AUSxURO | Special Edition

Arts Undergraduate Research Award 2022

ORGANIZED BY THE Arts Undergraduate Society AND Undergraduate Research Opportunities

UBC Vancouver

CANADIAN JOURNAL *of* UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

ARTS UNDERGRADUATE SOCIETY

University of British Columbia, Vancouver
Buchanan D140, 1866 Main Mall
Vancouver, BC Canada V6T 1Z1

aus.ubc.ca

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

University of British Columbia, Vancouver
Room 3302, 3500-6133 University Blvd.
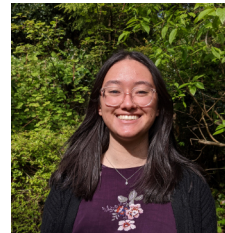Vancouver, BC Canada V6T 1Z1

www.uroubc.com

AUSxURO CJUR Editorial Team

Si-ah Choi
Co-Editor-in-Chief
BSc Behavioural Neuroscience (Hons.)

Emma Lam
Co-Editor-in-Chief
BSc Animal Biology (Hons.)

Imogen Porter
Senior Advisor
BSc Microbiology & Immunology (Hons.)

ABSTRACTS

Arts Undergraduate Society

URO

This special edition of the Canadian Journal of Undergraduate Research (CJUR) contains the works of winners of the Arts Undergraduate Society (AUS) and Undergraduate Research Opportunities (URO) Arts Undergraduate Research Award 2022. We are excited to feature authors from various fields of research, including sociology, psychology, international relations, and public health.

Our AUSxURO award was created in 2020 in order to reward hardworking students who have demonstrated excellence and dedication to their research, fostering a welcome environment for undergraduate researchers to share their work. We would like to commend all applicants for the enthusiasm shown in the ever-increasing levels of participation.

Fatima Rua
President | AUS

Rosemary Vayalikunnel
Co-President | URO

As undergraduate student-led organizations, our goal is to provide students with a strong foundation that they can utilize to go above and beyond. With opportunities available to students of all disciplines, we hope to motivate more students to pursue their passion.

Stephanie Quon
Co-President | URO
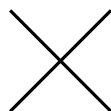
This issue is published on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Coast Salish Nations, including xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh).

Trans and Two-Spirit (Un)housing: Emergency Trans-Specific Shelter Space in Vancouver

Kira Dinim, BA English Language and Literature (fourth year)

Address correspondence to
kiradinim@gmail.com

This report serves as a strategic examination of the impacts of Vancouver's housing crisis on LGBTQ2S+ individuals, specifically on trans and two-spirit unhoused people. Just under one in 100 people ages 20-24 are non-binary or transgender in Canada according to the 2021 census, which is believed to be underreported (STATCAN Census Data, 2022). Over half of all trans and non-binary Canadians live in one of Canada's major urban centers, with Vancouver containing 10.8% of them (STATCAN Census Data, 2022). Queer people are disproportionately at risk for homelessness and economic vulnerability due to homophobia/transphobia from landlords or employers, rejection by family members, physical disabilities, and more. Additionally, they experience elevated risk in emergency housing and shelter space when compared to cis or straight people. Specifically, in gender specific or all gender shelter space, trans and gender-nonconforming folks are at a huge risk of physical or verbal abuse, sexual assault, dysphoria-inducing treatment, and general damage to physical and mental health (Lyons et. al., 2015). In addition to the data collected from academic and news sources, this report includes an interview conducted with Jodi Gray, the Program manager of Aoki Ross House which is Vancouver's only trans-specific housing initiative. Gray provided me with details about the house, which functions as a surgery recovery space and limited permanent housing, and informed me that since its creation it has had over 100 applications (Gray, 2022). The house has long term space for 15 people, and its necessity is illustrated by the demand (Gray, 2022). While several women-only shelters extend their definition of women to include trans and two-spirit individuals, there are several testimonies available that these spaces are unsafe, resulting in "gender-policing", misgendering, and transphobia from both staff and other shelter users (Lyons et. al., 2015). This evidence clearly illustrates the ways in which existing shelters are not sufficient or safe for most trans and two-spirit individuals. The proposed solution is the urgent implementation of a trans and two-spirit specific emergency shelter space in Vancouver that has trained staff to support the complex intersection of multiple traumas and marginalizations that trans and two-spirit unhoused people face.

This shelter space would have resources tailored to queer and gender-nonconforming individuals, including a registry of queer-friendly landlords, avenues to access gender-affirming care, trained case workers to assist with placement, and all of the other amenities of an emergency shelter, such as beds and hot food. There is little to no comprehensive research about the percentage of trans and gender-nonconforming individuals facing homelessness in Canada; trans-specific shelter space is only the first step in researching, identifying, understanding, and solving this crisis. This report is the just beginning of an ongoing project for the development of emergency trans-specific housing. I aim to work with community organizers, academics, and other professionals locally in order to expand the report. The ultimate goal is to present a comprehensive action plan to the Vancouver City Council Housing and Homelessness Services department for implementation within Metro Vancouver.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

[1]   Gray, J. (2022, November 1). Interview with Jodi Gray [Conducted by Kira Dinim] [Interview]. Vancouver, BC.

[2]   Lyons, T. (2015). Experiences of Trans Women and Two-Spirit Persons Accessing Women-Specific Health and Housing Services in a Downtown Neighborhood of Vancouver, Canada. LGBT Health, 3(5), 373-378. UBC Library Website. 10.1089/lgbt.2016.0060.

[3]   STATCAN. (2022, April 27). The Daily — Canada is the first country to provide census data on transgender and non-binary people. Statistics Canada. Retrieved December 8, 2022, from https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220427/dq220427b-eng.htm

Identity Politics in Contemporary Political Life: China and Hong Kong

Katherine Edwards, BA International Relations (Second year)

Address correspondence to katherinedavideedwards@gmail.com

The role of identity politics is crucial in contemporary political life, highlighted through analysis of tensions between Hong Kong and China. The 1997 handover of Hong Kong from Great Britain to China resulted in concern about China's adherence to communism. (Chalkey, 1997, p.139) The Sino-British declaration promised Hong Kong's social and economic systems would remain for 50 years, but tensions emerged between pro-democracy Hong Kongers' and China, who began to overstep its control. Identity politics offers marginalized sub-groups the opportunity to gain political power, freedom, and recognition through the promotion of political ideologies and the stimulation of political action domestically and globally. Pro-democracy Hong Kongers utilize identity politics to work toward political freedom and distinction from China through utilizing mass protests such as the 2014 'Occupy Central' movement to promote their ideology, and by garnering a following online due to the contemporary presence of social media. (Davis, 2014, p.209). Hong Kong academics "built support through a series of public forums and referendums" (Abraham, 2014, p.35), "pamphlets were published to inform the public on these issues" (Davis, 2014, p.209), and protests were also "extensively covered in the local media." (Preston, 2016, p.124) The promotion of an ideology is extremely significant in contemporary politics as it provides a voice to sub-groups who are marginalized, enabling them to voice their opinions freely to the public, and in some cases, gain them more support for their cause. Hong Kong demonstrates how identity politics can lead to changes in policy, and the reclamation of voices through speech and protest. However, identity politics' impact depends on a governments' willingness to make change, as sub-groups with limited power may be unable to achieve their desired outcomes, but rejection of these sub-groups can fuel the desire for change and lead to greater use of identity politics. The Hong Kong-China tensions serve as a testament to the significance of identity politics in contemporary political life.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

[1] Abraham, T. (2014). China's Hong Kong Conundrum. Economic and Political Weekly, 49(42), 33-35. https://www.jstor.org/stable/24480878

[2] Chalkley, B. (1997). Hong Kong: Colony at the Crossroads. Geography, 82(2), 139-147. https://www.jstor.org/stable/40572828

[3] Davis, M. (2014). HONG KONG DEMANDS DEMOCRACY. Journal of International Affairs, 68(1), 209-214. https://www.jstor.org/stable/24461714

[4] Preston, P. W. (2016). The Politics of China-Hong Kong Relations: Living with Distant Masters. Edward Elgar.

UBC and U of T International Student Recruitment: Continuing the Canadian Narrative of Multiculturalism?

Beth Patrick, BA Sociology (fourth year)

Over the past ten years, international student enrollment has increased dramatically across the globe, as in 2016, five million students chose to study at Higher Education Institutions in a country outside of their citizenship (Reichert & Bouajram, 2021). The global competition for international student enrollment can be considered part of the "great brain race," a term coined by Ben Wildavsky to describe how increased globalization has led Higher Education Institutions to compete "fiercely for the best minds" and the best student talent (Wildavsky, 2010: 5). The increasing internationalization of Higher Education Institutions has been essential to the financial security of Canadian universities among decreased provincial funding, but has also resulted in a need to promote the country as a unique place to study in competition with institutions across the globe. According to Stats Canada (2020), international students paid approximately 40 percent of all tuition fees and accounted for approximately 4 billion in annual revenue for Canadian universities in 2017/2018.

Universities as institutions deliver similar outcomes, and as the global competition has intensified, many institutions have developed "unique strategies" to attract international students (James-MacEachern, 2018: 249). In Canada, a possible "unique strategy" may be to promote the national identity of multiculturalism, including the "cultural mosaic" concept of different cultures and identities existing distinctly within the larger Canadian society. Therefore, the purpose of my research is to explore how Canadian university recruitment materials utilize Canada's perceived narrative as an "accepting, multicultural nation" in order to distinguish their institution in the global competition for international student enrollment.

This research analyzes the language and visualizations in a total of 10 promotional videos and 4 websites (N=14 promotional materials) from two case studies of the University of British Columbia and the

Address correspondence to
bethpatrick4@gmail.com

University of Toronto. The study finds that both UBC and U of T use elements of a multicultural narrative in recruitment of international students, such as promoting specific immigration policies, maintaining cultural identity within a broader society, and emphasizing diversity within the institution. The narratives of multiculturalism and mosaic metaphor are demonstrated through repeated messages in promotional videos, such as "be yourself," and the idea that there is no one way to be "Canadian." However, recruitment materials also promote international students "finding their community" in terms of the labour market, and finding friends among people who are "in the same boat" studying far away from home. The distinct promotion of "finding your community" within the university, rather than Canada as a whole, connects to barriers international students have faced in terms of obtaining permanent residency after their study period (Sá & Sabzalieva, 2018). Additionally, the promotional materials omit relationships between international and domestic students, demonstrating possible contradictions between Canada's reputation as a "multicultural nation" and the lived experiences of international students in terms of acceptance. Ultimately, this study concludes that Canadian universities use multiculturalism as a strategy for recruitment. However, these themes of assimilation through the labour market, and encouraging interactions between international students rather than domestic students, indicate that Canada's conceptualized "multicultural" narrative has limitations and should be called into question.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

[1]   James-MacEachern, M. (2018). A comparative study of international recruitment - tensions and opportunities in institutional recruitment practice. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, 28(2), 247-265. https://doi.org/10.1080/08841241.2018.1471014

[2]   Reichert, P. N., & Bouajram, R. (2021). Beyond Recruitment: Career Navigation and Support of International Students in Canada. In V. Tavares (Ed.), *Multidisciplinary Perspectives on International Student Experience in Canadian Higher Education* (pp. 308-327). IGI Global. http://doi:10.4018/978-1-7998-5030-4.ch016

[3]   Sá, C. M., & Sabzalieva, E. (2018). The politics of the great brain race: Public policy and international student recruitment in Australia, Canada, England and the USA. *Higher Education*, 75(2), 231-254. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-017-0133-1

[4]   Stats Canada. (2020). "Financial Information of Universities for the 2018/2019 School Year." https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/201008/dq201008b-eng.htm

[5]   Wildavsky, B. (2010;2012). Introduction: What is Global Higher Education-and Why Does it Matter? In *The great brain race: How global universities are reshaping the world*. (pp. 1-13). Princeton University Press.

Stitches Hurt: Examining COVID-19 counterpublics through TikTok's 'stitching' and 'commenting' features

Sherry Yu, Kate Black , BA English and Political Science (fourth year)

The emergence of Tiktok as a platform of mass communications coincides with the ever-growing debate regarding COVID-19 health mandates. Through Toepfl and Piwoni's (2015) framework of public and counterpublic spheres, we examine how those opposed to COVID-19 public health mandates form, or have the potential to form, online counterpublics: they distance themselves from and "challenge the consensus" of the mainstream public sphere's support of public health measures, while seeking to strengthen collective identities with those who agree with them. Scholars have not yet examined TikTok's capacity to form counterpublics - while the app's "For you page" (Avdeeff, 2021; Hautea et al., 2021) and subversive spheres of opinion on Twitter (Jackson & Welles, 2016) have been examined, we apply Toepfl and Piwoni's framework of counter-public communications to Tiktok to determine how the app's anatomy might support, or discourage, counter-public discourse regarding COVID-19 public health mandates. We conclude two things: firstly, that comment sections support, with limitations, the formation of counterpublics; secondly, that stitches offer a clear affordance to hostile infelicitous uptake, as they are used as a platform for pro-publics to respond to and effectively detract counterpublic formation.

Address correspondence to
sherryhongyu@gmail.com

BIBLIOGRAPHY

[1]   Avdeeff, M. K. (2021). TikTok, twitter, and platform-specific technocultural discourse in response to taylor swift's LGBTQ+ allyship in 'you need to calm down'. Contemporary Music Review, 40(1), 78-98.

[2]   Hautea, S., Parks, P., Takahashi, B., & Zeng, J. (2021). Showing they care (or Don't): Affective publics and ambivalent climate activism on TikTok. Social Media + Society, 7(2), 205630512110123.

[3]   Jackson, S. J., & Foucault Welles, B. (2016). Ferguson is everywhere: Initiators in emerging counterpublic networks. Information, Communication & Society, 19(3), 397-418.

[4]   Toepfl, F., & Piwoni, E. (2015). Public spheres in interaction: Comment sections of news websites as counterpublic spaces. Journal of Communication, 65(3), 465-488.

Ceci n'est pas une personne: Changes in pictorial medium and representation of people modulate the perceived mind

Salina Edwards, BA Cognitive Psychology (fourth year)

Pictures have the power to influence people in many ways. Although we do not view pictures of people as equivalent in value to living individuals, we often hesitate to damage or discard pictures of our loved ones (Mitchell, 1996). However, not all characteristics of a person can survive projection into pictures. In pictorial representation, some features of reality are lost, such as motion and three-dimensionality (Will et al., 2021). Therefore, pictures can be considered abstractions of reality.

 Some pictures can also contain pictures within themselves, such as in a news broadcast when a person is being depicted on a screen beside a reporter. This causes an increase in abstraction. We distinguish these abstractions with the assignment of levels: Level 1 abstractions (L1) refer to pictures of people within the environment, and pictures within pictures are referred to as Level 2 (L2) abstractions. Along with motion and three-dimensionality, there is a third thing that is lost: the perceived mind. In pictures, as abstraction increases (from L1 to L2), mind perception decreases. This is the cost of abstraction, otherwise known as the Medusa effect (Will et al., 2021).

However, this trade-off between abstraction and the perceived mind is not well understood across different pictorial mediums. In our current era, technological advancements have facilitated the creation and dissemination of images with unprecedented ease, making it nearly impossible to avoid encountering depictions of other individuals in our daily lives. Along with this, the presence of social media facilitates this process with a mere click of a button.

 Therefore, to discern the abstraction cost of various pictorial mediums, we measured the perceived mind of people in pictures in digital and paper format by asking participants to assign measures of agency (ability to do), experience (ability to feel), and realness (of the natural world) across differing levels of

Address correspondence to
alan.kingstone@ubc.ca

abstraction (L1 and L2). Results from analyses suggest that mind perception changes depending on pictorial medium and level of abstraction, providing evidence for variation of abstraction costs in pictures. In general, our findings indicate that L1 abstractions across all pictorial mediums are perceived as having higher levels of mind than L2 abstractions. For example, in a picture of a person (L1) holding a picture of another person (L2), the person at L1 is more likely to be perceived as having more mind than the person at L2. Interestingly, across all L2 abstractions, digital pictures of people represented digitally (e.g., L2 as depicted on a computer screen) were perceived as having higher levels of mind than when represented on paper.

Given that mind perception underlies moral evaluation, changes in the degree of the perceived mind can impact ethical deliberation (Gray et al., 2012). Consequently, individuals portrayed in greater levels of abstraction are at greater risk of being morally condemned, despite not being at fault. This trade-off between abstraction and ethical evaluation underscores the ethical implications of various forms of visual representation. If we know that not all minds are equal, we can strive to mind our perception of others.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

[1]   Gray, K., Young, L., & Waytz, A. (2012). Mind Perception Is the Essence of Morality. *Psychological Inquiry*, 23(2), 101–124. https://doi.org/10.1080/1047840X.2012.651387

[2]   Mitchell, W. J. T. (1996). What do pictures "really" want? *October, 77*, 71–82. https://doi.org/10.2307/778960

[3]   Will, P., Merritt, E., Jenkins, R., & Kingstone, A. (2021). The Medusa effect reveals levels of mind perception in pictures. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences,* 118(32), e2106640118. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2106640118