change and collective action amidst the setting of such abhorrent world strife and such significant literature that overwhelmingly informed the role of capitalism in much of that suffering.

Though the level of responsiveness of universities and student respondents posed a challenge, it further supports the conclusions drawn from this research and the merit of projects like this. Theories of the construction of meaning and the role of media and higher education in that construction, revealed that themes of consumerism, hyper-individualism, fear, hierarchy, and subordination are dominantly accepted around the world. Individuals are not often trained that it is acceptable to ask questions, to challenge the current social order, to trust and act with one another.

Literature has repeatedly cited a spreading “defeatist attitude” of those giving up on changing the world in the face of dominant, oppressive messaging and the magnitude of world suffering. Scholars like Teruelle (2012) reference “a stripped down' version of democracy and social justice” where utopian visions and the search for complete social transformation in abandoned, as represented by the crux of these crucial passages:

In a world fraught with poverty, imagining a place where everyone was employed is a utopian ideal that is in direct opposition to the current social order. Demanding that no one went without work would be akin to a requirement that no one went hungry; an impossibility within today's dominant capitalist structure and neoliberal ideologies.

As it stands, the capitalist system has been designed (or perhaps metamorphosed) to distantiate the rich from the poor and can only function through the maintenance of this separation. In short, the rich can only stay rich at another's expense, and thus, the system can only be maintained when countless individuals remain impoverished. 'So many are dying', as Cazdyn (2006, 17) rightly suggests, 'not because capitalism is failing, but because it is succeeding, because it is fulfilling its logic - a fact that seems more and more visible today than at any other time in recent

history'. Without the division between the rich and the poor, not only would poverty be a thing of the past, but those in power would also face diminishing wealth...

Effectively, Giroux credits neoliberalism as having been able to reduce individual freedoms and diminish social justice through its conflated hegemonic power. This complex power is immersed in both the economic and the ideological.... Even dissent is becoming criminalized... As well, Giroux (2005, 2) claims that 'democratic political projects appear remote and give rise to either cynicism, solipsism, or reductionistic ideologies on the part of many progressives within and outside of the academy... In short, neoliberalism has had such a profound effect on most that thinking through an alternative social order, not to mention utopias, has become increasingly challenging. Instead, hopelessness and cynicism are more readily available (Teruelle, 2012).

Including this passage to the extent of what was included is pivotal to both the level of severity of dominant global messaging, and the importance of the statement to follow: if only one person had their perception expanded from the reflections sparked by Survey One or Two, if only one person was inspired to act after attending the Global, Collective Action Seminar, if only one person was motivated to ask questions following the reading of this thesis, then this work was a success. And I implore every reader to challenge this assertion. When doing so, consider that fact that *every* individual has the power to be a social actor who can propose new meaning. With an understanding about how to motivate collective action and gain mass consent for those new meanings, change is always possible. Consider the rapid fluidness with which a note of communication via TikTok or various social media platforms can virally reach the masses; what steps might be taken to spark similar participation in collaborative activism?

Consider that from one Global Seminar, **54%** of the Survey Two Participants who chose to answer Question 1 indicated that they gained belief in positive social change from attending the seminar. **56%** of those who answered Question 3 increased the value they placed on perspectives outside their own. **54%** of those who chose to answer Question 5 asserted interest in furthering efforts, like the Seminar, to share this information. What would be the effect on the world of messaging such as the Seminar reaching even larger audiences?

Additional possible limitations of this work that are relevant for future consideration include the role of technology in skewing results. The same computer was used for most of this research; given the role of cookies on the web and the researcher's own patterns of web activity as related to institutions of higher education, there is a potentiality that the results of randomized searches for university selections could be impacted. Since students were not hand-selected from

any participating university, all students had an equal chance at each respective university to participate, and any student and university perspective was considered valuable for this research, any impact from cookies was irrelevant here. However, as AI web search technology amplifies, this may be of significant consideration for future study design.

This study specifically sought to understand if universal barriers, motivators, and influencers of positive social change could be identified across continents of the world to determine if any similarities drawn could stimulate collective action; however, demographic information such as age, gender identification, country of location, year of study, and more was collected in Survey One. Further research could draw from this data, and investigate how the nuance of demographic information may influence the specific responses given, including the characteristics of the variances in structure in the countries represented by the responses. Moreover, variances in structure in each *university* represented should also be a consideration.

The rationale for the selection of students navigating higher education was significant for the consideration of literature on the construction of meaning, and the processes that deem higher education such a critical factor of consideration. However, further research that broadens the survey population to specifically include the perspective of activists, workers, educators, and more is imperative. Just as the efforts connected with the seminar resulted in many different perspectives from varied pillars of society (activists, educators, families, organizations, workers, etc.) coming together for the shared goal of collective action for positive social change, further research in these areas may reveal additional similarities among social groups that can advance research and work for positive social change, as the results from Survey Two suggest.

One final consideration must be asserted, and that is in regard to concrete meanings. This work has established that meaning is a social construction that is constantly evolving; however, while the Global Collective Action Seminar was being organized and promoted, many came together to request that a particular speaker be eliminated from the program because of views that were deemed not fully progressive, harmful to different communities, and different than the majority of presenters. While the truth of those claims will not be confirmed, denied, or debated, the decision was made not to rescind the invitation to the speaker in question, with the caveat that the speaker, and every speaker and attendee of the seminar, had to honor the civility policy of the program. The civility policy (shown in Appendix D) required that every attendee show respect for and refrain from hostility with others throughout the duration of the program, even during

disagreements. That being said, all participants were encouraged to question, challenge, and even disagree with the information presented throughout the program, as the Literature Review chapter demonstrated the critical role of questioning in the creation of knowledge, innovation, and new ideas.

Though the speaker ultimately chose not to participate due to extenuating circumstances, this note is believed to be important. As necessary as it is to unite with others who believe social change is necessary, it is just as important to engage with those who believe the exact opposite; if dialogues with diverse perspectives do not take place, *then no new consent for meanings that support all people and the planet will ever be gained, existing consent will only be reinforced.*

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, an in-depth analysis of concepts connected to collective action for positive social change was performed. Three research questions (*How is social change perceived as a concept around the world? Are there universal barriers to collective action/positive change? What are universal influencers of awareness of the need for social change and universal motivators for action?*) informed the assertion of three hypotheses:

1. There are universal perceptions of social change that include its difficulty.
2. There are universal barriers to collection action and positive change.
3. There are universal influencers of need, and universal motivators of action.

The hypotheses were tested through the results of two global Qualtrics surveys, the application of literature on *Social Change*, *The Construction of Meaning*, *Social Order*, and *Cultural Constraints*, and the conduction of a virtual, Global Collective Action Seminar. Considerable evidence to support all three hypotheses was uncovered, and several conclusions were drawn.

Through the research, it was determined that higher education, comparable to other outlets such as media, has the power to facilitate consent for and reinforce the social order of the world. Literature and surveys revealed that the order proposed and reinforced has been dominantly oppressive and hierarchical, and remains so today. However, higher education can also communicate messages that sparks critical thinking, inclusion, collective action, and more in ways that create global change that benefits all people and the planet. Utilizing technology, such as Zoom, can further the reach of these messages, and increase innovation. Evidence from the surveys demonstrated that needs and motivations transcend borders; messaging that speaks to those universal truths may increase collective action and the impact of change.

As long as even one example of the plight referenced in the Introduction to this work can be found in the world, there will still be a need to further this research and increase efforts for collective action for positive social change. But every day is an opportunity to create new meaning in the world; as long as that fact remains, there is great evidence to support hope.

APPENDIX A. SURVEYS

Global Engagement Survey One

Q1 This survey is part of a larger project titled “Interpret the World and Change It: Overcoming Barriers to Positive Social Change” IRB NUMBER: IRB-2022-1098. In this project, we are examining if there are universal barriers to positive social change with a focus on how social change is perceived as a concept around the world, what issues of social change participants feel are most important, and what influences participants’ awareness of the need for social change. Participating in this survey is completely voluntary and no identifiable information will be collected; participants will remain completely anonymous. You must be 18 years of age or older to participate.

Do you consent to continue?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Q2 What university are you currently attending?

Q3 What discipline of study are you currently focusing on as a student?

Example: you are pursuing a degree in mathematics.

Q4 Please select your age group

- ☐ 18-26
- ☐ 27-37
- ☐ 38-48
- ☐ 49-59
- ☐ 60-70
- ☐ Other _____

Q5 What gender do you identify with?

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Non-binary / third gender
- ☐ Transgender
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Other _____

Q6 Please complete the following sentence to illustrate how closely you feel that your perspective aligns with the general perspective of your culture and region.

My perspective is_____ from/to the general perspective of my culture and region.

- ☐ Extremely Different (0/10)
- ☐ Somewhat Different (1-2/10)
- ☐ Different (3-4/10)
- ☐ Neither Different nor Similar (5/10)
- ☐ Somewhat Similar (8/10)
- ☐ Similar (9/10)
- ☐ Extremely Similar (10/10)

Q7 Please use the following scale to finish the below sentence based on your perception of your region's support of free speech.

My region _____ free speech.

- ☐ Never Supports (0/10)
- ☐ Sometimes Supports (1-4/10)
- ☐ Neither Does Not Support nor Supports (5/10)
- ☐ Supports (6-9/10)
- ☐ Always Supports (10/10)

Q8 Please use the following scale to indicate your perception of the likeliness of collective action for positive change (i.e., change that enhances life for the large majority of people). If you wish to elaborate on your answer, you may also select “additional feedback for response” and elaborate.

- ☐ Extremely Unlikely (0/10)
- ☐ Somewhat Unlikely (1-2/10)
- ☐ Unlikely (3-4/10)
- ☐ Neither Unlikely nor Likely (5/10)
- ☐ Somewhat Likely (6-7/10)
- ☐ Likely (8-9/10)
- ☐ Extremely Likely (10/10)
- ☐ Additional Feedback for Response _____

Q9 Please use the text box to answer the following question. What one word or phrase best describes positive social change in your opinion?

Q10 How frequently do you perceive positive social change occurs? If you wish to elaborate on your answer, you may also select “additional feedback for response” and elaborate.

- ☐ Never (0/10)
- ☐ Highly Infrequently (1/10)
- ☐ Somewhat Infrequently (2-3/10)
- ☐ Infrequently (3-4/10)
- ☐ Somewhat Frequently (5/10)
- ☐ Frequently (6-8/10)
- ☐ Highly Frequently (9-10/10)
- ☐ Additional Feedback for Response _____

Q11 Please rate the following on a scale of 1-8, with one indicating a highest motivator, and eight indicating a lowest motivator, to illustrate what issues would most motivate you to take action for positive social change. If you wish to elaborate on your answer, you may also select “additional feedback for response” and elaborate.

- _____ Food Insecurity
- _____ Health Disparities
- _____ Climate Change
- _____ Security and Well Being
- _____ Unemployment
- _____ Poverty
- _____ Racial Equality
- _____ Other

Q12 Please use the number scale to answer the following questions by assigning a number to each box based on your level of agreement.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Strong Disagreement

Strong Agreement

- ☐ I feel more inclined to take action if others are involved.
 - ☐ I feel more highly motivated to take action if an issue has wide public support (for example, an issue may have wide public support if it is supported by large groups of people, or is supported in the media, etc.).
 - ☐ I feel comfortable going against the opinion of the majority.
 - ☐ I feel comfortable standing up for what I believe in.
 - ☐ I am more likely to advocate for other's needs than my own.

Q13 How likely are you to participate in any actions for social change? (E.g., organizing for change, petitioning, protesting). If you wish to elaborate on your answer, you may also select “additional feedback for response” and elaborate.

- ☐ Extremely Unlikely (0/10)
 - ☐ Somewhat Unlikely (1-2/10)
 - ☐ Unlikely (3-4/10)
 - ☐ Neither Unlikely nor Likely (5/10)
 - ☐ Somewhat Likely (6-7/10)

- ☐ Likely (8-9/10)
- ☐ Extremely Likely (10/10)
- ☐ Additional Feedback for Response _____

Q14 What do you perceive as the biggest barrier(s) to your participation in positive social change?
Please rank the following issues on a scale of 1-6, with 1 being most severe, and six being least severe. Please elaborate on the barrier you associate with "other."

- ☐ Money/Finances _____
- ☐ Time Restraints (work, family, etc.) _____
- ☐ Health _____
- ☐ Risks to Reputation _____
- ☐ Risks to Safety _____
- ☐ Other _____

Q15 What do you perceive as the biggest barrier(s) to positive social change overall? I.e., why do you feel that the world is not resolving dominant societal issues? Please rank the following issues on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being most severe, and five being least severe. Please elaborate on the barrier you associate with "other."

- ☐ An unequal distribution of power (i.e., the distribution of resources among hegemonic corporations, leaders, etc. making it difficult to effect significant change.
- ☐ Individualistic Mindedness
- ☐ Political/Ideological Differences
- ☐ The desire to achieve power outweighing other desires

Q16 Do you have any additional comments regarding the topic of social change?

Global Engagement Survey Two

Q1 Please take a few moments to reflect on your overall experience at the Global Action Seminar and use the following text boxes to respond to the questions below. This survey is part of a larger project titled “Interpret the World and Change It: Overcoming Barriers to Positive Social Change”
IRB NUMBER: IRB-2022-1098. You must be 18 years of age or older to participate.

Do you consent to continue?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Q2 What was your perception of social change before attending the seminar? Did you feel that it was possible? Did you feel that it was difficult to achieve?

Q3 Was your perception about social change altered in any way by the seminar? If so, how?

Q4 What did you learn from the experience?

Q5 Do you feel the seminar was beneficial? Why or why not?

Q6 Do you have any additional comments about the Seminar?

APPENDIX B. RECRUITMENT MATERIAL

Dissemination Inquiry

“Kind greetings,

Thank you so much for agreeing to disseminate our survey. Please disseminate the survey link and the following message to your students via university email or the universally accessible communication method of your choice. From (this date will be set once we earn IRB approval), this survey will be open for fourteen days, closing on (this date will be set once we earn IRB approval).”

Universities Dissemination Script

“Dear Students,

Please consider taking a few moments to complete the attached sixteen-question survey that is part of a global research project being conducted at Purdue University Northwest titled “Interpret the World and Change It: Overcoming Barriers to Positive Social Change,” IRB NUMBER: IRB-2022-1098. In this project, universal barriers to positive social change are being examined with a focus on how social change is perceived as a concept around the world, what issues of social change participants feel are most important, and what influences participants’ awareness of the need for social change. The researchers are looking for student participants from universities around the world to take the anonymous survey. Participating in this survey is completely voluntary and no identifiable information will be collected; participants will remain completely anonymous. Participants must be 18 years of age or older, and the survey should take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. From this date, the survey will remain open for fourteen days, so please make sure to complete it before (this date will be set once we earn IRB approval) if you are willing to participate.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please contact our PI: Dr. Lee Artz, Purdue University Northwest, artz@pnw.edu or Purdue's Institutional Review Board (IRB) at irb@purdue.edu.”

Collective Action Seminar Survey Request

“Thank you so much for attending the Global Action Seminar. Please take a few moments to reflect on your overall experience at the Seminar and complete the attached survey. This survey is part of a larger project titled “Interpret the World and Change It: Overcoming Barriers to Positive Social Change” IRB NUMBER: IRB-2022-1098. You must be 18 years of age or older to participate. Participating in this survey is completely voluntary and no identifiable information will be collected; participants will remain completely anonymous.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please contact our PI: Dr. Lee Artz, Purdue University Northwest, artz@pnw.edu or Purdue's Institutional Review Board (IRB) at irb@purdue.edu.”

APPENDIX C. QUALITATIVE CODE BOOKS

Global Engagement Survey One Qualitative Code Book

Global Engagement Survey One	121 Responses Total	150 Participants Requested Total	81% Response Rate
Question 8: Additional feedback on the question of perception of the likeliness of positive social change			
Theme	Definition	Example Exerpts	Frequency
<i>Universal Perception of Difficulty: Difficult</i>	Response shows participants perceive positive social change as difficult or unlikely to achieve	1. "change is difficult, at least it feels like it." 2. "hard to organize/get on the same page."	5
<i>Universal Perception of Difficulty: Possible</i>	Response shows participants perceive positive social change as possible.	1. "I think that the discontent is growing." 2. "there is a general feeling of tension, people wanting change, not knowing where to start."	5
<i>Universal Perception of Difficulty: Easy</i>	Response shows participants perceive positive social change as easy to achieve.	N/A	0

Figure 11: Survey One, Question Eight Codes

Question 9: What one word or phrase best describes positive social change in your opinion?			
Theme	Definition	Example Exerpts	Frequency
<i>Inclusion</i>	Response shows participants believe positive social change means making the world better for <u>all</u> people.	1. "Working for the common good." 2. "	26
<i>Open Mindedness</i>	Response shows participants believe positive social change means being open to others, to new ideas, etc.	1. "I did come away from the seminar with renewed hope that young people want to see change." 2. "I have developed some optimism as it relates to social change"	22
<i>Understanding</i>	Response shows participants believe that positive social change means increasing knowledge and understanding of others, of society, or of cultural/structural constraints.	1. "My perception was not modified in any way." 2. "I have the same view of social change now as I did before the seminar."	15
<i>Control</i>	Response shows participants believe that positive social change means that citizens have control in society, and/or take an active role in changing society.	1. "active democracy" 2. "taking action and making sure it is heard creates a change." 3. "Power of action."	16
<i>Unity</i>	Response shows that participants believe that positive social change means individuals must unite, work together, engage in collective action, etc.	1. "Proletarier aller Länder, vereinigt euch!" (Workers of the world, unite!) 2. "Collaborative and strategic actions."	17

Figure 12: Survey One, Question Nine Codes

<i>Hope/belief/support</i>	Response shows that participants believe that positive social change includes promoting/spreading hope, belief, or support for positive change, i.e., morale is an important factor.	1. "Hope" 2. "uplifting" 3. "Kindness"	11
<i>Positive conditions for many</i>	Response shows that participants believe that positive social change means that conditions are improved for many, but do not need to be improved for all.	1. "A change that improves life for a significant part of society. In my opinion it does not have to be the majority of the population." 2. "For someone to succeed others must fail."	8
<i>Growth</i>	Response shows participants believe that positive social change means actual change and growth in society, not a sustainment of current structure, etc.	1. "Yes, I learned that it only happens because of individuals so my original perception must have just been conditioned somewhere." 2. "I certainly got new perspectives on how to better approach social change and areas of social improvement that I never knew existed." 3. "Abolishment of the capitalist class"	27

Figure 13: Survey One, Question Nine Codes Continued

Question 10: Additional feedback on the question of the perceived frequency of social change			
Theme	Definition	Example Exerpts	Frequency
<i>Constant</i>	Responses show that participants feel that social change is a continual process.	1. "I think social change happens at every moment."	6
<i>Occuring, but Negatively</i>	Responses show that participants feel that social change is occurring in a negative way.	1. "A lot but for the worse."	5
<i>Slow</i>	Response shows that participants feel social change is a slow process.	1. "Progress is slow but being made."	4
Question 13: Additional feedback for question of likeliness of participation in action for social change.			
Theme	Definition	Example Exerpts	Frequency
<i>Too Difficult</i>	Response shows participants feel participation would be too difficult	1. "I find it difficult to be the instagator of change due to exhaustion."	3
<i>I Would Like to do More</i>	Response shows that participants would like to participate more.	1. "I would like to be more active."	1

Figure 14: Survey One, Question Ten and Thirteen Codes

Question 14: Additional feedback to question on Barriers to Participation			
Theme	Definition	Example Excerpts	Frequency
<i>Lack of Support</i>	Response shows participants feel lack of support is a barrier to their participation	1. "Lack of social structure to participate in positive social change with."	9
<i>Fear</i>	Response shows that participants feel lack that fear is a barrier to their participation.	1. "Social anxiety."	3
Question 15: Additional feedback on question of Barriers to Change.			
Theme	Definition	Example Excerpts	Frequency
<i>Structural Barriers</i>	Response shows participants feel that political, economic, or other structural barriers exist against positive social change.	1. "The current political system based on the concept of sovereign power."	5
<i>Faith/Moralital Barriers</i>	Response shows participants feel that an absense of faith, support, or morality is a barrier against positive social change.	1. "The absence of moral duty."	3

Figure 15: Survey One, Question Fourteen and Fifteen Codes

Question 16: Additional Comments			
Theme	Definition	Example Excerpts	Frequency
<i>Commitment to Change</i>	Response shows that participants are interested in taking action for positive change.	1. "I am totally committed to progressive social change." 2. "No sacrifice too great."	2
<i>Desire for More Information</i>	Response shows that participants are interested in learning more about positive social change, open to different perspectives, and/or want the information to be more widely accessible.	1. "MORE MEDIA FOCUS ON THIS TOPIC."	3

Figure 16: Survey One, Question Sixteen Codes

Global Engagement Survey Two Qualitative Code Book

Global Engagement Survey Two	50 Responses Total	85 Surveyed Total	59% Response Rate
Question 1: What was your perception of social change before attending the seminar? Did you feel that it was possible? Did you feel that it was difficult to achieve?			
Theme	Definition	Example Exerpts	Frequency
<i>Belief Gained</i>	Response shows participants gained belief in the possibility of social change after the seminar	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> "We are stronger in community and knowledge. This event was so important because it helped put light to issues that I did not know needed help. Now that I know, I can help further." "I felt that social change was kind of outside of my reach but this event made it certain that it was people like me who make change in enough numbers." 	20
<i>No Belief Gained</i>	Response shows participants did not gain any belief in the possibility for social change.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> "Didn't attend" 	1
<i>Understanding Gained</i>	Response shows participants gained a new understanding about the methods necessary for social change.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> "I realized also that there are many barriers to how far this success extends." "Prior to the seminar I was confident that social change is possible, but was lacking in my awareness of specific methods of implementation." 	20
<i>Perception of Difficulty</i>	Response shows participants perceive social change as difficult.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> "Yes--possible, but difficult. It is a long haul." "I recognize the difficulty in making systemic change." 	20

Figure 17: Survey Two, Question One Codes

Question 2: Was your perception about social change altered in any way by the seminar? If so, how?			
Theme	Definition	Example Exerpts	Frequency
Perception Changed: Positive Social Change Support	Response shows participants are now more supportive of or open to positive social change.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "The seminar helped enhance my awareness of the broadness in scope of what is necessary for social change." 2. "Yes, I am more keenly aware of social problems that need to be addressed." 	21
Perception Changed: Increased Belief in Positive Social Change	Response shows participants now more strongly believe positive social change is possible.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "I did come away from the seminar with renewed hope that young people want to see change." 2. "I have developed some optimism as it relates to social change" 	14
Perception Unchanged	Response shows participant's views were not altered in any way by the seminar.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "My perception was not modified in any way." 2. "I have the same view of social change now as I did before the seminar." 	13
Perception Changed: Negative Opposition	Response shows participants are now against positive social change or have negative feelings toward the concept.	N/A	0
Knowledge was Gained	Response shows participants have gained new knowledge from the seminar.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Yes, I learned that it only happens because of individuals so my original perception must have just been conditioned somewhere." 2. "I certainly got new perspectives on how to better approach social change and areas of social improvement that I never knew existed." 	19

Figure 18: Survey Two, Question Two Codes

Question 3: What did you learn from the experience?			
Theme	Definition	Example Exerpts	Frequency
<i>The Importance of Positive Social Change</i>	Responses show that participants display an understanding of the importance of positive social change.	1. "I learned that positive social change is very important and it is something we can and should take part in no matter what our background is. I also learned that positive social change is most successful when we all work together. This way we can bring about the biggest change."	19
<i>Value of Different Perspectives</i>	Response shows that participants acknowledge it takes multiple perspectives and many people to achieve social change.	1. "I learned that there are many nuances to the implementation of social change and that it is less cut-and-dry than I had imagined."	20
<i>Confidence Gained</i>	Responses show that participants gained an increase in confidence in their abilities to be a part of efforts for social change.	1. "I learned to trust my abilities more and not sell myself short in this arena." 2. "Anyone can change for the better little at a time. Be the change you want to be."	10
<i>New Knowledge</i>	Responses show that participants gained new knowledge including a greater understanding of perspectives outside their own, and/or the realization that we, as a global humanity, share important similarities with each other.	1. "Globally, people share some of the same problems." 2. "That we are all concerned about the extraordinary historical times we are living through." 3. "I learned that there is a large group of people who are really concerned and are really active for real social change."	25

Figure 19: Survey Two, Question Three Codes

Question 4: Do you feel the seminar was beneficial? Why or why not?			
Theme	Definition	Example Exerpts	Frequency
<i>Value of the Initiative</i>	Response shows that participants believe that creating or engaging with spaces that allow for the sharing of perspectives and ideas is valuable.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Yes! Any time we can get together as colleagues and share ideas is beneficial. The roots of social change were watered today!" 2. "I feel it was very beneficial. I learned about topics that I never would have known about. I feel I can help people that I did not know needed help before. Every room I went to had deep conversations that I feel everyone took something away from. If everyone who took something from each room and acts on it, then the world will be a better place." 	35
<i>Lack of Value of the Initiative</i>	Response shows that participants did not feel the seminar was valuable.	N/A	0
Question 5: Do you have any additional comments about the Seminar?			
Theme	Definition	Example Exerpts	Frequency
<i>Interest in Furthering Efforts</i>	Responses show that participants are interested in creating more opportunities like the seminar, attending again, or taking action for positive social change beyond the seminar.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "This seminar must be adopted by the institution." 2. "I look forward to attending another in the future! I think this one was amazing!" 3. "I enjoyed the idea of Collective sharing in a Global Seminar, and I hope the event will be attempted again. Beautiful Idea!" 	19

Figure 20: Survey Two, Question Four and Five Codes

APPENDIX D. SEMINAR PROGRAM



February 21st, 2023

7:45 a.m. --5:00 p.m. CT

(Central Standard Time)

There is a lot of meaningful work for equality, environment, human rights, and positive social change happening all around the world, but we still have a lot farther to go, and we need to do it together. Mainstream media does inform about significant world issues, but most often through framing that suggests it is impossible to change things for the better. We are also facing a time of significant division around the world; thus, it is crucial that spaces where we can share, reflect, communicate, and work to understand others outside of our immediate perspectives exist. The 2023 global, virtual Collective Action Seminar aims to eliminate barriers to access of some of the latest thinking on positive social change, and create a space where these important conversations can occur so that more collective action for humanity and the planet may be possible.

So, whether you are speaking at this seminar, attending, or both, work to keep an open mind so that you may consider issues related to race, human rights, environment, and positive change from

many different perspectives. Consider the information you receive as a tool to ask more questions, to connect, to realize that you do have the power to make a significant impact by uniting with others, and to take action for change. Consider that every day is another opportunity to break through barriers, many that we in humanity create ourselves, and begin to make a difference.

There are a wide range of talks on the schedule on topics ranging from community work, research, activism, climate change, workers' rights, civil rights, and more. It is inspiring that scholars, students, activists, community organizations, publishers, editors, artists, and more from all over the world have been willing to come together for this. Often at conferences, we get the perspective of one area of a discipline, for example, conferences where presenters are all academics, or all organization leaders. But here, speakers from varied backgrounds have come together with a goal of sparking serious thinking and consideration of the world. And in reflection, this makes a lot of sense, for every time an activist takes a stand, or a professor speaks before a class, or an artist displays a new piece, or an organization assembles, they are all attempting to do the very same thing. There is power in the realization of what we all have in common. In so many cases, we are fighting for the same things, and can do much more if we work together.

Seminar Civility Policy

This seminar is open to all speakers and attendees from anywhere in the world who are interested in joining and willing to contribute their time to considering topics related to creating a better world for all; the 2023 Collective Action Seminar stands against discrimination of anyone for any reason, including discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, or gender identity), national origin, disability, age, genetic information(including family medical history), or status as a veteran.

This is meant to be an inclusive space of learning, reflection, and communication.

You are encouraged and welcome to ask questions after a speaker has finished presenting, and also welcome to disagree with speakers and/or attendees. But please make sure that you are courteous and respectful.

This means that respect should be present in both verbal and written communications (including Zoom chat messaging), and that mutual respect for people, their roles, their experiences, and their knowledge should be shown. This requires kindness, courtesy, and patience, and is imperative, as we are all responsible for creating and maintaining a welcoming space where dialogue for positive societal change can occur. Once more, disagreement is welcomed, but should include communication, integrity, respect for differing viewpoints, and freedom from unnecessary disruption.

Schedule and Zoom Room Location Map

7:45-7:55 a.m. CT

❖ **Check In**

Participants/attendees may enter, check in, ask questions, and receive help getting to their rooms.

➤ **Main Room**

7:55-8:00 a.m. CT

❖ **Welcoming Remarks:** *Kayla Vasilko will welcome attendees and participants, and commence the seminar with opening remarks.*

➤ **Main Room**

8:00-9:00 a.m. CT

❖ **KEYNOTE Q&A with Disability Rights Activist Judy Heumann**

➤ **Main Room**

9:00-10:00 a.m. CT

❖ **Group Break:** *Take time to step away from the screen.*

10:00 a.m. CT

12:30 p.m. CT

❖ **Dr. Errol Salamon:** *Unions in Digital Media*

➤ **Room 12**

❖ **Dr. Colette Morrow:** *Transphobia is Anti-Feminist: Iranian and US Activism and Neo-fascists' Cunning Disinformation Campaign against Gender Justice*

➤ **Room 13**

❖ **Rebecca Chambers, Nancy Walter, & April Valentine:** *NWI Poor People's Campaign*

➤ **Room 14**

1:00 p.m. CT

❖ **Dr. Rhon Teruelle:** *The Lamplighter Project and Twitter: Police Whistleblowing and Social Media*

➤ **Room 15**

❖ **Dr. Karen Bishop Morris:** *The World House: Dr. King's Move Toward a Moral Reawakening and a Global Ethic*

➤ **Room 16**

❖ **Dr. Kim Scipes:** *Involving Progressive Labor Organizations in the Fight against Climate Change and*

- ❖ **Dr. Brian Dolber:** *In the Driver's Seat: Research for Justice in the Gig Economy*
 - **Room 1**
- ❖ **Michael Albert:** *No Bosses: Life After Capitalism*
 - **Room 2**
- 10:30 a.m. CT
- ❖ **Dr. Kenny Kincaid & Pam Saylor:** *A Discussion of Ocean Passages*
 - **Room 3**
- 11:00 a.m. CT
- ❖ **Dr. David Detmer:** *The Post-Truth World*
 - **Room 4**
- ❖ **Cooper Sperling:** *Strikes at the New School*
 - **Room 5**
- ❖ **Daniel Gyekye:** *An examination of Linguistic Racism*
 - **Room 6**
- 11:30 a.m. CT
- ❖ **Dr. Shreya Bhandari (PNW):** *Lived Experience of South Asian women experiencing domestic violence in the United States*
 - **Room 7**
- ❖ **Dr. Urooj Raja:** *Social Change Through the Lens of Social Psychology*
 - **Room 8**
- ❖ **Briana Davis:** *Understanding Race, Gender, and Class in Urban Instructional Environments*
 - **Room 9**
- 12:00 p.m. CT
- Environmental Destruction: Focus on Imperialism, Globalization, and Neo-liberal Economics*
- **Room 17**
- 1:30 p.m. CT
- ❖ **Dr. George Villanueva:** *Toward a Social Justice Communication Infrastructure Praxis*
 - **Room 18**
- ❖ **Cait Lackey:** *AI as Media*
 - **Room 19**
- 2:00 p.m. CT
- ❖ **Stansfield Smith:** *How the National Security State Controls Both the "News" and Opposition to its Rule*
 - **Room 20**
- ❖ **Ricardo Levins Morales:** *Art as Weapon and Medicine*
 - **Room 21**
- 2:30 p.m. CT
- ❖ **Dr. Lee Artz:** *Social Media and Social Movements*
 - **Room 22**
- ❖ **Heather Augustyn:** *Women in Ska and why it Matters*
 - **Room 23**
- ❖ **Dr. Janusz Duzinkiewicz:** *Ukraine's Identity*
 - **Room 24**
- 3:00 p.m. CT
- ❖ **Dr. Sevda Can Arslan:** *Academia & Society*
 - **Room 25**
- ❖ **Dr. Deepa Majumdar:** *The Human Foibles causing Global Crises – Our Passions*
 - **Room 26**
- 4:00-4:45

❖ **Dr. Steve Macek:** *Ignoring Labor, Marginalizing the Environment: Themes from Project Censored's Recent Media Monitoring.*

➤ **Room 10**

❖ **Dr. Bridget Meehan:** *ZNetwork and independent media*

➤ **Room 11**

❖ **Dr. Ugur Baloglu and Dr. Deepa Majumdar:** *Supporting Turkey and Syria*

➤ **Main Room**

4:45-5:00

❖ **Closing Remarks & Reflections:** *Kayla Vasilko and Participants*

➤ **Main Room**

Session Descriptions

8:00-9:00 a.m. CT

KEYNOTE Q&A with Disability Rights Activist Judy Heumann **Main Room**

Purdue University Northwest Disability Access Center Director Debra Wysong and graduate student Kayla Vasilko will have a “fireside chat” with Disability Rights Activist Judith (Judy) Heumann. Attendees of the session will also be able to ask questions of Judy Heumann during the second half of the session.

Keynote Speaker Bio: Judy Heumann is an internationally recognized disability advocate who has served in the Clinton and Obama Administration and was a Senior Fellow at the Ford Foundation. “Judy's story was also featured in the documentary "Crip Camp: A Disability Revolution," a 2020 American award-winning documentary film produced by the Obama Higher Ground Production. In 2020, she published her memoir "Being Heumann: An Unrepentant Memoir of a Disability Rights Activist," written with Kristen Joiner. There is also a Young Adult version called "Rolling Warrior." Judy is now the producer of The Heumann Perspective, a podcast and YouTube channel that aims to share the beauty of the disability community” (Heumann, 2020); You can learn more about Judy and the incredible work she has done by visiting her website: <https://judithheumann.com>

10:00 a.m. CT

“In the Driver’s Seat: Research for Justice in the Gig Economy”

Brian Dolber, California State University San Marcos **Room 1** 10:00 a.m. CT

As a scholar-activist, I work alongside Rideshare Drivers United, a fledgling labor organization of 20,000 app-based drivers in California. RDU's organizing method, which I term "start-up unionism," has been one that flips surveillance capitalism on its head. Through a hybrid approach that relies on an independently developed app, Facebook advertising, and face-to-face organizing and relationship building, RDU has attracted the attention of labor unions, policymakers, and media, earning drivers a seat at the table in debates over the future of the so-called gig economy. As a member of RDU's organizing committee, I have been able to study the organizing process while contributing my own knowledge as an academic and experienced organizer to strategy development. The Data Accountability Campaign, which led to the publication of two studies of conditions California drivers face under Prop 22, highlights the ways that research may serve as an organizing strategy.

Speaker Bio: Dr. Brian Dolber is Associate Professor of Communication at California State University San Marcos. His work focuses on the intersections of labor, media, technology, and history. He is the author of *Media and Culture in the U.S. Jewish Labor Movement: Sweating for Democracy in the Interwar Era* (2017) and co-editor of *The Gig Economy: Workers and Media in the Age of Convergence* (2021). He has worked for several labor unions as an organizer and researcher, and currently serves on the organizing committee of Rideshare Drivers United. Dr. Dolber earned his Ph.D. from University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

"No Bosses: Life After Capitalism"

Michael Albert, RevolutionZ, **Room 2** 10:00 a.m. CT

I will summarize the core institutions of the economic vision called Participatory Economics, briefly argue their worth and viability, and briefly discuss some implications for current activism. There will then be time for discussion.

Speaker Bio: Michael Albert's radicalization occurred during the 1960s. His political involvements, starting then and continuing to the present, have ranged from local, regional, and national organizing projects and campaigns to co-founding South End Press, Z Magazine, the Z Media Institute, and ZNet, and to working on all these projects, writing for various publications and publishers, giving public talks, etc. His personal interests, outside the political realm, focus on general science reading (with an emphasis on physics, math, and matters of evolution and cognitive science), computers, mystery and thriller/adventure novels, sea kayaking, and the more sedentary

but no less challenging game of GO. Albert is the author of 21 books which include: No Bosses: A New Economy for a Better World; Fanfare for the Future; Remembering Tomorrow; Realizing Hope; and Parecon: Life After Capitalism. Michael is currently host of the podcast Revolution Z and is a Friend of ZNetwork.

10:30 a.m. CT

“A Discussion of Ocean Passages”

Dr. Kenny Kincaid & Professor Pam Saylor, Purdue University Northwest **Room 3** 10:30 a.m. CT

A discussion of Erin Suzuki’s “Ocean Passages: Navigating Pacific Islander and Asian American Literatures,” which is a book that "explores how movement through—and travel across—the ocean mediates the construction of Asian American and Indigenous Pacific subjectivities in the wake of the colonial conflicts that shaped the modern transpacific. Ocean Passages considers how Indigenous Pacific scholars have emphasized the importance of the ocean to Indigenous activism, art, and theories of globalization and how Asian American studies might engage in a deconstructive interrogation of race in conversation with this Indigenous-centered transnationalism.

Speaker Bios:

Pamela Saylor is a clinical assistant professor in the Department of Behavioral Sciences. With a history of program development in social services, Saylor was program director for the accreditation of the social work program in 2019. Saylor developed an interprofessional education abroad program, taking a group of students to Guatemala in 2018 and 2019. With a focus on a student/professor collaborative partnership, Saylor connects with her students through high-impact practices and experiential learning. Saylor teaches Introduction to Social Work, Communications, Policy, Macro Practice, and the Senior Internship courses.

Kenneth Kincaid is a history supervisor of social studies. He is also a member of the history graduate committee, faculty advisor to Phi Alpha Theta and member of the Center for Global Studies. Kincaid’s research areas focus on environmental and ethnographical topics relating to Latin America, specifically Ecuador and Peru. He has also published on immigration as well as Latinx communities in the United States.

11:00 a.m. CT

“The Post-Truth World”

Dr. David Detmer, Purdue University Northwest **Room 4** 11:00 a.m. CT

In 1943 George Orwell declared that “the very concept of objective truth is fading out of the world.” In November 2016 the Oxford Dictionaries named “post-truth” 2016’s word of the year. And now it has become something of a commonplace to say that we live in a post-truth world. In this presentation I will offer a few observations about the meaning of this post-truth phenomenon, assess some of its causes and consequences, and make some suggestions about ways to combat it.

Speaker Bio: David Detmer is a Professor of Philosophy at Purdue University Northwest. He is the author of seven books, including *Freedom as a Value*; *Challenging Postmodernism: Philosophy and the Politics of Truth*; *Phenomenology Explained*; *Zinnophobia: The Battle over History in Education, Politics, and Scholarship* (on the radical American historian, Howard Zinn); and *Simply Sartre*.

“Strikes at the New School”

Cooper Sperling, ZNetwork **Room 5** 11:00 a.m. CT

A discussion of strikes at the New School, and Cooper’s Sperling’s work in activism.

Speaker Bio: Originally from the San Francisco Bay Area, Cooper is currently living in Brooklyn, New York. He attends The New School where he majors in Integrated Design at Parsons School of Design and Philosophy. He is one of the co-founders of Student Faculty Solidarity (SFS) which organizes and advocates on behalf of part-time faculty. SFS works with ACT-UAW Local 7902: The union of academic workers at NYU & The New School: NYU Adjuncts and New School part-time faculty, student workers, & healthcare workers. He is also a member of Real Utopia: Foundation for a Participatory Society.

“An examination of Linguistic Racism”

Daniel Gyekey, Purdue University Northwest **Room 6** 11:00 a.m. CT

In addition to language being ingrained in culture, an individual's culture also includes beliefs and values. An individual's lifestyle and wellbeing are shaped by this. Individuals in a certain geographic location communicate using the language that is most comfortable for them. Relationship-building depends on language, yet it might be difficult if it makes someone feel

uncomfortable because of their social identity (Derwing and Munro, 1997). It should be mentioned that language itself carries a certain amount of stigma. In most African societies, linguistic stigmatization is very common; the instant someone talks, their ethnicity is revealed, and as a result, they may not be allowed to join organizations or express themselves in public. Crocker (1998) defines stigmatization as the devaluation of a social identity in a specific social setting. The majority of linguistic racism may be overt or covert, according to Zurijeta (2019). Individuals who experience such linguistic racism may occasionally encounter discriminatory treatment, such as being passed over for promotions, being denied housing, and not being given leadership roles. The creation of software that alters people's accents and also makes them more at ease speaking in public as a result of discrimination against accents of people, whether unintentionally or voluntarily. Given that, this work will examine linguistic racism and its effect on individuals.

Speaker Bio: Daniel is an international student from Ghana, West Africa. His current study focus is on Digital Culture in the Modern World. Daniel enjoys assisting students in both the classroom and outside of it with their educational and social growth. Daniel's life purpose is to motivate individuals to help others in any manner they can, not because they have to, but because they want to. Daniel believes that we can all make a difference in so many people's lives. Even if we do not think we are making much of a difference, a little goes a long way.

11:30 a.m. CT

“Lived Experience of South Asian women experiencing domestic violence in the United States”

Dr. Shreya Bhandari, Purdue University Northwest, Social Work **Room 7** 11:30 a.m. CT

The presentation will describe the lived experiences of domestic violence among a convenience sample of 20 South Asian women. The experiences of abuse are drawn from in-depth telephonic interviews conducted all across the United States. The analysis describes four major categories of abuse: (a) types of abuse; (b) abuse involving children; (c) family involvement in abuse; and (d) formal and informal support. Implications for social workers working with South Asian women are shared.

Speaker Bio: Shreya Bhandari is a social work educator, practitioner and researcher. In addition to serving as a faculty member, she is also the BSW Director of Social Work at PNW. She is excited to engage, serve and lead the social work program and the students in her new role. Her

current research interests include coping strategies and patterns of abuse among rural, pregnant and South Asian women in the United States as well as women in India who have experienced domestic violence. She has published over 30 peer-reviewed articles and book chapters and presented her research in various national and international conferences. Her recent book *South Asians in the US: A guide for social workers and other helping professionals* is available on Amazon.

“Social Change Through the Lens of Social Psychology”

Dr. Urooj Raja, Loyola University Chicago, Assistant Professor, School of Communication, Advocacy and Social Change **Room 8** 11:30 a.m. CT

How does the field of social psychology define social change and transformative change? What insights can we draw about social change from social psychology theories touching on human cognition, emotion, and behavior is the question this talk briefly touches on.

Speaker Bio: Dr. Raja is an Assistant Professor of Advocacy and Social Change and is an interdisciplinary social scientist whose work centers on understanding society’s responses to complex socio-environmental problems. Ultimately, Dr. Raja seeks to advance knowledge on public engagement with climate change and to contribute to the mitigation of environmental and societal harm. To do so, she studies new mediums (Virtual Reality in particular) that show potential in capturing the public’s imagination. Her research further uses both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to understand how psychological distance—the perception that events, people, experiences, and places are physically or perceptually distant—relates to people’s engagement with climate change.

“Understanding Race, Gender, and Class in Urban Instructional Environments”

Briana Davis, George Mason University **Room 9** 11:30 a.m. CT

A discussion of race, gender, and class in urban instructional environments.

Speaker Bio: Briana Davis (She/Her) is a Ph.D. student and graduate lecturer in the department of Communication at George Mason University. She earned a B.S in Communication Studies from Radford University (V.A) and a M.A in Strategic Communication from High Point University (N.C). Briana's previous research experience and interest include Quantitative, Qualitative, and

Critical methodology, Instructional Communication, Interpersonal Communication, Strategic Communication, and the intersections of Race, Gender, and Class. She takes particular interest in exploring Race, Gender, and Class in urban instructional environments. Her goal is to use her research to develop and further policies that benefit urban education, urban youth, and teacher pedagogy practices.

12:00 p.m. CT

“Ignoring Labor, Marginalizing the Environment: Themes from Project Censored’s Recent Media Monitoring”

Steve Macek, North Central College **Room 10** 12:00 p.m. CT

Project Censored is an American media monitoring organization that finds, evaluates and publicizes stories that go underreported or are completely ignored by the big corporate news media. Its motto is “the news that didn’t make the news.” Founded in 1976 as a seminar at Sonoma State University by sociologist and former journalist Carl Jensen, the Project each December issues a list of the top 25 underreported stories of the previous year and, since the early 1990s, has released the list together with essays of media criticism as an annual book published by Seven Stories Press. The 1200 or so stories that the Project has identified as underreported or ignored over the past 46 years constitutes a fairly detailed longitudinal record of the corporate media’s various sacred cows, third rails and blind spots. What that record shows is that the corporate media fail, systematically, at covering certain sorts of stories. Stories about government malfeasance, corporate wrongdoing, the activities of national intelligence agencies, the horrific conditions endured by the socially and economically marginalized, and the real costs of military actions and military spending—all figure prominently on Project Censored’s top 25 lists each year. However, two broad sorts of stories recur again and again on those lists: stories about workers, economic exploitation, working conditions and labor struggles and stories about the damage humans are causing to the environment. This presentation will describe some of the stories related to labor and environmental issues featured on recent Project Censored top 25 lists, including the list for 2021-22. I will analyze the inadequate coverage these stories received in the corporate press and contrast that with the more thorough and exhaustive coverage they received in the independent media. And I will explore economic, political and ideological factors that might underlie the corporate media’s neglect of these important topics.

Speaker Bio: Dr. Steve Macek teaches courses on media studies, communication and the First Amendment. He is the author of *Urban Nightmares: The Media, the Right and the Moral Panic over the City* (University of Minnesota Press, 2006), a critical analysis of media representations of American cities and the urban poor in the 1980s and 90s. His articles on Chicago's radical and alternative press have been published in *A.R.E.A.* magazine and in the collection *A Moment of Danger: Critical Studies in the History of US Communication since WWII* (Marquette University Press, 2011). His op-eds on media, politics, communication policy and academic freedom have appeared in newspapers such as *The Atlanta Journal Constitution*, *The News and Observer*, *The Seattle Times* and *The Columbus Dispatch* and online publications like *Truth Out* and *Common Dreams*. Macek is currently writing a book about the history of film censorship in Chicago and in the summer of 2014 he co-curated an exhibition on the subject, *Banned in Chicago: Eight Decades of Film Censorship in the Windy City*, at the Museums at Lisle Station Park. Steve was part of a team that compiled, edited, fact-checked and rewrote the stories that make up this year's top 25 list, published this past fall in *State of the Free Press 2023* (Seven Stories 2022).

“ZNetwork and independent media”

Dr. Bridget Meehan, ZNetwork **Room 11** 12:00 p.m. CT

A discussion of ZNetwork and the value of independent media.

Speaker Bio: Dr. Bridget Meehan is a writer and activist based in Ireland. She is a co-founder of the Northern Mutual bank campaign and a member of Collaboration for Change (CfC), a grassroots activists' network promoting collective activism across Ireland. Bridget believes non-reformist projects like CfC can be the foundation for the participatory society of the future. As an advocate for a participatory society, she is also a member of Real Utopia, an organization dedicated to advancing participatory society. In her spare time, Bridget enjoys writing fiction.

12:30 p.m. CT

“Unions in Digital Media”

Dr. Errol Salamon, **Room 12** 12:30 p.m. CT

A discussion of unions in digital media with time for Q&A.

Speaker Bio: Errol Salamon is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Media, Journalism and Film at the University of Huddersfield. His research has been published in *New Media and Society*, *Digital Journalism*, *Journalism Studies*, *Journalism Practice*, *tripleC: Communication, Capitalism & Critique*, and *Canadian Journal of Communication*. Salamon is co-editor of the book *Journalism in Crisis: Bridging Theory and Practice for Democratic Media Strategies in Canada* (University of Toronto Press, 2016). He received his Ph.D. in Communication Studies from McGill University.

“Transphobia is Anti-Feminist: Iranian and US Activism and Neo-fascists’ Cunning Disinformation Campaign against Gender Justice”

Dr. Colette Morrow, Director of Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, Purdue University Northwest Room 13 12:30 p.m. CT

This presentation opens with a brief description of transgender activism in Iranian theater of the oppressed during the country’s current feminist revolution. It then uses the anti-transgender activism in the US as a case study to argue that today’s ascendent, international neo-fascist movement is exploiting transphobia not only to block codification of transgender rights but also to undermine feminism. One of the most effective strategies in this effort is the radical right’s disinformation campaign that feminism is transphobic. I argue that this rhetoric aims to subvert the existential threat posed to patriarchy by the core feminist principle that “sex and gender are social and cultural inventions” (Bassi & LaFleur 2022; Scott 2016).

Speaker Bio: Colette Morrow is the Director of Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies and a Professor of English. She is the former president of the National Women’s Studies Association, which is the only nationwide academic professional association in Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies in the US. Morrow is a senior Fulbright scholar and has worked to develop Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies in universities in Eastern Europe and South Asia. Her book publications include *Unveiling Desire: Fallen Women in Literature, Culture and Film of the East* with a foreword by Nawal El Saadawi (Rutgers University Press, 2017) and *Getting in Is Not Enough: Women in the Global Workplace* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012).

She served as editor of *Feminist Formations*’ (formerly the NWSA Journal) Retrospective Book Series, which consists of five edited anthologies published by Johns Hopkins University Press

(JHUP) that highlight the journal's contributions to the development of feminist scholarship. Morrow earned her Ph.D. in English at Texas Christian University in Ft. Worth.

"NWI Poor People's Campaign"

Rebecca Chambers, Nancy Walter, & April Valentine **Room 14** 12:30 p.m. CT

A discussion of the work of the Northwest Indian Poor People's Campaign

Organization and Speaker Bios: The NWI Cluster of the Indiana Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival has been working since 2020 to address the five interlocking injustices of poverty, systemic racism, militarism and the war economy, ecological devastation, and the false narrative of religious nationalism. Rebecca Chambers, Nancy Walter, and April Valentine work together to further the mission of the organization.

1:00 p.m. CT

"The Lamplighter Project and Twitter: Police Whistleblowing and Social Media"

Dr. Rhon Teruelle, Purdue University Northwest **Room 15** 1:00 p.m. CT

This presentation is based on a case study involving seven "whistleblowers" that I interviewed. Through necessity, social media has become the primary communication tool used by these individuals to expose malfeasance and corruption in policing. Social media functions as a strong juxtaposition to the silencing of complaints that is common within law enforcement; in direct opposition to "the thin blue line" and "the blue wall of silence." The pervasive culture of law enforcement condemns any kind of vocal critique of policing (Kappeler et al. 1998; Long et al. 2013; Taylor 2019), and social media provides a space for those who wish to challenge the existing system. Moreover, this paper investigates The Lamplighter Project and Twitter as important social media resources that assist police whistleblowers who speak out against wrongdoings perpetrated by other members of law enforcement working within a corrupt system.

Speaker Bio: Dr. Rhon Teruelle is currently working as Assistant Professor of Mass Communication and Social Media in the Department of Communication and Creative Arts at Purdue University Northwest. Teruelle's research has three streams: social justice, social media and social movements. His work has appeared in Canadian Journal of Communication, Social

Media & Society, Democratic Communiqué, Social Alternatives and the SAGE Encyclopedia of Social Media and Politics.

“The World House: Dr. King's Move Toward a Moral Reawakening and a Global Ethic”

Dr. Karen Bishop Morris, Purdue University Northwest **Room 16** 1:00 p.m. CT

A discussion of Dr. King's Move toward a moral reawakening and a global ethic.

Speaker Bio: Karen Bishop Morris specializes in the teaching of writing, has served in leadership roles for several national non-profits, and currently serves on the boards of St. Catherine Hospital and LFC, Inc. Her areas of expertise include: Writing Program Administration, High-impact practices for first-generation college students, Philanthropy and public engagement, and Public health literacy.

“Involving Progressive Labor Organizations in the Fight against Climate Change and Environmental Destruction: Focus on Imperialism, Globalization, and Neo-liberal Economics”

Dr. Kim Scipes, Professor Emeritus of Sociology, Purdue University Northwest **Room 17** 1:00 p.m. CT

A discussion of imperialism, globalization, and neo-liberal economics through the lens of progressive labor organizations in the fight against climate change.

Speaker Bio: Dr. Scipes is a long-time labor activist and scholar who has been working to build global labor solidarity for the past 40 years. His latest published book, of four, is a compilation of some of his most important writings between 1985-2020 titled Building Global Labor Solidarity: Lessons from the Philippines, South Africa, Northwestern Europe, and the United States (Lexington Books, 2021, 2022 in paperback). Scipes’ work has integrally included the fight against white supremacy and racism, and he has taught 57 semesters of “Race and Ethnic Diversity” to undergraduate students in Northwest Indiana. (A listing of all of Dr. Scipes’ writings, many with links to original articles, is available on-line at <https://www.pnw.edu/faculty/kim-scipes-ph-d/publications/>.) His current work is arguing the need for progressive labor organizations around the world—and not all labor organizations are progressive—to build global labor solidarity; which he sees as essential in the fight against climate change and environmental destruction, a fight crucial to win for the continued existence of humans, animals and most plants on this planet. Key

to this, he argues, is to repudiate US nationalism, which is based on white supremacy. He advocates taking a global approach to grassroots politics, and claims that three key social forces affecting people around the world are imperialism, globalization, and neo-liberal economics, which he will focus on in his talk. Dr. Scipes argues that we must focus on the US Empire, which he argues is responsible for most of the social devastation around the world as well as the intensifying social devastation in the United States.

1:30 p.m. CT

“Toward a Social Justice Communication Infrastructure Praxis”

Dr. George Villanueva, Associate Professor. Department of Communication & Journalism, Texas A&M University **Room 18** 1:30 p.m. CT

This presentation builds off ‘communication infrastructure theory’ (an ecological framework grounded in the notion that communities are discursively constructed) and ‘communication activism research’ (an approach stressing communication research interventions that promote collective action in the pursuit of social justice) to imagine a ‘social justice communication infrastructure praxis’. The turn is important because it provides communication researchers and activists transformational frameworks that put theory and research into action.

Speaker Bio: Dr. Villanueva is associate professor in the Department of Communication at TAMU. His primary inquiries are in researching how marginalized communities of color survive the material realities of structural oppression that have been reproduced along the intersectional social identities of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and class. To this end, he researches the role that communication, organizing, media, activism, and expressive culture play in place-based advocacy and social change goals of marginalized communities of color in cities. This research further examines how organizational communication and culture can contribute to more equitable, inclusive, and just futures. His research methods are interdisciplinary and informed by critical theoretical frameworks in communication, anthropology, sociology, cultural studies, and engaged scholarship. External Webpage: <http://www.georgevillanueva.com/>

“AI as media: Utilizing media ecology to critically explore human-AI dimensions and dynamics”

Cait Lackey, University of Illinois Chicago **Room 19** 1:30 p.m. CT

This presentation draws critical attention to the need to recognize and understand the agenda, biases, and/or philosophies of artificial intelligence (AI) media ecologies. Media ecology (ME) studies approaches human-made technologies like AI as media that can shape the way people think, feel, and act (Cali, 2017; Innis, 1999; McLuhan, 1964; Mumford, 2010; Postman, 1970, 1998; Strate, 2017). I will discuss AI's mediating powers, and illustrate how ME can be used to uncover AI's shaping socio-cultural effects and larger ecological workings.

Speaker Bio: Cait Lackey is a part of the 2019 doctoral student cohort. She completed her BA and MA in Communication at Purdue University Northwest. Her previous research focused on persuasion and reason, visual methodologies, and strategic communication.

Cait's current research interests focus on artificial intelligence, algorithmic technology, technologically driven strategic communication, and social justice. She is an experienced graduate with a demonstrated history of working in public relations, software development, information technology, and the higher education industry. Skilled in public relations, academic advising, technological consulting, strategic training, crisis communication, visual communication, photography, and journalism, Cait hopes to blend her experience and interests in her upcoming work involving an intersection of communication, computer sciences, and psychology. She is currently a graduate instructor teaching the Fundamentals of Communication.

2:00 p.m. CT

“How the National Security State Controls Both the “News” and Opposition to its Rule”

Stansfield Smith, Chicago ALBA Solidarity, writer Room 20 2:00 p.m. CT

I will summarize different ways in which the corporate rulers of our country (also called the national security state or “deep” state) control our access to information so that we are presented with information or “news” that they find serves their economic and political interests. First, corporate interests control the mainstream media; second, financial resources coming from the government and corporate foundations are used to fund and build up progressive organizations and alternative media that they find compatible with their interests; third, government regulations and corporate control of the media and social media enable them to censor voices that do expose and organize against government deceptions of the public. Thus, for instance, the government and corporate media so controlled our access to information that they could sell their story that Iraq

had weapons of mass destruction, while blocking reporting on United Nations inspectors who explained there was no evidence of a WMD program in Iraq.

Speaker Bio: Stansfield Smith is a member of Chicago ALBA Solidarity, formerly the Chicago Committee to Free the Cuban 5. He has published in Counterpunch, Dissident Voice, Council on Hemispheric Affairs, Monthly Review online, and other websites. Smith is a longtime anti-war activist, and opposed U.S. interference over the years in Latin America. He produces AFGJ's Venezuela & ALBA Weekly News.

“Art as Weapon and Medicine”

Ricardo Levins Morales, RLM Art Studio Room 21 2:00 p.m. CT

Art and culture are the soil in which our struggles for social justice take root. Drawing on fifty years movement experience, Ricardo will share how art can be effective in organizing, building solidarity and addressing trauma.

Speaker Bio: Born in Puerto Rico, Ricardd came of age in the upheavals of 1960s Chicago, starting as a member of the Black Panther Defense Committee. He has been deeply involved in labor, racial justice, anti-colonial and ecology movements ever since, most recently in challenging the racist US police system. He works out of a collective storefront studio in Minneapolis.

2:30 p.m. CT

“Social Media and Social Movements”

Lee Artz, Purdue University Northwest, Room 22 2:30 p.m. CT

Discussion will include components of social media ownership, functions, and dominant usage and observations on successful social movement structures and communication practices.

Speaker Bio: Lee Artz is a professor of media studies and the director of the Center for Global Studies at Purdue University Northwest. His research overview includes: Political economy of media production, Analysis of media news and entertainment content, Relation between public interest and media industry, Investigation of media framing of international events, and Media contribution to mass consent for social order.

“Women in Ska and why it matters”

Heather Augustyn, continuing lecturer, PNW, English and World Languages Room 23 2:30 CT

The ska revival in the UK and the 2 Tone label represented unity of black and white in both the content of the songs, and appearance of the bands. While race may have been central to this declaration, where did gender fit in? Many bands had few, if any, women in their lineup and so women had to do it for themselves. Empowered by punk and impassioned by Jamaican ska and reggae, they took up the microphone, the saxophone, and drumsticks. Women demanded their space on the stage and in the studio. I will discuss the importance of historic preservation and representation in my newest work that utilizes exclusive interviews with more than 50 women involved in ska in the UK during the '70s and '80s.

Speaker Bio: Heather Augustyn is a continuing lecturer in the English Department and director of Westville's Writing Center. She teaches first-year writing as well as oral and written communication for engineers. She writes extensively about the history of ska music in Jamaica, the U.K., the U.S., and all over the world. Her books, scholarly journals, magazines, newspapers, and online publications aim to give recognition of these artists and this marginalized genre of music. She has also established a collection of ska oral histories and artifacts at the Archive of African American Music.

"Ukrainian Identity as an Expression of Western Values"

Dr. Janusz Duzinkiewicz, Purdue University Northwest Room 24 2:30 CT

A discussion of Ukrainian identity as an expression of Western values.

Speaker Bio: Dr. Duzinkiewicz, Associate Professor of History, came to Purdue North Central in 1997 after teaching at Rhodes College and William Penn College. He had completed his undergraduate degree at Spring Hill College (a Jesuit school) and his Master's and Doctorate at the University of Iowa under the guidance of the late Ukrainian-Polish-American scholar, Jaroslaw Pelenski. Dr. Duzinkiewicz was also fortunate to have studied at Jagiellonian University in Kraków and the University of Warsaw. The Duzinkiewicz family dates back to the early 1500s when a Lithuanian-Ruthenian moved to the Western Ukrainian town of Tlumach. Subsequently, his descendants acquired a Polish identity while frequently marrying German women. The family came as official World War II refugees in 1954 to New York where Dr. Duzinkiewicz was born. His research focuses on the constitutional history of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and his

teachings on surveys of Western history and the Great Issues courses tracing Western thought and values. Currently, he is particularly fascinated by the evolution of complexity and consciousness in life as such and in the awakening of the Universe.

3:00 p.m. CT

“Academia & Society”

Sevda Can Arslan, University of Paderborn, Room 25 3:00 p.m. CT

This presentation is about the theory and practice of the relationship between academia and society. It asks: What is critical, public, materialistic communication science? In recent years, the necessity of socially effective research has again been discussed from various perspectives, also in German-language communication studies (e.g. Altmeyden 2021). Based on Michael Burawoy's work on Public Sociology, for example, a charter on Public Communication Science was called for in 2019 (Prinzing, Eisenegger, and Krainer 2019). These existing concepts of Public (Communication) Science will be related to an understanding of critique as claimed by the Critical Communication Science Network. On this basis, concrete current case studies of critical media research with public impact will be discussed. In the process, possibilities, challenges and limits of public impact of communication science will be explored.

Speaker Bio: Dr. Sevda Can Arslan works at University of Paderborn as Research Associate for Media Systems and Media Organisation. Media Systems and Media Organisation focuses on communication, media economic processes, digitalisation, the Internet, and the roles of media systems and media organizations in society.

“The Human Foibles causing Global Crises – Our Passions”

Dr. Deepa Majumdar, Purdue University Northwest Room 26 3:00 p.m. CT

In this presentation, I trace all the world's problems back to the individual and his / her ungoverned passions. Capitalism and the climate crisis are caused by human greed and patriarchy by human lust. War is caused by anger and hatred. So it all boils down to who we are and why we are so empty within that we need soulless material things to fulfill ourselves. Our reckless materialism is ruining not only the environment, but human nature as well. One purpose of modernity is prosperity. Its second purpose is carving individuality, or an “I” out of the “we.” These two purposes are related. For the more prosperous we grow, the more we recoil into the shell of the

isolated ego. This inordinate focus on the self culminates in the selfie, which comes with somatic-narcissistic connotations. What modernity has brought is the retching soul, exteriorized by its own deracinating passions. Having lost inwardness, we succumb to addictions and are addicted to therapy, which turns iniquities into pathologies.

So the long-term solution I suggest is a radical return to our higher selves, one individual at a time. Passing all the laws and ordinances in the world will not help us morally, until we check the human passions by sublimating them through ethical and unselfish conduct. As leaders in the Great Chain of Being, we are stewards for other creatures on planet earth. They are not "resources" to be exploited to satiate our endless greed, which is jeopardizing Earth itself. Nature's intelligent creature is therefore more dangerous than all others on the Great Chain of Being.

Speaker Bio: Dr. Majumdar is a professor of philosophy at Purdue University Northwest. Originally from India, she studied western (continental) philosophy at the Graduate Faculty of the New School, in New York City. She specializes in the Enneads of Plotinus, especially his notion of time. Her publications include a book, research papers on Plotinus, Plato, and Gandhi – plus philosophical essays and a volume of philosophical poetry.

“Supporting Turkey and Syria”

Dr. Ugur Baloglu, Istanbul University, and Dr. Deepa Majumdar, Purdue University Northwest
Main Room 4:00-4:45 p.m. CT

A discussion of how the impacts of the earthquake that struck Turkey and Syria, the media restrictions during the search and rescue efforts, and the importance of empathy, ethics, and fellow-feeling.

Speaker Bios:

Dr. Ugur Baloglu is from Istanbul University at the Institute of Social Sciences. He recently published “The Critical Review of the Westernized Late Ottoman Empire Education System in a Cinematic Context with an Education Related Focus” in the Global Journal of Business and Social Science Review.

Dr. Majumdar is a professor of philosophy at Purdue University Northwest. Originally from India, she studied western (continental) philosophy at the Graduate Faculty of the New School, in New

York City. She specializes in the Enneads of Plotinus, especially his notion of time. Her publications include a book, research papers on Plotinus, Plato, and Gandhi – plus philosophical essays and a volume of philosophical poetry.

APPENDIX E. SEMINAR RECORDINGS

Seminar recordings can be viewed at the below link.

[HTTPS://DRIVE.GOOGLE.COM/DRIVE/FOLDERS/15HKBY6ZXKKNLSMUOBNATKZVZZWQ7RMSZ?USP=SHARING](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/15HKBY6ZXKKNLSMUOBNATKZVZZWQ7RMSZ?usp=sharing)

APPENDIX F. SEMINAR MANUALS AND INTERACTIVES

Manuals

Speaker Instructions

Step 1:

Review your Speaker Instruction Email, which includes the Zoom breakout room number your session is in. You can also find this information on the Easy Access Seminar Map (included in the email), and the Seminar program (included in the email as well). Please review the Seminar program carefully, including the civility policy.

Step 2:

Review the instructions for changing your Zoom participant name: <https://www.lifewire.com/change-name-on-zoom-5097226>; <https://youtu.be/v-QbYXDkQRI?t=27>. You will want to make sure that your Zoom name matches the name you used to sign up to speak during a session. Please consider using this feature to also indicate your preferred pronouns to ensure that all are addressed in a manner that is respectful. If you would like to review how to log on to a Zoom meeting, you can access that information here: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362193-Joining-a-Zoom-meeting>

Step 3:

Review the instructions for moving to breakout rooms and moving back to the main room during a Zoom meeting: <https://youtu.be/PssgCl3NSZQ>; review the instructions for changing your Zoom background: <https://youtu.be/d0ZIE5Ynuxc>. You may change your background at any time. Three optional Collective Action Seminar Zoom backgrounds have been provided to you via the Speaker Instructions Email.

Step 4:

Arrive at the Zoom Seminar in the main room at least ten minutes before your session begins. The host of the seminar will need to make you a co-host so that you will be able to share your screen, mute participants if needed, and record. Note: you will need to log onto the Zoom meeting on a computer; you can't present from a phone.

Step 5:

Move to the appropriate breakout room for your session at least 5 minutes before the session is scheduled to begin. If you run into any trouble moving to the appropriate room, the host will be able to help move you to the appropriate room manually.

Step 6:

Make sure that you are unmuted, and wait for your session moderator to read your biography and introduce your presentation. If you need to address the moderator at any time during your presentation and do not wish to do so orally, you may use the chat feature: Chatting in a Zoom meeting – Zoom Support; How to mute participants during a meeting: <https://youtu.be/FhP4XvxX8QM>

Step 7:

Start recording the session: <https://youtu.be/WUfw8Oc9tjY>

Step 8:

While presenting, if you wish to share your screen at any point during the session, instructions to do this may be accessed here: <https://youtu.be/9wsWpnqE6Hw>

Step 9:

When you have finished speaking, the moderator will lead Q&A.

Step 10:

When the session time ends, please leave the breakout room and allow the recording to process. Please share the recording with Kayla Vasilko (kvasilko@pnw.edu) within 48 hours.

Note: If you would like to schedule a practice session, you may do so by emailing kvasilko@pnw.edu at any time. Additionally, please note that you are welcome to attend sessions as a guest as well; simply indicate this when signing up.

Attendee Instructions

Step 1:

Review your attendee instruction email, which includes the session map, and the Seminar program. Please review the Seminar program carefully, including the civility policy. If you would like to review how to log on to a Zoom meeting, you can access that information here: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362193-Joining-a-Zoom-meeting>

Step 2:

Review the instructions for changing your Zoom participant name: How to Change Your Name On Zoom (lifelwire.com); <https://youtu.be/v-QbYXDkQRI?t=27> in case you would like to remain anonymous during the seminar or need to adjust your name for any reason. Please refrain from using any derogatory language when and if changing your participant name. Attendees with derogatory language in their participant name will be asked to remove said language. Please consider using this feature to also indicate your preferred pronouns to ensure that all are addressed in a manner that is respectful.

Step 3:

Review the instructions for moving to breakout rooms and moving back to the main room during a Zoom meeting: <https://youtu.be/PssgCl3NSZQ>. Review the instructions for changing your Zoom background: <https://youtu.be/d0ZIE5Ynuxc>. You may change your background at any time. Three optional Collective Action Seminar Zoom backgrounds have been provided for you, and you are welcome to use them throughout the seminar!

Step 4:

You may arrive at the Zoom Seminar in the main room at any time. You will be able to navigate to the breakout rooms for the sessions you wish to attend from this point. If you have any trouble moving to the appropriate room, the host will be able to help move you to the appropriate room manually. You may attend all or part of any session that you wish to attend. To enable captions in

your preferred language, please see this guide: https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/6643177746829-Viewing-captions-in-another-language#h_01G5MJ6D6DS1F4JQP9SAPXED4K

Step 5:

Make sure that you are muted while the speakers and session moderators are speaking. When Q&A begins, please wait until the moderator has called on you to speak. If you need to address the moderator at any time during the talk or simply wish to use the chat, you may do so at any time: Chatting in a Zoom meeting – Zoom Support.

Step 6:

When one session ends, you will need to return back to the main room before you can navigate to a different breakout room for the next session you want to attend. If you have any trouble navigating at any time, a host from the main room will be able to help you.

Moderator Instructions

Step 1:

Review your moderator instruction email, which details which session you will be moderating, and includes the speaker bio you will need to read at the start of your session, and the Zoom breakout room number your session is in.

Step 2:

Review the instructions for changing your Zoom participant name: How to Change Your Name On Zoom (lifewire.com); <https://youtu.be/v-QbYXDkQRI?t=27>. You will want to make sure that your Zoom name matches the name you used to sign up to moderate a session. Please consider using this feature to also indicate your preferred pronouns to ensure that all are addressed in a manner that is respectful.

Step 3:

Review the instructions for moving to breakout rooms and moving back to the main room during a Zoom meeting: <https://youtu.be/PssgCl3NSZQ>; review the instructions for changing your Zoom background: <https://youtu.be/d0ZIE5Ynuxc>. You may change your background at any time. There are three optional Collective Action Zoom backgrounds included in your moderator instruction email which you may elect to use.

Step 4:

Arrive at the Zoom Seminar in the main room at least ten minutes before the session you signed up to moderate begins. The host of the seminar will need to make you a co-host so that you will be able to mute participants and record. Note: you will need to log onto the Zoom meeting on a computer; you can't moderate from a phone.

Step 5:

Move to the appropriate breakout room to moderate your session at least 5 minutes before the

session is scheduled to begin. If you run into any trouble moving to the appropriate room, the host will be able to help move you to the appropriate room manually.

Step 6:

Make sure that all participants in the breakout room are muted, except for you and the speaker. Before the session begins, you should post the following message in the chat: “Thank you for joining us. (ENTER TITLE OF PRESENTATION) will begin at (ENTER TIME OF PRESENTATION). Please take a moment to mute yourself, and ensure that you remain muted until the speaker has finished speaking. There will be time for Q&A at the conclusion of the presentation. At that time, you may raise your hand, or post your question in the chat, and I will call on you or read your question aloud.” Chatting in a Zoom meeting – Zoom Support; How to mute participants during a meeting: <https://youtu.be/FhP4XvxX8QM>

Step 7:

Start recording the session: <https://youtu.be/WUfw8Oc9tjY> and put the link to the Collective Action Seminar Reflection forum into the chat:
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1aRWU0121F043GRnisuSiEyooRgz38u8hh5EtJkKSc/edit?usp=sharing>

Step 8:

Welcome everyone to the session and explain that participants may log their reflections in the communal Collective Action Seminar forum via the link in the chat (See Step 7). You also need to explain that they may ask the speaker questions when the speaker has concluded speaking, but they must do so by raising a virtual hand or posting a question into the Zoom chat, not the reflection forum. Then, read the speaker’s biography (provided in instruction email); state that the presentation will now begin, then mute yourself until the speaker has concluded. If attendees unmute and attempt to speak over the presenter, please mute them and ensure there are no disruptions during the presentation. If you need to share your screen for any reason during the session, instructions to do this may be accessed here: <https://youtu.be/9wsWpnqE6Hw>

Step 9:

When the speaker has finished, please thank the speaker and attendees and open it up for questions. Read the questions in the order they are presented (either in the chat or by raised hands). Before the end of the session, read the question that you have been provided. Before the session ends, ask the standard questions that were provided to you in the instructions email.

Step 10:

When the session time ends, notify the speaker and attendees that time is up and thank them for their time. Leave the breakout room and allow the recording to process. Share the recording with Kayla Vasilko (kvasilko@pnw.edu) within 48 hours.

Note: If you would like to schedule a practice session, you may do so by emailing kvasilko@pnw.edu. Additionally, please note that you are welcome to moderate more than one session, and/or attend sessions as a guest; simply indicate this when signing up.

Self-Moderator Contingency Instructions

If for any reason at all, your moderator(s) have not shown up, or cancel ahead of time, and it is time for your session to begin, simply do the following:

Step 1:

Make sure that all participants in the breakout room are muted, except for yourself. Before the session begins, you should post the following message in the chat: “Thank you for joining us. (ENTER TITLE OF PRESENTATION) will begin at (ENTER TIME OF PRESENTATION). Chatting in a Zoom meeting – Zoom Support; How to mute participants during a meeting: <https://youtu.be/FhP4XvxX8QM>

Step 2:

Start recording the session: <https://youtu.be/WUfw8Oc9tjY> and put the link to the Collective Action Seminar Reflection forum into the chat: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1aRWU0121F043GRnisiSiEyooRgz38u8hh5EtJkKSc/edit?usp=sharing>

Step 3:

Welcome everyone to the session and explain that participants may log their reflections in the communal Collective Action Seminar forum via the link in the chat (See Step 7). You also need to explain that they may ask you questions when you have concluded speaking, but they must do so by raising a virtual hand or posting a question into the Zoom chat, not the reflection forum. Then, introduce yourself and your talk. You can even read your biography (which is highlighted via the seminar program in your instructions email.)

Step 4:

When your talk is over, please open it up for questions if time allows. Read the questions in the order they are presented (either in the chat or by raised hands). Before the end of the session, read the standard question(s) that you have been provided in your email.

Step 5:

Leave the breakout room and allow the recording to process. Share the recording with Kayla Vasilko (kvasilko@pnw.edu) within 48 hours.

Co-Host Instructions

This role doesn't require you to speak during the meeting if you don't wish to, or even show your camera. You can use the chat feature alone if that works best. For the hours that you signed up, please arrive in the main room and help monitor the chat. If a participant needs help getting to a breakout room, please assist them.

You can access the list of the moderators, along with the room numbers they are supposed to be in, here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CbtU-5GIgyfYGkqQM3nYPfbtUqefq4WJF9W3eRu1oKM/edit?usp=sharing>

Additional Helpful Tips:

Note: you may wish to use the following features.

Review your Instruction Email, which includes the Easy Access Seminar Map and the Seminar program. These will help you locate all room assignments. Please review the Seminar program carefully, including the civility policy.

Review the instructions for moving participants: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206476313-Managing-Breakout-Rooms>

Review the instructions for changing your Zoom participant name: <https://www.lifewire.com/change-name-on-zoom-5097226>; <https://youtu.be/v-QbYXDkQRI?t=27>. Please consider using this feature to also indicate your preferred pronouns to

ensure that all are addressed in a manner that is respectful. If you would like to review how to log on to a Zoom meeting, you can access that information here: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362193-Joining-a-Zoom-meeting>

Review the instructions for moving to breakout rooms and moving back to the main room during a Zoom meeting: <https://youtu.be/PssgCl3NSZQ>; review the instructions for changing your Zoom background: <https://youtu.be/d0ZIE5Ynuxc>. You may change your background at any time. Three optional Collective Action Seminar Zoom backgrounds have been provided to you via the Speaker Instructions Email.

Review the instructions for using the chat feature: Chatting in a Zoom meeting – Zoom Support; and how to mute participants during a meeting: <https://youtu.be/FhP4XvxX8QM>

Zoom Information

The below Zoom link is the link that you will use for the Mainroom, all breakout rooms, and whether you are a presenter, co-host, moderator, or an attendee. In other words, there is only one Zoom link required for the entirety of this seminar.

The 2023, Global Collective Action Seminar runs from 7:45 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. CT (Central Standard Time). For a listing of sessions, please see the Seminar Program or Easy Access Seminar Map.

Kayla Vasilko is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Collective Action Seminar

Time: Feb 21, 2023 07:45 AM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://purdue-edu.zoom.us/j/97700510757>

Meeting ID: 977 0051 0757

One tap mobile

+13126266799,,97700510757# US (Chicago)

+16465588656,,97700510757# US (New York)

Dial by your location

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

+1 646 931 3860 US

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

+1 305 224 1968 US

+1 309 205 3325 US

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)
+1 689 278 1000 US
+1 719 359 4580 US
+1 253 205 0468 US
+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)
+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
+1 360 209 5623 US
+1 386 347 5053 US
+1 507 473 4847 US
+1 564 217 2000 US
+1 669 444 9171 US
+54 343 414 5986 Argentina
+54 112 040 0447 Argentina
+54 115 983 6950 Argentina
+54 341 512 2188 Argentina
+55 11 4700 9668 Brazil
+55 21 3958 7888 Brazil
+55 11 4632 2236 Brazil
+55 11 4632 2237 Brazil
+55 11 4680 6788 Brazil
+359 3 257 1633 Bulgaria
+359 2 492 5688 Bulgaria
+1 780 666 0144 Canada
+56 232 938 848 Chile
+56 41 256 0288 Chile
+56 22 573 9304 Chile
+56 22 573 9305 Chile
+56 23 210 9066 Chile
+57 60 1518 9698 Colombia
+57 60 2620 7388 Colombia
+57 60 1508 7702 Colombia
+57 60 1514 0382 Colombia
+57 60 1518 9697 Colombia
+506 4100 7699 Costa Rica
+506 4036 0180 Costa Rica
+385 1777 6333 Croatia
+385 1300 0988 Croatia
+357 2 505 4777 Cyprus
+357 2 200 0888 Cyprus
+420 2 2888 2388 Czech Republic
+420 2 3901 8272 Czech Republic
+420 5 3889 0161 Czech Republic
+1 829 956 2188 Dominican Republic
+1 829 947 9220 Dominican Republic
+593 962 842 117 Ecuador
+503 2136 6444 El Salvador

+503 2113 9088 El Salvador
+372 880 1188 Estonia
+372 660 1699 Estonia
+358 3 4109 2129 Finland
+358 9 4245 1488 Finland
+358 9 7252 2471 Finland
+995 7067 77954 Georgia
+995 3224 73988 Georgia
+30 231 118 0599 Greece
+30 211 198 4488 Greece
+36 1 408 8456 Hungary
+36 1 701 0488 Hungary
+36 1 779 9126 Hungary
+972 3 978 6688 Israel
+81 3 4579 0545 Japan
+81 3 4579 0432 Japan
+82 2 3143 9612 Korea, Republic of
+82 2 3143 9611 Korea, Republic of
+371 6303 1888 Latvia
+371 6303 1808 Latvia
+370 5214 1488 Lithuania
+370 3799 9260 Lithuania
+352 2786 1188 Luxembourg
+352 2786 4277 Luxembourg
+352 342 080 9265 Luxembourg
+60 3 9212 1727 Malaysia
+60 3 3099 2229 Malaysia
+60 3 7724 4079 Malaysia
+60 3 7724 4080 Malaysia
+356 2778 1288 Malta
+356 2776 1777 Malta
+52 558 659 6001 Mexico
+52 558 659 6002 Mexico
+52 554 161 4288 Mexico
+52 554 169 6926 Mexico
+52 556 826 9800 Mexico
+47 2400 4736 Norway
+47 2400 4735 Norway
+507 833 9588 Panama
+507 378 2155 Panama
+51 1 707 5788 Peru
+51 1 708 8312 Peru
+51 1 730 6777 Peru
+48 22 306 5342 Poland
+48 22 307 3488 Poland
+48 22 398 7356 Poland

+1 787 945 1488 Puerto Rico
+1 787 966 7727 Puerto Rico
+1 939 945 0244 Puerto Rico
+40 37 170 0418 Romania
+40 31 630 1088 Romania
+7 499 951 6380 Russia
+7 499 951 6379 Russia
+421 233 418 515 Slovakia
+421 233 056 888 Slovakia
+386 1888 8788 Slovenia
+386 1600 3102 Slovenia
+27 87 551 7702 South Africa
+27 21 426 8190 South Africa
+27 21 426 8191 South Africa
+27 87 550 3946 South Africa

Meeting ID: 977 0051 0757

Find your local number: <https://purdue-edu.zoom.us/j/97700510757>

Join by SIP

97700510757@zoomcrc.com

Join by H.323

162.255.37.11 (US West)

162.255.36.11 (US East)

Meeting ID: 977 0051 0757

Standard questions

Before the Q&A portion of the session you are moderating is over, please be sure to ask the following of the presenter:

If there is only time for one question, ask:

--What factors do you believe are most important when it comes to trying to achieve positive social change? In other words, what are the necessary ingredients?

If there is time for three, ask:

--What factors do you believe are most important when it comes to trying to achieve positive social change? In other words, what are the necessary ingredients?

--What advice would you give others who are considering joining a cause for positive change? What advice would you give to those currently advocating for a cause for positive change, but who are feeling discouraged?

--Considering your unique work, what is one way that you would be interested in collaborating with a person or a group? What is one area of your work you would like to expand?

Judy Heumann Q&A Script

We've read a lot about your journey as a disability rights activist. Your work with governments, NGOs, non-profits, and disability interest groups has helped develop human rights legislation and policies benefiting children and adults with disabilities. Through your work in the World Bank and the State Department, you've also led the mainstreaming of disability rights into international development, and you did all of this after fighting repeatedly to be included in the educational system. What were some of the strategies you used to stay motivated and not give up on this cause? What might you say to others fighting for their rights in similar or different areas?

There is still a great deal of variance in supports available to students with disabilities in college settings. What do you say to people who argue that it isn't fair to other students in the class for students with disabilities to have accommodations?

You attended Camp Jened, a camp for children with disabilities, for nine years, and said that your experiences there brought a greater awareness of the connectedness of the disabled experience, stating, "We had the same joy together, the same anger over the way we were treated and the same frustrations at opportunities we didn't have." What role do you feel connectedness and shared understanding play in the fight for any kind of change? How do you feel these experiences impacted your approach to fighting for disability rights?

While attending Long Island University, you organized rallies and protests with other students, both with and without disabilities, to demand access to classrooms by ramps and the right to live in a dorm. How did you approach inspiring those who may not have been directly related to get involved? How did the involvement of individuals without disabilities impact the movement? In response to letters and outreach from those with disabilities facing discrimination around the country, you founded Disabled in Action, an organization that focused on securing the protection of people with disabilities under civil rights laws through political protest. In addition to this, you did significant work for the 504 Sit-In, World Institute on Disability, for what is now the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and much more. Drawing from these experiences, can you speak to the importance of equal access to information on disability rights?

You are spreading awareness for disability rights through several books, a podcast, a documentary, a myriad of organizations, and much more. What role do you feel the medium plays in a movement? How might this have changed from when you began your activism to now?

Interactives

Registration

Questionnaire One

Q1 Name

Q2 Email

Q3 Affiliation (E.g., university association, student, community member, organizational affiliation, etc.)

Questionnaire 2

Q1 Will you attend the Welcoming Remarks from 7:55-8:00 a.m. CT?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Q2 Will you attend the Keynote Q&A with Judy Heumann from 8-9 a.m. CT

☐ Yes

☐ No

Q3 Which sessions will you attend from the 10:00 a.m. CT start bracket?

☐ Brian Dolber's Session

☐ Michael Albert's Session

☐ No Session

Q4 Which sessions will you attend from the 10:30 a.m. CT start bracket?

☐ Kenny Kincaid and Pam Saylor's Session

☐ No Session

Q5 Which sessions will you attend from the 11:0 a.m. CT start bracket?

- ☐ David Detmer's Session
- ☐ Cooper Sperling's Session
- ☐ Daniel Gyekye's Session
- ☐ No Session

Q6 Which sessions will you attend from the 11:30 a.m. CT start bracket?

- ☐ Shreya Bhandari's Session
- ☐ Urooj Raja's Session
- ☐ Briana Davis' Session
- ☐ No Session

Q7 Which sessions will you attend from the 12:00 p.m. CT start bracket?

- ☐ Steve Marcek's Session
- ☐ Bridget Meehan's Session
- ☐ No Session

Q8 Which sessions will you attend from the 12:30 p.m. CT start bracket?

- ☐ Errol Salamon's Session
- ☐ Colette Morrow's Session
- ☐ Rebecca Chambers, Nancy Walter, and April Valentine's Session
- ☐ No Session

Q9 Which sessions will you attend from the 1:00 p.m. CT start bracket?

- ☐ Rhon Teruelle's Session
- ☐ Karen Bishop Morris' Session
- ☐ Kim Scipes' Session
- ☐ No Session

Q10 Which sessions will you attend from the 1:30 p.m. CT start bracket?

- ☐ George Villanueva's Session
- ☐ Cait Lackey's Session
- ☐ No Session

Q11 Which sessions will you attend from the 2:00 p.m. CT start bracket?

- ☐ Stansfield Smith's Session
- ☐ Ricardo Levins Morales' Session
- ☐ No Session

Q12 Which sessions will you attend from the 2:30 p.m. CT start bracket?

- ☐ Lee Artz' Session
- ☐ Janusz Duzinkiewicz' Session
- ☐ No Session

Q13 Which sessions will you attend from the 3:00 p.m. CT start bracket?

- ☐ Sevda Can Arslan's Session

☐ Deepa Majumdar's Session

☐ No Session

Q14 Will you attend from the 4:00-4:45 p.m. CT session on Syria and Turkey?

☐ Yes, I will attend Ugur Baloglu and Deepa Majumdar's Session

☐ No, I will not attend this session

Q15 Will you attend the Closing Remarks & Reflections from 4:45-5:00 p.m. CT?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Easy Access Seminar Map



Figure 21: Easy Access Seminar Map

Seminar Reflective Forum

Please use [this journal](#) to type your thoughts/feedback following a session of the Collective Action Seminar. If you wish to connect with other attendees and/or presenters, you may leave your email address here in the reflection forum.

"I felt that Judy's session was so important. She has walked the walk and understands the struggles for not only disabled individuals, but all intersectionalities to gain equal rights. Many resources were provided for further research on the viewer's end. A main takeaway was the need for representation for the Disabled community, as about 2 percent of media portrays Disabled individuals."

"Both hosts were welcoming and professional."

“If anyone would like to discuss Disability Rights and Accessibility, my email is morri587@pnw.edu”

“Dr. Dolber’s presentation was amazing. He was very down to earth and communicated effectively. As a regular Uber user, I did not know the struggles Uber and Lyft drivers have faced to get minimum wage and union benefits. I will keep an eye on California as those rights are in the courts right now. I also found it inspirational that Dr. Dolber and his group have not given up even though there have been defeats and long-term battles. It was inspirational.”

“Daniel Gyekye’s presentation was important and relevant to many topics. Specifically, myself as a teacher. It is great that Daniel expressed implicit and explicit uses of linguistic racism, as many may not know they are being racist. I was saddened to hear his American experiences when he first arrived were less than ideal but was glad to hear his colleagues have been working to accept and understand his speaking. Daniel gave great advice on balancing being a teacher of English/Communications when it comes to standards and balancing accepting students for how they are. Daniel was very welcoming.”

“Dr. Bhandari’s presentation was heartbreaking but needed to be viewed. Nobody in the world should ever suffer from abuse. It was heartbreaking to see how prevalent it is in Asian women. It is important to note that not all abuse is physical but there are so many forms of mental abuse, even to the extent of threatening the citizen status of a woman. I did, however, find hope that there are groups that work to help individuals in this situation. While it is tricky for numerous reasons (such as some women mentally abused not believing they are abused, as well as abusers not trusting many people with the fact they were abused), groups like the APNA GHAR help these women who are in need. I find this information vital and thought Dr. Bhandari was a great host.”

“Dr. Scipes’ presentation was complex but interesting. While I still am processing a lot of information that was shared, the topic of imperialism stood out to me. Not all countries have equal diplomatic power. Outside of Iran and Thailand, every country has been colonized by an imperial country. There is also labor imperialism that is economically and politically influenced. The top layer of society gains money while the bottom often loses money. There was a large loss in the bottom layer of society, in example, during the Bush (G.W.) era. I am still looking into what Neo-Liberal Economics are and look forward to better understanding it. Dr. Scipes was a great presenter as usual.”

“The presentation was very informative. I enjoyed learning about it! Thank you.”

“Session #23 (Duzinkiewicz): Very well versed and informative, and provides good context for how to view the current war with Russia.”

Zoom Whiteboard

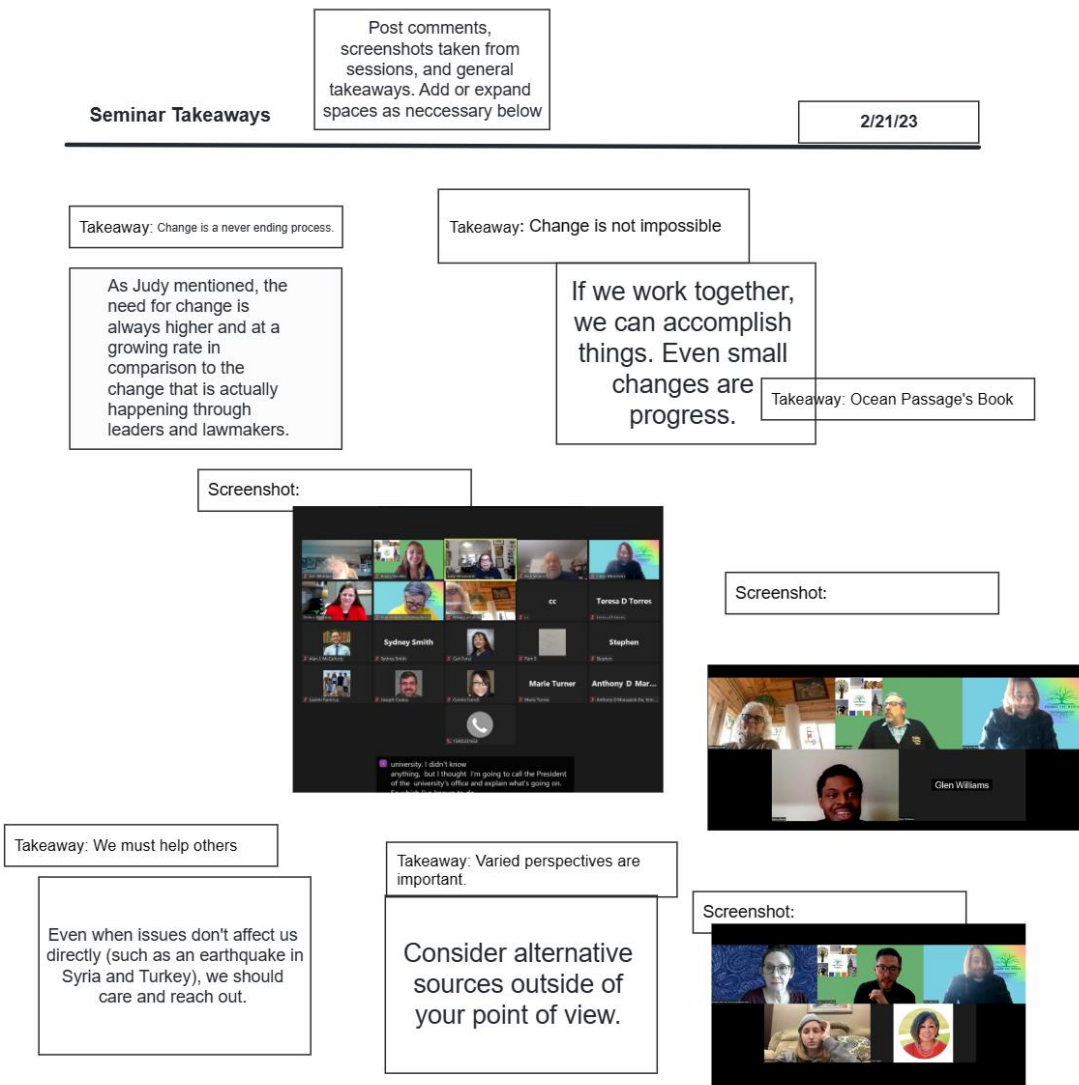


Figure 22: Zoom Whiteboard

Zoom Backgrounds



Figure 23: Zoom Background One

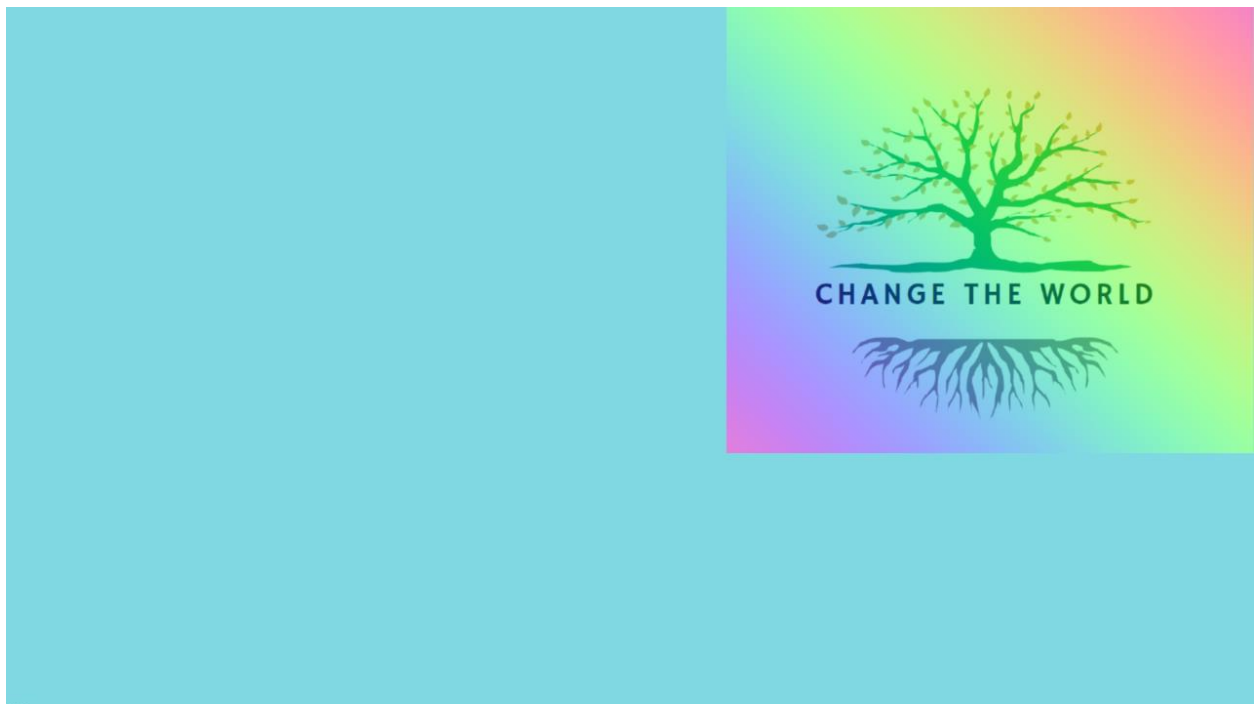


Figure 24: Zoom Background Two



Figure 25: Zoom Background Three

APPENDIX G. SEMINAR MARKETING

Environment



**FEBRUARY 21
2023 VIA ZOOM**
**7:45 A.M. -5:00 P.M. CT
(CENTRAL STANDARD TIME)**




The first 100 registered will be entered in a drawing to win a copy of Judy Heumann's "Being Heumann" and Erin Suzuki's "Ocean Passages." The first 50 will be entered to win a podcast equipment bundle.

Global Media

**GLOBAL COLLECTIVE
ACTION SEMINAR**

Human Rights



Register by scanning the QR code or using the link below.
Attendees must register in advance
[HTTPS://PURDUE.CA1.QUALTRIC.S.COM/3FE/FORM/SV_1MWZ36D/EJVTJHD0](https://PURDUE.CA1.QUALTRIC.S.COM/3FE/FORM/SV_1MWZ36D/EJVTJHD0)

Social Justice

Sessions led by:
 Judy Heumann
 Dr. Shreya Bhandari
 Pam Saylor
 Dr. Brian Dolber
 Dr. David Detmer
 Dr. Kim Scipes
 Michael Albert
 Ricardo Levins Morales
 Dr. Steve Macek
 Dr. Errol Salamon
 Dr. Bridget Meehan
 Dr. Rhon Teruelle
 Dr. George Villanueva
 Stansfield Smith
 Dr. Lee Artz
 Dr. Urooj Raja
 Dr. Sevda Can Arslan
 Derrick Jensen
 Daniel Gyekye
 Dr. Deepa Majumdar
 Briana Davis
 Cooper Sperling
 Dr. Colette Morrow
 Rebecca Chambers
 Nancy Walter
 April Valentine
 Dr. Karen Bishop Morris
 Cait Lackey
 Dr. Janusz Duzinkiewicz
 Dr. Kenneth Kincaid
 Dr. Ugur Baloglu
 And more!

Questions? Contact
kvasilko@pnw.edu

Figure 26: Seminar Promotional One

Environment

Global Media

GLOBAL COLLECTIVE ACTION SEMINAR

Social Justice

FEBRUARY 21

2023 VIA ZOOM

7:45 A.M. -5:00 P.M. CT

(CENTRAL STANDARD TIME)

Human Rights

SPECIAL OPENING KEYNOTE Q&A WITH

DISABILITY RIGHTS ACTIVIST

JUDY HEUMANN

8:00 -9:00 A.M. CT

KEYNOTE CO-SPONSORED BY THE

PURDUE UNIVERSITY

NORTHWEST

DISABILITY ACCESS

CENTER

Figure 27: Seminar Promotional Two

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VITA

KAYLA M. VASILKO

Purdue University Northwest
Dept. of Communication & Creative Arts

1401 South US Highway 421
Westville, IN 46391

Education

MA	Purdue University Northwest, Communication	Forthcoming--May
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2023

BA	Purdue University Northwest, Honors English Writing	4.0 May 2021
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Graduated with Highest Distinction (Highest Grade Point Average in the College of Humanities, Education, and Social Sciences), and the Chancellor's Medallion.
Minored in Spanish and Creative Writing as a Profession

Honors and Awards

Honors—

Purdue University Northwest Outstanding Graduate Student	2023
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Awarded for service such as uncovering a university time capsule, writing grants to bring the "Hoosier Slide" art to Purdue Northwest, working as a graduate instructor of the Fundamentals of Speech Communication, and an administrative assistant for the Purdue Office of Engagement.

Eugene V. Debs Award in Communication for the Common Good Award

2022

Awarded for significant action in the community to progress social and environmental justice.

3rd Place Purdue Service-Learning Summit Service-Learning Summit Award

2022

LaPorte County Historian of the Year	2021
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Awarded for research and resulting exhibit showcasing the life of Anita King.

Purdue University Northwest Honors College Hall of Fame	2021
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Awarded for exemplary leadership from 2017-2021 in the PNW Honors College.

2021 500 Festival Princess	2021
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Awarded to the most academically driven women in the state of Indiana.

Purdue University Northwest Outstanding Undergraduate Student 2021

Awarded for service such as opening a remembrance garden at Gabis Arboretum, managing several student organizations, and working as a tutor and supplemental instructor.

Purdue University Northwest Dean's List 2017-22

Awarded every semester for academic performance of sustaining an overall grade point average of at least 3.5 and a semester grade point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.

Purdue University Northwest Semester Honors 2017-22

Awarded every semester for academic performance of sustaining an overall grade point average of at least 3.5 and a semester grade point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.

Purdue University Northwest Honors College Outstanding Student Leader 2020

Awarded for exemplary service as a student leader in the Honors College.

Honors College Outstanding Student Leader 2019

Awarded for exemplary service as a student leader in the Honors College.

Honors College Outstanding Participation Nominee 2019

Nominated for exemplary service as a student leader and volunteer in the Honors College.

Honors College Outstanding Volunteer Nominee 2019

Nominated for exemplary service as a volunteer in the Honors College.

Honors College Outstanding Freshman 2018

Awarded for exemplary innovation as a freshman in the Honors College.

Clement Stacy Undergraduate Research Award, First Place 2018

Awarded for outstanding research for a presentation titled: "The Power of Kindness & Positivity in the College Environment."

Clement Stacy Undergraduate Research Award, Second Place 2018

Awarded for outstanding research for a presentation titled: "A Philosophical View of the Importance of Honesty in Romantic Relationships."

Grants—

John S. Tuckey Graduate Research Award

2022

Awarded by PNW Graduate Studies for thesis project: "Interpret the World and Change It: Overcoming Barriers to Positive Social Change."

Promoting Spanish Culture Through the Arts, *collaboration*

2021

Purdue University Northwest Undergraduate Research Competition, \$600

Uniting for Important Paws: Independent Cat Society Project (Fall)

2021

Awarded by the Purdue University Service-Learning Grant Competition, \$1500

Uniting for Important Paws: Independent Cat Society Project (Spring)

2021

Awarded by the Purdue University Service-Learning Grant Competition, \$1500

PNW Precious Plastics Initiative, *collaboration*

2021

Awarded by the Purdue University Service-Learning Grant Competition, \$1500

Anita King, Indiana's own Paramount Girl

2020-21

- ❖ Purdue University Northwest English Department, \$400
- ❖ Purdue University Northwest History and Philosophy Department, \$710
- ❖ Purdue University Service-Learning Grant Competition, \$1500
- ❖ The Lynn and Jeanie Kissel Foundation, \$1001
- ❖ The Commission for Women in Michigan City, \$500
- ❖ Purdue University Northwest Undergraduate Research Competition, \$600

Aero Solar Energy Collection (Spring), *collaboration*

2020

Purdue University Northwest Undergraduate Research Competition, \$600

Increasing Student Participation in Undergraduate Research

2020

Purdue University Northwest Undergraduate Research Competition, \$300

Know your Lemons: Squeezing out Breast Cancer and Winning the Fight

2020

Purdue University Northwest Undergraduate Research Competition, \$300

Porter County Veterans Treatment Court

2020

Awarded by the Purdue University Service-Learning Grant Competition, \$1500

Aero Solar Energy Collection (Fall), *collaboration*

Purdue University Northwest Undergraduate Research Competition, \$600

2019

Professional Experience

Purdue University, West Lafayette

May 2022 to Present

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Office of Engagement

- Interviewed Subjects for Office Media
- Authored Articles for Purdue Today and Office Media
- Developed Communication Guidebook
- Trained Writing Interns
- Performed Qualitative and Quantitative Data Analyses

Purdue University Northwest, Westville

Aug 2021 to Present

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Department of Communication and Creative Arts

- Taught 5 sections of COM 114 with approximately 28 students in each section
- Created lesson plans and engagement initiatives
- Created questions for department-wide COM 114 midterm and final exams
- Provided feedback to help students become more effective communicators

Falling Waters Estates, Crown Point

Aug 2021 to Present

Media Consultant, Falling Waters HOA

- Facilitated the creative development of the bi-monthly newsletter
- Conducted interviews, took photographs, and generated content for bi-monthly newsletter
- Wrote narratives and edited for bi-monthly newsletter

Purdue University Northwest, Westville

Aug 2020 to May 2021

Supplemental Instructor, Department of English

- Provided supplemental instruction for 2 section English 104 with approximately 25 students per section
- Created lesson plans and engagement initiatives
- Advised students

Purdue University Northwest, Westville

Jan 2019 to May 2021

Writing Tutor, PNW Writing Center

- Helped students in every stage of the writing process
- Advised in APA, MLA, and Chicago Style formats
- Counseled grammar, structure, and organization

Purdue University Northwest, Westville

Aug 2019 to Dec 2019

Teaching Assistant, Honors College

- Taught **HONR 111**, the first undergraduate course in the Honors College cohort
- Developed lesson plans and assignments
- Revised the syllabus
- Worked one on one with students on APA and MLA format

Purdue University Northwest, Westville

Aug 2018 to Dec 2019

Teaching Assistant, Department of History and Philosophy

- Graded assignments of approximately 65 students in multiple sections of Introductory Ethics and Philosophy
- Managed gradebook
- Communicated with students

Conference & Professional Presentations

Purdue University Northwest Dangerous Discussions, Presenter, 2023

Days of Discovery, Presenter, 2018

Days of Discovery, Presenter, Two Presentations, 2019

Days of Discovery, Presenter, Three Presentations, 2020

Days of Discovery, Presenter, Four Presentations, 2021

Days of Discovery, Presenter, Two Presentations, 2022

Days of Discovery, Presenter, Five Presentations, 2023

Clement Stacy, Presenter, 2018

Clement Stacy, Presenter, Two Presentations, 2019

National Collegiate Honors Council Conference, Presenter, Two Presentations, 2018

National Collegiate Honors Council Conference, Presenter, 2019

Johns Hopkins Macksey Symposium, Presenter, Two Presentations, 2021

Mid-East Honors Association, Presenter, Four Presentations, 2021

Purdue Service-Learning Summit, Presenter, 2019

Purdue Service-Learning Summit, Presenter, Three Presentations, 2021

Purdue Service-Learning Summit, Presenter, Two Presentations, 2022

LaPorte County Historical Society Annual Car Show, Keynote Speaker, 2021

Professional Training

Safe Zone Awareness

Purdue University Northwest, 2018 & 2019

Suicide Prevention

Purdue University Northwest, 2018 & 2019

Bystander Intervention

Purdue University Northwest, 2018 & 2019

Certificate in Writing for Interactive Media

Purdue University Northwest, 2020

CITI

Purdue University Northwest, 2018, 2020, 2022

Professional Service

Committee Member, Benchmarking Committee, Faculty Senate

Present

2022-

- Examining comparable institutions site for future PNW strategic planning

Program Director, Indiana Pandemic Poetry Project, Legacy Foundation

Present

2020-

- Marketing
- Coordinating donations
- Overseeing application guidelines and marketing

- Website designing
- Review committee coordinating
- Student Organization Founder, S.H.I.N.E (Students Helping Ignite Needed Esteem)** 2018-
Present
 - Leading members
 - Managing advertising
 - Coordinating events
- Student Organization Leader, PNW Chapter A.M.F (Actively Moving Forward)** 2018-
Present
 - Leading members
 - Managing advertising
 - Coordinating events
- Student Organization Founder, Westville Warriors** 2019-
Present
 - Leading members
 - Managing advertising
 - Coordinating events
- Student Organization Founder, The Graduate Association of Leaders** 2021-
Present
 - Leading members
 - Managing advertising
 - Coordinating events
- Committee Member, Purdue University Northwest Honors College, Faculty Senate** 2018-
2019
 - Advising on program development
- Purdue University Northwest Student Government Association** 2018-
2021
 - President Pro Tempore
 - Honors College Senator
- Committee Member, Purdue University Northwest TIP Committee** 2019
 - Advising faculty promotions
- Purdue University Northwest Honors College** 2019-
2021
 - Serving as HSAB President
 - Serving as Community Involvement Committee Chair
 - Approving event proposals
 - Mediating convocations
 - Advising the writing of the Honors constitution
 - Meeting monthly with the Honors Dean

- Grant Writing
- Purdue University Northwest CHESS Student Advisory Board** 2019-2021
 - Chair of the board
 - Working with the Dean of CHESS
 - Coordinating events
 - Interviewing faculty
 - Volunteering
- National Society of Leadership and Success, PNW Chapter** 2019-2021
 - Serving as chapter president
 - Leading chapter orientations
 - Overseeing committees
 - Participating in national conference calls
 - Managing and coordinating induction ceremonies
- Sigma Tau Delta, PNW Chapter** 2020- 2021
 - Serving as chapter president
 - Leading chapter book club
 - Coordinating conference attendance
- Writing Intern, Easy Event Planning: Honor and Thank** 2020
 - Creating recognition for COVID-19 frontline workers
 - Assembling press releases
 - Contacting influencers
 - Blogging for the organization
 - Working with state leaders and government officials
- Laini Fluellen Charities (LFC), Triple Negative Breast Cancer Non-Profit** 2020
 - Writing grants
 - Writing scripts for speeches
 - Coordinating media coverage
 - Composing a grants calendar
 - Advising the first annual virtual Pink Tie Gala
 - Working with sponsors
 - Organizing a collaboration with the PNW STAR Walk 2020
 - Editing the LFC Website

Professional Affiliations

Festival 500, 2021-Present

Indianapolis 500 Ambassador, 2021 Festival Princess.

Mid-East Honors Association, 2021-Present

Lake County Legacy Foundation, 2021-Present

Sigma Tau Delta, 2020-Present

National Society of Leadership and Success, 2018-Present

Omicron Delta Kappa, 2018-Present

National Collegiate Honors Council, 2018-Present

PUBLICATIONS

- Vasilko, K. (2020) "Mourning Night," The Symphony of Reason: Vol. 1, Issue I.
- Vasilko, K. (2020) "Covid-19 and the Philosophy of Change," The Symphony of Reason: Vol. 1, Issue II.
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