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THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES



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THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH
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A Message from the Dean

It goes without saying that the past year has been challenging for the College of Humanities as it has been for all of us. We have had to adapt to new ways of doing our familiar work and have been compelled to confront the consequences of significant cultural changes. We've introduced new technologies for teaching and new workplace protocols and we have witnessed profound, sometimes unsettling transitions in our social and political life. We believe the disciplines of the humanities give us tools for understanding, contextualizing and coping with such powerful changes in social life and modes of personal interaction, and so we wanted this issue of Perspectives, our college magazine, to highlight some of the ways our students and faculty are reflecting on the general topic of change.

As humanists we think first of language as the medium through which we confront and shape our world and here you will read about how language itself adapts to changing social realities, how new media technologies have reshaped the way our political leaders communicate with us, how our students are challenged to develop rhetorical strategies that enable civil discourse in an age of conflict, and how, on the borders of our nation, language provides a means of negotiating between different cultures. Humanists are also committed to articulating the global and historical contexts in which these changes take place and here you will have a glance at past moments of far-reaching political change and significant transformations of the American workplace. It is important for us to include here the voices of students, who are experiencing their college years in an entirely unexpected way that has proven challenging but still transformative.

Certainly, the public research university will continue to evolve in the coming years. We believe it is important for the disciplines of humanistic inquiry to play a significant role in shaping the future of higher education. The doors to this College have never been more widely open and we encourage you to visit us, to attend our public events, both virtual and live, enjoy our podcasts, follow us on social media but most of all to continue to support our students as they graduate into new careers in an ever-changing world.

Sincerely,

Stuart K. Culver

Dean, College of Humanities
University of Utah

‘Our national vocabulary was tested’

Johanna Watzinger-Tharp
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,
DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS

On the Media host Bob Garfield uttered this statement during a segment that referenced the protests that erupted in summer 2020 around the U.S. in response to the murder of George Floyd. Divergent depictions of the events reflect fierce disagreements about their nature: Did we witness riots or peaceful protests against racial injustice? Did we see cities under siege or isolated violence? Was systemic racism of law enforcement at the root of George Floyd’s death, or was it inflicted by a bad apple?

As a linguist, I could not help but notice Garfield’s choice of the passive voice—our national vocabulary was tested. Using the passive voice shifts the focus to the recipient of an action, sometimes because the actor is not known or because we prefer for them to remain unnamed. The statement prompted me, as a listener, to reflect further on the role that language played over the course of last year. What or who tested our language? What does language we hear tell us about

events we see? And does language provide clues that suggest how we experienced and coped with them?

COVID-19, racial unrest, and an insurrection attempt. Social distancing. Black Lives Matter. Stop the Steal. Language acquires its meaning in context, in a specific situation, with speakers and listeners, or interlocutors, and their intents and purposes. Recent events have indeed tried and stretched the language available to us, but they have actually tested us and how we, as language users, choose to employ language—in ways that are beneficial or in ways that are harmful and hurtful.

Social distancing became a key phrase to refer to the simple but effective strategy of staying home and apart during the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, versions of this pandemic watchword turned up around the world: Soziale Distanz (German), distanziamento sociale (Italian); sotsial’noye distantsirovaniye (Russian); socialt avstånd

¹ On the Media. 23 April 2021. How the Right is Redefining “Peaceful Assembly.”
<https://www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/otm/segments/defining-peaceful-assembly>





Racism is
so American
that when you
Protest it,
PEOPLE think
you are
Protesting
America



(Swedish); and, coined on Twitter, *tan doori* (“tan” “body” and “doori” distance), employing humor to cope with coronavirus stress.

In spite of its inherent incongruity (how can we

be social AND distant at the same time?), social distancing became an effective linguistic tool to help make the transition from our usual, close-proximity social selves to being safely apart (and finding ways to socialize, too). Put differently, when the coronavirus tested us, we employed language intentionally and beneficially to communicate what was needed to stem its spread. The meaning of social distancing is thus

inexorably tied to the COVID-19 pandemic. And to many, this phrase also signifies societal inequities between those who had the privilege of staying home (and keeping their homes and their incomes) and those who were unable to stay home or faced financial ruin if they did.

We can think of Black lives matter as a speech act that demands a national reckoning with systemic racism and institutionalized violence against black women and men. A societal transformation that



replaces acceptance of killings as a regular occurrence to accountability of law enforcement. When the phrase Black Lives Matter was seen and heard during protests around the U.S. and in many places around the world, it was the context of George Floyd's death, and of so many others, that made it meaningful. Our shared understanding of the premise and context of utterances are essential to successful communication. When people engage in conversations with others—in good faith—they intuitively abide by what linguists define as the cooperative principle; in fact, contextual factors and presuppositions routinely figure into a conversation without being explicitly stated.

Don't all lives matter, some asked? Of course, they do, and that is precisely why this retort violates the cooperative principle. Black lives matter does not reply to a question about all lives and whether they matter or not. Rather, the question that we must confront is whether Black lives do actually matter in America, given the apparent disregard for Black lives and the persistent violence against Black men and women. As a blog by a group of linguists at Stanford University noted, "All lives matter" is a hurtful, dismissive, and cruel response to "Black lives matter." While perhaps not intentionally cruel, the response "All lives matter" intentionally disregards a self-evident shared premise; it is uttered in bad faith. By suggesting that "Black lives" means only Black lives, those who use, or rather abuse this expression, cause harm.

How a hitherto shared premise can be replaced with a lie is plainly evident in the phrase Stop the Steal. Stop the Steal assailed a fundamental and shared assumption about the peaceful transition of power after an election. Not only is it an example of destructive language, but it directly translated into destructive action, into the January 6



insurrection attempt that cost lives.

It was all the more heartening, then, that the political transition from one administration to another on January 20 featured the restorative power of language. Amanda Gorman delivered a stirring poem, with this stanza that conveyed confidence and hope:

*So while once we asked, how could
we possibly prevail over catastrophe?*

Now we assert,

*How could catastrophe possibly
prevail over us?*

Catastrophe has tested our language and it continues to test us. Will we pass this test with a renewed sensitivity to language that will guide us toward using the power of language responsibly? Perhaps. But first we must reject language that instills pain and perpetuates racism and embrace language that fosters compassion and social justice. **P**

The Presidency in



Kevin Coe

PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT
OF COMMUNICATION

Few things signal change so clearly in the U.S. as an incumbent president losing re-election. These rare moments—there have been just three in the last 40 years—invite the public to imagine sharp contrasts between what was and what will be. Jimmy Carter’s national “malaise” became Ronald Reagan’s “shining city on a hill.” George H. W. Bush’s reserved traditionalism was replaced by Bill Clinton and the “New Democrats.” Donald Trump’s chaotic populism gave way reluctantly, even violently, to Joe Biden’s pleas for unity.

These dramatic moments of transition are easy to spot because they happen quickly and focus on individuals. One president replaces another. One administration is in, the other is out. But what about broader transitions that shape the institution these people represent?



What about changes to the presidency itself?

Those changes are more subtle but just as consequential. Instead of happening between Election Day and Inauguration Day, they happen over the course of terms and decades and eras.

For most of my career, I have studied the U.S. presidency in transition. Recently, along with professor Joshua Scacco at the University of South Florida, I have been chronicling the rise of the “ubiquitous presidency.” The term ubiquity indicates that, increasingly, presidents seem to be everywhere. Whereas Americans in the mid- to late-20th century were accustomed to hearing from presidents mostly about serious topics and in formal settings, such as a scripted speech or a news segment, presidents now show up in a variety of nontraditional spaces, blending the political and nonpolitical in their messages.

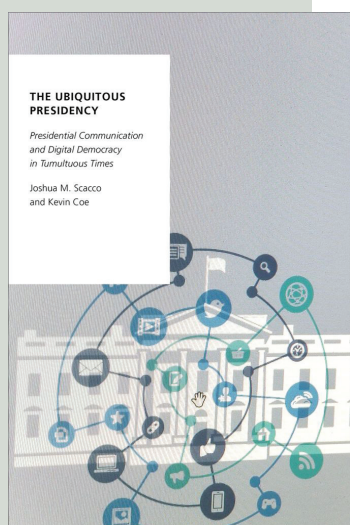
What changed? The contexts in which presidents attempt to achieve their primary communicative goals. Modern presidents have always sought visibility via whatever media are available to them. They have always prioritized adaptation as new circumstances arise. And they

have always sought to control the information environment as much as possible.

Presidents do not work to achieve these goals in a vacuum, however. They do so within specific contexts that create opportunities and constraints. As those contexts have morphed over time, so too have the strategies presidents use to achieve their enduring goals. Three contexts have shaped the presidency in especially important ways over the past several decades.

• • •

The first is the massive increase in the accessibility of information. As cable television and eventually the internet replaced broadcast television as the dominant form of information transmission, Americans had more choices about what content to select. They often didn’t select serious political information, opting instead to be entertained. This forced presidents to work harder to garner the attention they once took for granted. They did so, in part, by following audiences into nontraditional spaces. That’s why Bill Clinton gave multiple interviews to MTV, and why George W. Bush spoke to ESPN’s Sunday Night Baseball. It’s why Barack Obama appeared on the satirical online program *Between Two Ferns*, and why Donald Trump tweeted out his Emmy Awards rendition of the musical “Oklahoma.” It’s also why one of President Biden’s most widely seen messages of his presidency thus far came as part of the NFL’s Super Bowl halftime show



The Ubiquitous Presidency, by Joshua M. Scacco and Kevin Coe, examines the intricate relationship between the president, news media, and the public.

in February. These spaces are where the audiences are.

• • •

The second context shaping the presidency is the personalization of politics. As political content found its way into a wider array of venues, the boundary between the political and the personal began to blur. Presidents are increasingly expected to communicate personally and informally. They are asked not just to make a joke but, if the moment calls for it, to be the joke. This transition has its roots in presidential campaigns—think of Richard Nixon appearing on the comedy program *Laugh-In* in 1968, for example—but didn't really take off in the presidency itself until the 1990s. A defining moment in this shift occurred when Bill Clinton went on MTV's *Enough is Enough* town-hall forum in 1994. There primarily to talk about gun

control, Clinton was asked about personal topics as well. Most famously, 17-year-old Laetitia Thompson posed this question: "The world is dying to know—is it boxers or briefs?" Chuckling, Clinton replied: "Usually briefs." And, recognizing the norm-breaking moment, he followed up: "I can't believe she did that." Presidents would have many such personal moments in subsequent decades.

• • •

A final context influencing the presidency is pluralism. America has grown dramatically more diverse over the past several decades, both in terms of sheer demographics and in the extent to which issues of inclusion and equity circulate in public discussion. For presidents, these shifts provide two very different rhetorical possibilities. One approach is to embrace the nation's changing contours, speaking more with and

about minority communities. This was the approach Clinton, George W. Bush, and Obama took. For instance, each of these presidents gave more interviews than had their predecessors to media organizations that primarily reached minority communities, and they also talked much more about diversity than had been common in the presidency to that point. Trump took quite a different approach, leveraging pluralism to stoke fear and play upon prejudices. In one prominent example, Trump tweeted that four members of Congress collectively known as “The Squad”—Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Ilhan Omar, Ayanna Pressley, and Rashida Tlaib—should “go back” to “the totally broken and crime infested places from which they came.” Apart from having his facts wrong (all except Omar were born in the U.S.), it was impossible to ignore that Trump had specifically called out four women of color, including the first two Muslim women ever elected to Congress.

“Change is inevitable in an institution as complex as the presidency.”

Trump’s language was a far cry from the last Republican president, George W. Bush, who routinely talked about how Muslims, like people of any other faith or no faith at all, were “equally American.”

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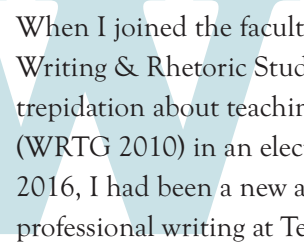
Change is inevitable in an institution as complex as the presidency. As the Biden administration approaches the end of its first year, it is already clear that it represents a departure from numerous aspects of the Trump administration. But amid those differences, one thing remains constant: Biden, like all his recent predecessors, will need to respond to the contexts that define the ubiquitous presidency. **P**



(Ir) responsible Rhetoric & Cultural Transformation

Kendall Gerdes
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When I joined the faculty in the Department of Writing & Rhetoric Studies one year ago, I had some trepidation about teaching intermediate writing (WRTG 2010) in an election year. In the fall of 2016, I had been a new assistant professor teaching professional writing at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas, a city that had been deemed “second most conservative” (actually, right behind Provo, Utah!) back in 2005. The results of the 2016 election left me stunned and I felt I had no choice about how to teach my classes that week but to share my disappointment with my students. I framed a lesson about the limits of professionalism, the point at which professionalism fails and falls apart. I told my students that day in part:

Jacob Tobia writes that “Professionalism is a funny term, because it masquerades as neutral despite being loaded with immense oppression. As a concept, professionalism is racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, classist, imperialist and so much more—and yet people act like professionalism is non-political” (2014). As a teacher of professional writing, I have struggled all semester with whether and how to engage you in the politics of professionalism, especially in an election season that pitted professional politics against the violation of American political norms in an unprecedented way.

Four years later, many of us, I’d wager, felt all too familiar with the dissolution of American political norms. I resolved to approach the teaching of required writing classes (like the one I taught in the fall of 2020) with certain disciplinary values front and center. As a rhetorician, my areas of research and expertise include how the way we argue about public issues can cause harm. By harm I mean both symbolic violence, yes, but also “real,” material harm in actual people’s lives. I wanted to be sure that I gave my students the chance to understand this viewpoint, even if they don’t share it.

So I now begin my intermediate writing course with four weeks reading Patricia Roberts-Miller’s brief and elegant gem of a book, *Demagoguery and Democracy* (2017). Roberts-Miller argues that “demagoguery” describes a highly polarized form of argumentation in which a focus on policy is supplanted by a focus on identity. Whether a

speaker (or writer—a rhetor) is a member of one’s in-group matters more than whether they are proposing a feasible plan that will solve a real problem. Certainty in one’s convictions—and that one’s own perception of reality is universal and unmediated (a belief called “naïve realism”)—ensures that arguments about the complexity or nuance of a political situation fall flat. Contrasts are exaggerated so that everything can be viewed in black and white; phrased in terms of “us” versus “them.”

So far in my experience teaching Roberts-Miller’s book, students are pleasantly surprised by the invitation to think about writing and rhetoric in terms that give them purchase on the rhetorical culture of their communities, be it American national politics or their families, workplace, favorite sports teams, or fandoms. My guess is that many students import their expectations of college writing from experiences in high school that lead them to think of writing as a difficult and unpleasant task, a recitation of knowledge rather than a way of exploring and thinking. It is a delight to be a part of a department and college that instead shares an esteem for writing as a method of inquiry, of reflecting on what persuades us and on how the quality of our deliberation and decision-making can be made better.

Rhetoricians from multiple disciplines have been working on the problem of demagoguery, and the way it depends on a culture that tolerates it rather than a few charismatic individuals who wield it: Roberts-Miller published an extended scholarly version of her argument in *Rhetoric and Demagoguery* (Southern Illinois University Press, 2019). Joshua Gunn published *Political Perversion: Rhetorical Aberration in the Time of Trumpeteering* (The University of Chicago, 2020). Ryan Skinnell edited a collection of essays called *Faking the News: What Rhetoric Can Teach Us About Donald J. Trump* (Imprint Academic, 2018). The critical insights of these scholars go beyond passing judgment on individual demagogues (however powerful) to analyzing the social conditions and media ecologies that support them. In *Rhetoric and*

Demagoguery, Roberts-Miller argues that the ability of demagoguery to cause harm can be curbed when the culture that supports it changes. That means the responsibility for an ethical rhetorical culture is one we bear collectively.

I think teaching students about demagoguery gives them a language to think about ethical argumentation and democratic conflict, which is to say, about how to negotiate disagreements with people who are different from you. These



questions are often centered in the stories we tell ourselves in my discipline about rhetorical history and its relationship to democracy. And at this moment in rhetorical history and in American political history, the language of rhetorical ethics is needed for us to embrace our collective responsibility and encourage those in our spheres of influence to value difference, to argue fairly and inclusively when we disagree, and to entertain the possibility of changing our minds.

Yet, remembering Tobia’s caution about the apparent neutrality of professionalism, with its hidden norms favoring the already privileged and powerful, my recourse above to the collective pronouns “we” and “us” could conceal the exclusion of dissent necessary to support the fiction that everybody in a democracy has a voice. Not every voice has equal rhetorical power. Not every person is seen as a citizen, and even my own beliefs create ideological blindspots about who I can recognize as capable of rhetorical engagement. What I’m saying is that responsible rhetoric is a practice, but it’s also a calling: To keep moving beyond what is given and insist that the culture transforms. **P**

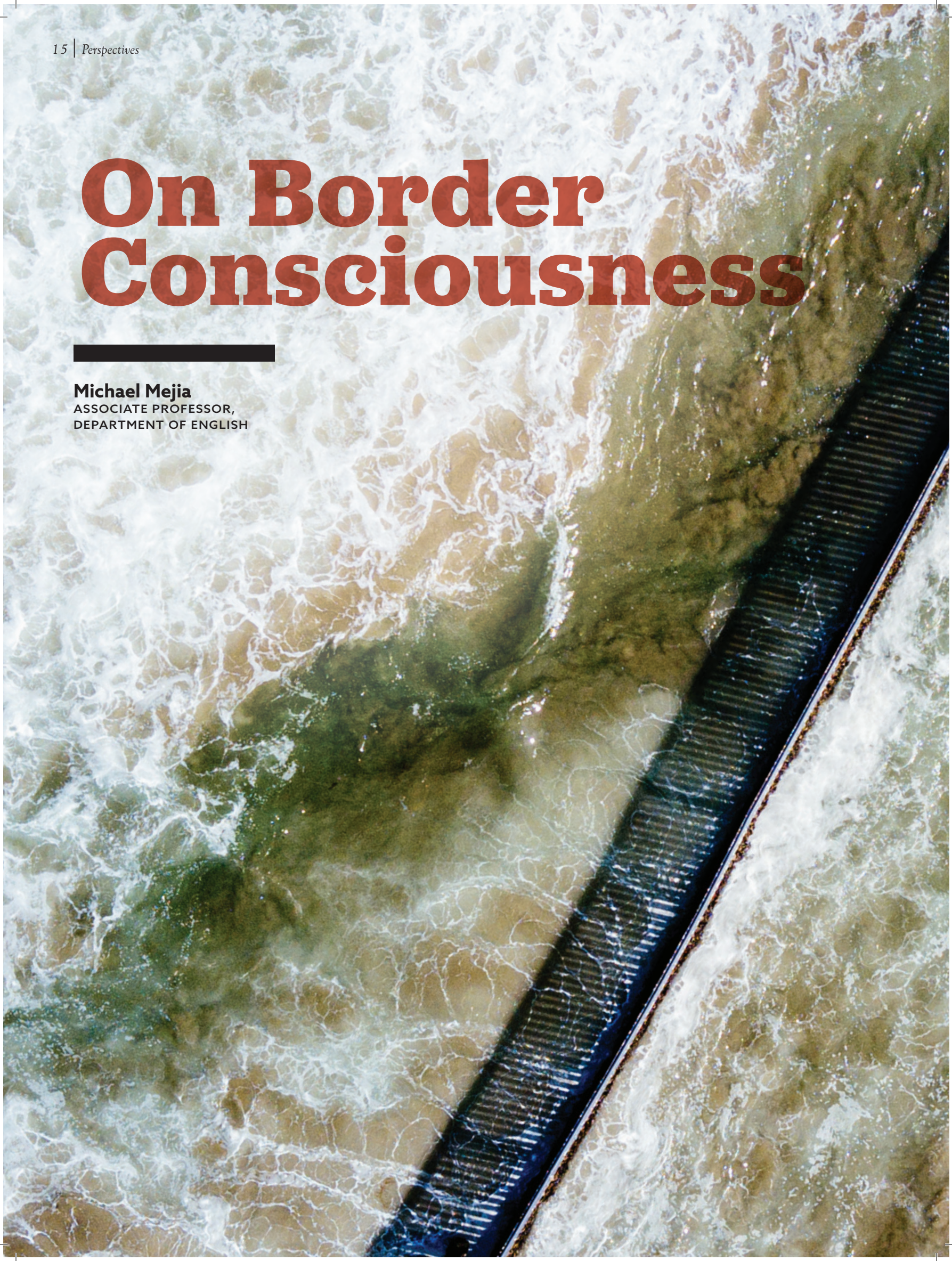




On Border Consciousness

Michael Mejia

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,
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**A BORDERLAND IS A VAGUE AND
UNDETERMINED PLACE CREATED
BY THE EMOTIONAL RESIDUE OF AN
UNNATURAL BOUNDARY. IT IS IN A
CONSTANT STATE OF TRANSITION.**

Gloria Anzaldúa,
Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza

In the middle of his novel *Signs Preceding the End of the World*, Yuri Herrera's heroine Makina, finds herself immersed in a new language. She's recently crossed the border on a mission to find her brother, who migrated years before and from whom her family's heard nothing in some time. Makina is carrying a message from their mother. She doesn't know it yet, but she's been sent to retrieve her brother, to recover him from the other side, and bring him home.

Makina is determined not to stay herself, having witnessed how crossing and remaining too long in the “North” affected another man from her town:

Everything was still the same, but now somehow different, or everything was similar but not the same: his mother was no longer his mother, his brothers and sisters were no longer his brothers and sisters, they were people with difficult names and improbable mannerisms, as if they'd been copied off an original that no longer existed.

You're alienated from your home, your origin, your motherland, in the most personal of ways. There's a hint of annoyance, too, the beginnings of intolerance, in those “difficult names and improbable mannerisms.” Not only do you not quite recognize your people, you're also not sure you can stand them anymore. Why would you want to come back (not home) to that?

• • •

WHAT BORDER?

Herrera declines to say exactly, though a few hints—the direction North, a river crossing, references to anglo tongue and latin tongue as transparent code for English and Spanish—seem to confirm what we expect.

And yet, there must be a reason for Herrera's evasiveness, his abstractions and tweaks to a rather familiar story, one we encounter in many ways, in many genres, but maybe most frequently as an issue rather than as a detailed, personal narrative experienced by real individuals.

That is, Herrera is asking us to encounter the migrant's journey in a new way, with new eyes, through other words, as if traveling from one alien planet to another. His protagonist is unusual: A young woman with no need to cross, no desire to stay, who suffers along her route, but who also displays great craft, will, and resilience. These last qualities are a necessity for any migrant risking her life to cross treacherous landscapes, relying on predatory smugglers, appealing to the mercy of unsympathetic authorities. But Makina is clearly special, and she's aided, protected, guided, by seemingly supernatural forces of dark power and prescience.

Which is to say that Herrera has imbued Makina's tale with the qualities of myth. Readers may sense several possible references, but the clearest, in terms of image and form, is the Mexica myth of the



journey to Mictlán, the Land of the Dead.

We probably shouldn't take the implications of this schema too personally. As Makina's final destination, the U.S. isn't hell exactly, just the underworld, a place of transformation, translation, and transition, a land of eternal repose that the soul must struggle to achieve through nine stages of trials, from a river crossing to being assailed by winds and arrows, and, finally, by a jaguar set to tear out your heart.

• • •

The new language Makina experiences in the North isn't anglo or latin tongue, but she's heard it before. She even knows how to speak it. As a telephone exchange operator in her hometown, part of Makina's job is to facilitate re-connection between those who've migrated and their loved ones at home. When necessary, she translates. If you've “forgotten the local lingo,” she'll speak to you “in [your] own new tongue.”

But on the other side, in the North, immersed for the first time within the culture of yet-to-be assimilated immigrants that creates this



“intermediary tongue,” Makina perceives its qualities much more fully. Like her, the operator, the language produces unique connections between “two like but distant souls.” It embodies “both ancient memory and the wonderment of a new people”:

More than the midpoint between homegrown and anglo their tongue is a nebulous territory between what is dying out and what is not yet born.... Makina senses in their tongue not a sudden absence but a shrewd metamorphosis, a self-defensive shift.... In it brims a nostalgia for the land they left or never knew when they use the words with which they name objects; while actions are alluded to with an anglo verb conjugated latin-style, pinning on a sonorous tail from back there.... It's not another way of saying things: these are new things. The world happening anew, Makina realizes: promising other things, signifying other things, producing different objects.

• • •

I'm in love with this passage because of its ambiguous, unsettled hope, expressed not as prediction or desire, but as fact. It is not a facet of Herrera's fictional tale, which, as myth, as allegory—

symbolic modes for telling truths—is no fiction at all. It is, rather, a moment of reportage. This, Herrera is telling us, is what's happening right now, all around us, every day, in immigrant communities along the border and elsewhere, in the frequently hidden experiences of immigrants arriving in the US from all over the world, through a variety of means, wanting to make this place, the North, their home.

We might say that the experience Herrera describes is not exactly the one the immigrant is looking for, and maybe also not what many Americans are hoping for for them, though that's largely because they don't know it's happening or what it may mean. Or for those Americans who fear immigrants, Herrera's description may be another way of articulating exactly what it is they dread.

What I'm talking about is the process of cultural transformation, a process of invention and remaking that, unlike the journey, works in multiple directions at once. Through the new tongue, through the goodwill and negotiation of its creators, a new culture, a hybrid culture, is produced, continuously and always in the present. At least for a short time, maybe a generation, until assimilation, until America takes hold.

Change, hybridity, continuous transition: there are a lot of ifs in these processes, there is a lot of instability, a lot of newness that never quite settles into dominance. That is, understandably, a little frightening. It is, quite literally, unsettling. And yet, it's also uniquely exciting. What if, I wonder with my students, during our discussions of Herrera's novel, we, too, could live perpetually in this culture of negotiation and transformation, “the world happening anew”? Wouldn't that require us to perform the immigrant's challenge of transition in the other direction? Wouldn't it require us to surrender what we know, too, what our dominant language and culture seem to make certain, allowing us to participate in this always-new culture of perpetual change?

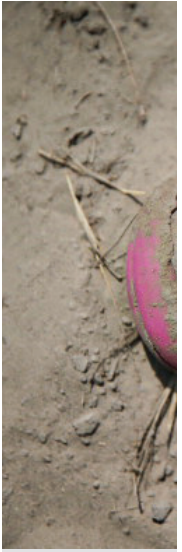
Wouldn't that be a true embrace of the immigrant? Wouldn't that show gratitude for their struggle, their arrival, their contributions, their desire?

Wouldn't that be love?

• • •

When I say we and us, of course, I'm not sure who I mean. Or that's not true, because I have folks in mind, but I don't really mean me. Or I do, because,

“The Borderlands are physically present, where the space between two individuals shrinks with intimacy.”

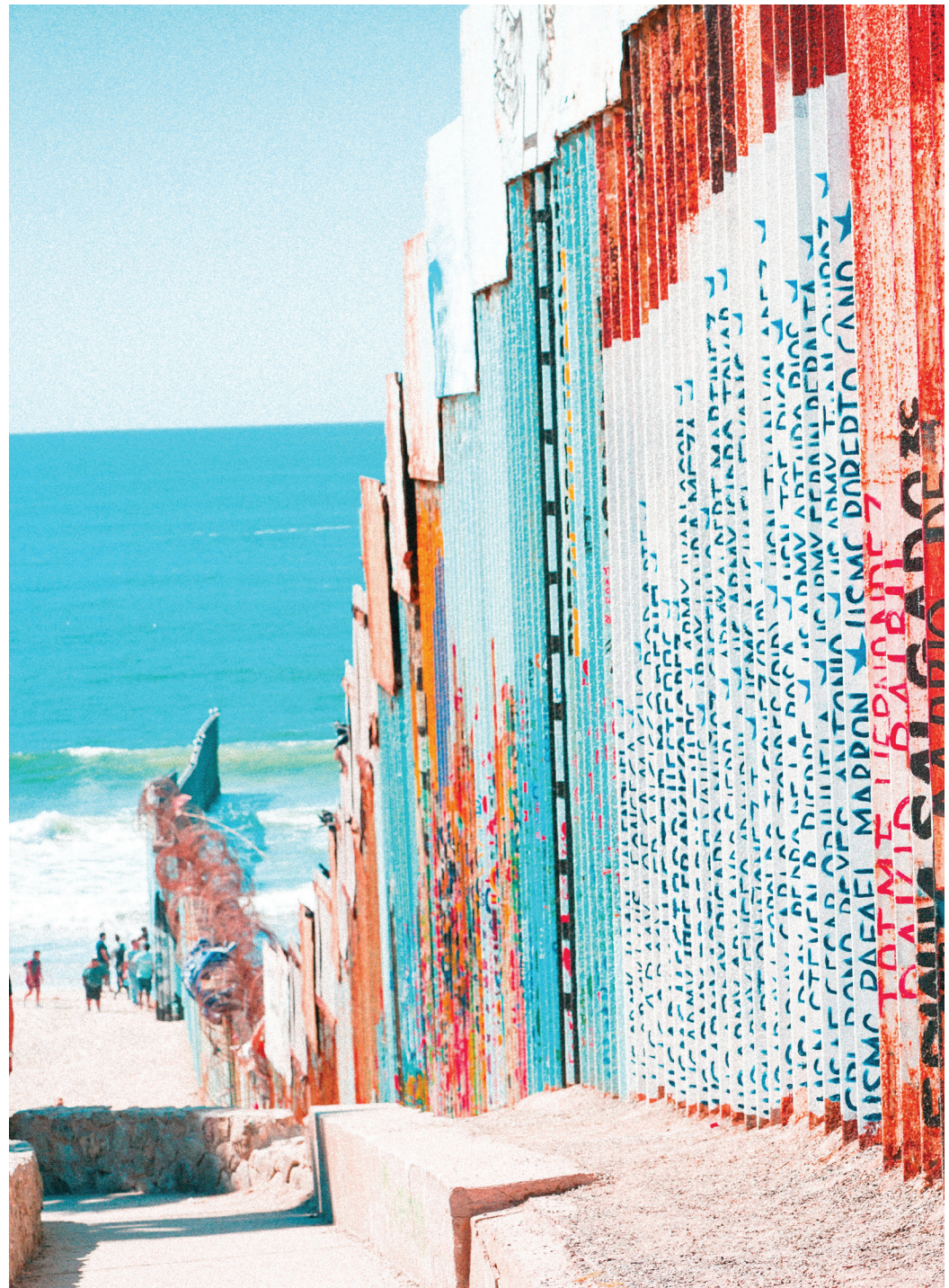


while I identify as Latinx, I am an American. I was born far from the border, in Sacramento, California, one generation removed from my ancestors' arrival from Mexico on my father's side, two generations from the Italians and Irish on my mother's. So I'm a relatively common kind of American hybrid. I have green eyes and brownish skin. I didn't grow up speaking Spanish, but I'm learning because I want to connect. Or reconnect? Because I want to know even more about what I don't know, and to use that knowledge to meliorate the alienation of new arrivals. I want to collaborate and imagine together “the world happening anew.”

...

It's interesting that Herrera ties new tongue so specifically to place. A “nebulous territory,” he calls it, and we might also name it the Borderlands. More than a distinct geographical region, the Borderlands is a cultural space defined by mixture—*mezcla*—by ambiguity and hybridity—*mestizaje*: the intertwining of personal and national histories and the hope of futures enriched by respect for multiple perspectives. The Borderlands “is not a comfortable territory to live in,” Gloria Anzaldúa tells us in *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*. “No, not comfortable but home.”

Makina's recognition of new tongue expressing “wonderment” and the “promise of new things” turns the language of discovery on its head. The language of the Age of Discovery, that is, of a period (the 15th to the





18th century), not simply of wonder and novelty—as it’s mostly portrayed in narratives of European explorers adventuring in Africa, Asia, and the Americas—but also of colonization and cruelty, of the exploitation of humans and natural resources, and the naturalization of ideologies and institutions (including universities) that have created persistent inequities frequently linked to ethnicity and place of origin.

The New World of new tongue, as Makina hears it, feels much more

generous, much less certain, more full of promise for those who’ve traditionally been oppressed. It’s a form of evasion and resistance, but also, I think, an invitation for anyone with a will to participate in rethinking communities and culture on more equitable terms.

• • •

“[T]he Borderlands are physically present,” Anzaldúa says, “where the space between two individuals shrinks with intimacy.”

We begin speaking to each other in any tongue by introducing ourselves, by acknowledging our shared presence and then opening up, observing, revealing what we see and hear and taste, what we feel. We seek common ground, we generously negotiate differences. We listen, we speculate. We language together.

I introduce my students to Makina’s journey and linger on this particular passage about language, because I hope I can help my little pod better see the experience of immigrants in the US, and of the Borderlands more generally, as one in which they can share, with which they should seek to struggle in a hybrid language. It’s why I’ve brought Herrera himself to Utah, in the first of two Borderlands Conferences, to be in conversation with us and with other authors writing in latin and anglo and new tongue—Cristina Rivera Garza, Francisco Cantú, Antonio Ruiz-Camacho, Julián Herbert, Natalie Scenters-Zapico, Fernanda Melchor, Eduardo Halfon.

Not comfortable but home, the Borderlands: its cultures, its languages, its histories, its presents, its futures, its literatures—and all of these, I believe, in the broadest, most hemispheric sense, ours together to suffer and to shape, and within which to be transformed, made more hybrid, more whole, again and again. **P**



Transformations after the Fall of the Berlin Wall:

What happened in East Germany?

Julia E. Ault

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY



On November 9, 1989, the Berlin Wall fell, and so the story goes, communism came to an end in Europe. A symbol of oppression since its construction in 1961, the Berlin Wall continues to be used as a shorthand for the Cold War, especially in Europe.

The Wall invokes images and memories of the standoff between the two superpowers and their proxies, East and West Germany. Tales of secret passages and desperate attempts to cross the heavily militarized border remain a fixture in popular culture.

The actual opening of the Wall in 1989 was a rather inglorious moment, though, because East German authorities accidentally announced new policies over the radio before informing border police. East Germans heard the news and flooded the checkpoints, demanding to cross into the democratic and capitalist West Germany. Lacking instructions to the contrary, officials relented. In Berlin, people from East and West climbed the fortifications and celebrated. Newscasters from around the world, including well-known NBC anchor Tom Brokaw, heralded the events as the historic moment that brought East Germans freedom.

The fall of the Wall is a well-known story. But what came next? Diplomatically, we know that the Cold War ended in Europe, the Red Army pulled out of East Germany, and Germany was united. But on a societal level, how did 17 million East Germans react to the myriad of changes they confronted in a new democratic and capitalist world?

To understand the magnitude of these

transformations, we must first consider what life was like under communism. East Germans experienced repression; faced imprisonment for any number of crimes against the state, including attempting to flee to the West; and lived in the shadow of one of the most extensive surveillance apparatuses of the time. They had fewer consumer goods than their West German counterparts, and obviously, experienced enormous challenges if they wished to travel outside of the Soviet bloc. At the same time, East Germans went about their lives. They attended school, they went

to work, they had families, they celebrated birthdays and weddings. East Germans lived in a restricted societal and political system, but they were humans—not automatons.

As communism collapsed in the fall of 1989, East Germans took to the streets to demand freedoms that they had been denied. They demanded reform, including the right to travel; the right to multiple,

legitimate, and independent political parties (democracy); a clean environment; and better access to consumer goods. With the opening of the border on November 9, East Germans felt a sense of euphoria. They could now access the many things that they had desired but been forbidden. As the protests went on, public sentiment



A section of the Berlin Wall on Harzer Strasse, Germany, October 1962.

changed from calling for reform of East Germany to unification with West Germany. On October 3, 1990, a single, unified Federal Republic of Germany came into being and East Germany disappeared.

The months and years that followed present a complicated story of excitement, bewilderment, and disillusionment. Overnight, institutions and certainties that East Germans expected were gone. McDonalds opened locations across the former communist territory, new shopping malls sprang up in fields, and bright, colorful clothing became the norm. The influx of goods brought excitement, but many East German industries failed to transition to a competitive market economy. Quickly, jobs disappeared, and unemployment rose. Workers of all ages were confronted with uncertain futures. Many young people left the former East Germany, searching for better jobs and more opportunity in the West. East German families, accustomed to

“Meaningful transformation takes a long time and almost inevitably has unexpected consequences.”

universal, state-run daycare, had to find new childcare arrangements that inevitably cost more. Politically, East Germans struggled to navigate an unfamiliar system that was already well-established and typically run by West Germans.

The dual transition (to democracy and capitalism from communist dictatorship) also presented unexpected challenges. In the case of environmental protection, for example, German unification brought in substantial investments for pollution abatement. Additionally, antiquated industries that dumped waste into rivers and released sulfur dioxide into the air did not survive privatization or became subject to more stringent regulation. Renewal projects cleaned up towns and turned old open-cast mines into beautiful lakes. For



the environment, the transition was an absolute win. The new boardwalks, parks, and swimming areas, however, are often empty as a result of outmigration over the last three decades. The air was clean, but no one was left to breathe it. Massive federal support could not fully offset differences in living standards, job opportunities, and outlooks on life between the former East and West Germany. Those shopping malls built in the 1990s have closed again in light of depopulation and unemployment, leaving abandoned buildings and even fewer options for those who remain. Now, over thirty years later, the gap is closing, but disparities continue.

Disenchantment with life after communism has led some former East Germans to turn to a nostalgia for the East (In German: Ostalgie = Ost + Nostalgie). They imagine that everything was better



under communism: consumer goods were cheaper, crime was virtually nonexistent, jobs were guaranteed by the state. Some also blur the lines between reminiscing about their youths and the political system in which they occurred. Whether or not truly invested in East Germany's socialist project, this nostalgia illuminates what former East Germans see as the failings of Germany today. The excitement and anticipation of 1989 has been tempered over time.

What can we take away from this narrative of political and societal transformation? First, meaningful transformation takes a long time and almost inevitably has unexpected consequences. Even much desired transitions can prove problematic, especially when policies come from the top-down without community support or input. Second, nostalgia for an imagined past is a powerful force. Few East Germans would actually wish a return to communism but invoking certain aspects of the previous regime can be used to criticize the existing system. Third, and finally, it is easy to lose sight of the individual in moments of large-scale transformation. Individual transitions are at stake, too, with significant financial, emotional, and psychological consequences. Acknowledging complex human experiences is essential to maintaining empathy, historical and contemporary. **P**



Will the Pandemic Transform the Gendered Division of Labor?

Cynthia A. Stark
PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT
OF PHILOSOPHY

During this pandemic, 2.5 million women have left the workforce (compared to 1.8 million men). Women, who before the pandemic made up more than half the workforce, are now at their lowest workforce participation level since 1988. Women of color have been especially affected. In January of 2021, for instance, the overall unemployment rate for women was 6.3% (double the pre-pandemic rate), but the rate for Asian women was 7.9%, for Black women 8.5%, and for Latina women 8.8%. White women's unemployment rate was 5.1%.

This exodus of women from the workplace was propelled in part by the gendered division of labor. We are all familiar with this division, even if we do not know it by that name. It describes the phenomenon whereby the bulk of unpaid domestic work is done by women whether or not they also do paid work outside the home. Unpaid domestic work includes housework, such as cleaning, cooking, shopping, and doing laundry, and caring work, such as feeding, dressing, bathing and transporting children, helping

with homework, and assisting elderly parents. Recent data show that, in the U.S., women who are married to, or cohabitating with, a man do about two-thirds of all routine household tasks. In OECD countries, fathers, on average, spend less than half the time caring for children than their employed female partners do. According to a 2018 Oxfam report, women around the world do between two and 10 times as much unpaid domestic work as men. The global value of this work is estimated to be \$10 trillion per year.

In addition to performing most of the domestic labor, women typically also carry what is called the “mental load”—the invisible work involved in managing a household and a family. This work includes such tasks as planning meals, making doctor's appointments, signing up for parent-teacher conferences, organizing birthday parties, registering for summer camp, finding babysitters, and so on. Moreover, mothers in heterosexual partnerships are typically the “default parent.” This means that they are the ones ultimately









responsible for child care. This responsibility includes bearing the mental load when it comes to parenting but also taking time off from work when children are sick, foregoing promotions, or withdrawing from the workforce altogether when children are young.

It appears then that traditional ideas about men's and women's roles in the family have persisted, despite men's increased involvement in domestic labor in developed countries over the past 60 years and despite the prevalence of a "marriage between equals discourse" identified by family researchers. An illustration of this persistence is the favorable reaction to Jen Psaki's announcement that she will soon step down from her position as President Biden's press secretary in order to spend more time with her children. One wonders how people would have regarded a similar announcement coming from Sean Spicer.

The pandemic has laid bare the resilience of this traditional perspective, especially the idea of the mother as the default parent. When schools and child care facilities shuttered, it was primarily mothers who left their jobs to care for children and shepherd them through online school, thus contributing to the especially high rate of unemployment among women. This abrupt shift in employment caused an abrupt shift in perspective for many Americans. Care work, they realized, is a substantial and vital part of human life. Hence it is unrealistic to ask individual women (or men) to figure out how to provide it on their own, especially under the constraints of outdated ideologies that make

providing it costly and difficult. A collective approach, it seems clear now, is better for everyone. In the words of the recently formed Care Economy Business Council, "Our economy cannot reach its full potential without women and women cannot reach their full potential without a reimagining of care."

What would such a reimagining look like? Several ideas have been proposed. One is to modify workplace policies and culture. Many jobs are designed as though workers lack caring responsibilities. The notion of the "worker," presumably gender-neutral, is actually the notion of the male breadwinner. Another is federally funded family and medical leave available to both male and female workers. This would enable those who want to have children but also need or want to do paid work to do so without bearing undue emotional, social or financial costs. Yet another proposal is increased wages for caregiving workers. This would attract highly qualified individuals and reflect the social value of their work. Perhaps most important is the Biden administration's proposal to spend \$200 billion to make preschool free for 3- and 4-year-olds, as kindergarten currently is, and to ensure that middle-income families pay no more than 7% of their income on child care and that low-income families pay nothing.

There is increasing support for improving our caregiving infrastructure. We are at a tipping point. Let's hope we can keep the momentum going for the sake of all who rely on care from others at some point in their lives, which is to say, for the sake of everyone. **P**



Andy Warhol

Finding a Willingness to Listen

Devon Hoxer
HUMANITIES STUDENT

I got sober in 2020. Through the heat of the summer, I spent a great deal of time with my bare, unadulterated self. I spent the year unlearning old habits, forcing myself to feel my feelings, and when my body wanted the path of least resistance—the magic ways I’d learned to numb the pain—I had to fight like hell to stay present and take new actions, to dig new rivers.

Summer 2020 presented its share of global and national pain to be acknowledged, felt, metabolized. Collective grief and discomfort was at the forefront of daily experience. I often felt like the ways my life was shifting mirrored the ways that America was being pushed to pay attention, to rise, and to adapt.

One of the more well-known aspects of recovery from addiction is the process of making amends to those you have harmed. It’s another non-negotiable part of sustainable change: honestly examining the past and taking responsibility for the fallout of past versions of ourselves.

I think, overall, we’re pretty ill-equipped to handle the idea of being the bad guy. Most stories read to me as a kid encouraged me to believe in good and evil as straightforward, predictable concepts. It had never occurred to me that I could be the villain in someone else’s story, or my own.

There are versions of America that we’d rather not sit with, but this year has been a reminder to not look away. Growth happens when we have the bravery to stay, to give what we can even if it is just our attention. Eye contact. A willingness to listen. It’s a start. **P**

Lessons from a Pandemic

Madelyn Poston
HUMANITIES STUDENT

I will always remember the panic that ensued when lockdown hit. Empty shelves, empty streets, empty cars. The world panicked, then went quiet. At least on the outside. Virtually though, life was bustling. Communities started Facebook groups, they shared recipes, stories, sanitized mason jars of yeast starters. Everyone was confused, hurting and isolated but we were going through it together.

Despite the chaos I was astonished that our first instinct was supporting each other. This newfound epiphany was challenged in May, with the divided uproar following the tragic death of George Floyd. Growing up as a minority, coming from a family of immigrants, I knew racism. I had seen firsthand the twisted truths it speaks, the ugly pain it leaves in its wake.

When I saw people, people I knew, people sharing yeast starters, denying its existence I was furious. The only solace I found was strengthening a voice I rarely used, a voice with little tolerance for ignorance and extensive amounts of patience for teaching. I called senators, protested, signed petitions, and convinced my best friend to vote for the first time. I was not the only one.

January of 2021, I lost two very close family members to COVID-19. I was forced to say goodbye to my uncle over Zoom. I hadn't given my grandfather a hug in almost a year. I know I was not alone in this experience either.

Many people talk about "returning to normal." I hope we don't. I hope we continue to grieve and honor those we lost. I hope we keep sharing mason jars of yeast starters. I hope we keep fighting for justice. I hope we never stop collecting the lessons this strange interval gave us. I hope we take surviving this pandemic as an opportunity to try a little harder, to be a little better. **P**





Featured Community


Edward Lueders
EMERITUS PROFESSOR

Jan and Bryson Garbett
HUMANITIES ALUMNI



Reflections of an Inextricable Bond

Lexie Kite
DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR



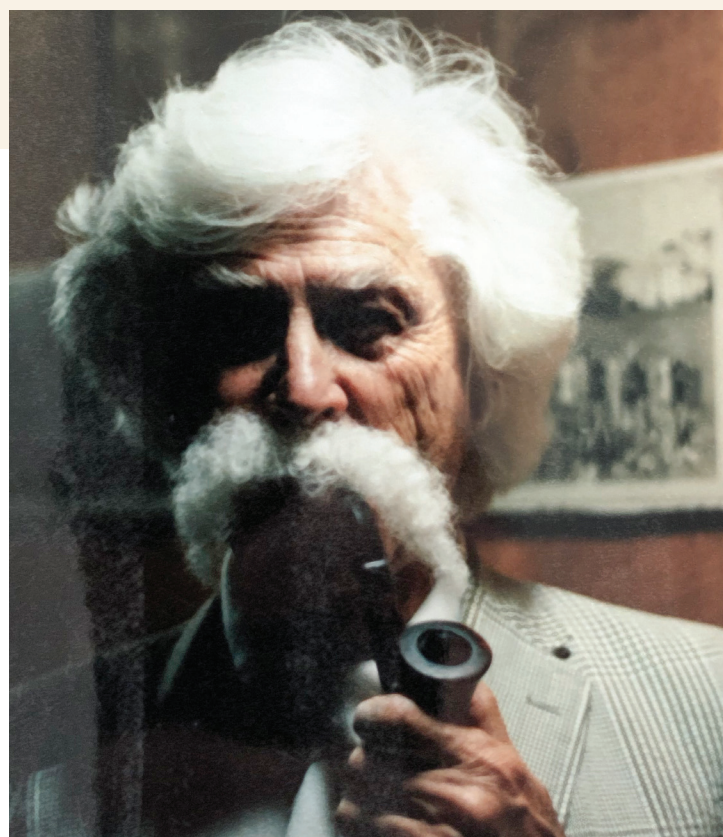
Emeritus Professor Edward Lueders taught at the University of Utah for 24 years where he directed the Creative Writing Program, chaired the Department of English, served as editor of the *Western Humanities Review*, and published 13 books, ranging from creative nonfiction (including *The Clam Lake Papers* and *The Salt Lake Papers*), to collections of modern verse, critical biographies, translations, and beyond. Still active and writing at 98, his new book, *Living on This Animal Planet: Zodiac Annual Poems with Papers*, is ready for its publisher. On top of all this, he spent 40 years consulting with secondary school students and teachers as Poet in the Schools throughout the U.S., India, and Japan. His honors include a Fellowship in Creative Writing from the National Endowment for the Arts, the 1992 Governor's Award in the Humanities from Utah Humanities, and the 1998 Entrada Institute Award for Environmental Education. At the end of his career, he was appointed the prestigious honor of University Professor.

His creativity, it should be noted, extends far beyond the written word. He has been playing jazz piano for audiences ever since 1943, when he was drafted into the US Armed Forces as a special services pianist. He has played at Utah ski resorts, including years as house pianist at Alta's Rustler Lodge. He was the dinner pianist at the Capitol Reef Inn in Torrey, Utah, where he and his wife, Deborah Keniston, built their retirement home, and volunteered as a lobby pianist for the University of Utah Hospital.

Former students and community members may also remember Lueders and

the late English Professor Kenneth Eble traveling throughout Utah performing a two-man show featuring the famed authors Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson. In his yet-to-be-published memoir, Lueders reflects on his inextricable bond with Eble, who passed too soon, and their classroom teaching brought to life:

"On the university campus, Ken and I each taught a range of courses. Our overlap was in American Literature. He especially liked to teach a concentrated single-author course on the work of Henry David Thoreau. Once when he was deep in the course, I chided him that he was beginning to look like Henry. In fact in some respects he did. He was short and compact with a largish head and a nose to match. I kidded

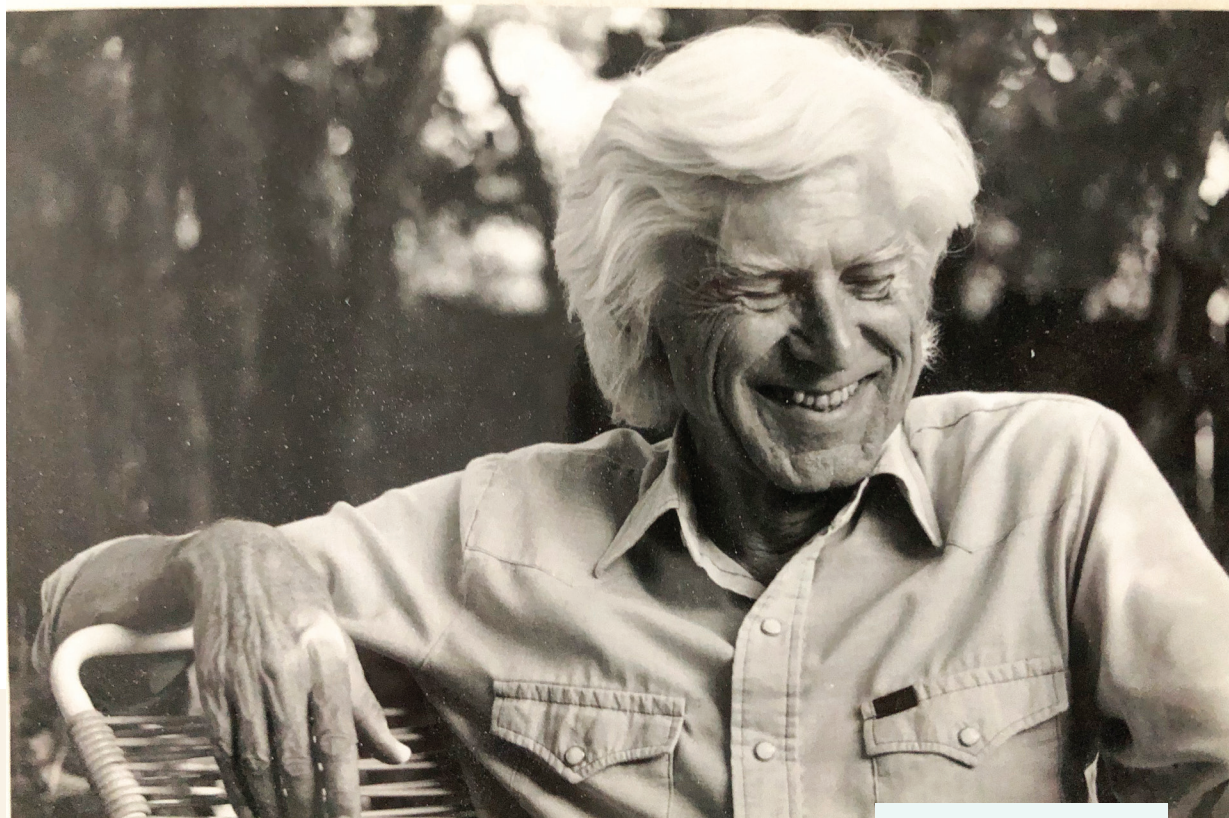


him that he ought to get himself up as Thoreau and teach his class in the guise of his subject.

I didn't suppose he'd take me seriously, but, always interested in making teaching techniques more vital, he did. A few days later he told me he'd do it—if I would 'do' Ralph Waldo Emerson with him, so that the two worthies, friends associated in life, could perform a dialogue to be fashioned from their writings. I was teaching a course on the New England Transcendentalists at the time and had always felt an affinity with Emerson. So I went for the idea, borrowed a 19th century frock-coat from the theater department, and played Emerson to his Thoreau.

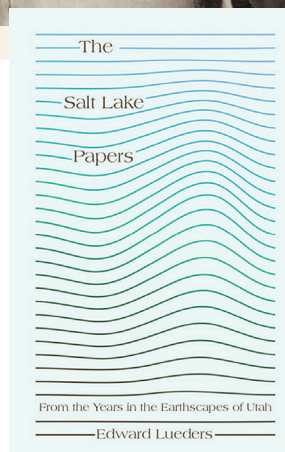
Ken drafted and I collaborated on a conversational script drawn chiefly from their books and essays. Ken's costume was modeled on the frequently published drawing of Thoreau in a knee-length coat, floppy hat, heavy shoes, and stout walking stick. To tailor the dialogue for our classes, we devised the script as our responses to an interview conducted by one of our students for whom we had written in the pertinent leading questions. Thoreau, as you might imagine, had all the best lines with Waldo as a kind of witty high-flown straight man. The most popular and challenging part of the skit came at the end with unrehearsed questions from the audience. By then we were steeped in our characters' language and manner. Our professorial familiarity with our subjects enabled us to ad lib our response faithfully in character.

We performed the skit first for Ken's Thoreau class. Then we did it for mine. By then *The Salt Lake Tribune* learned of our act, and we appeared photographed in costume with an accompanying write-up on the first page of the local section. That did it. High schools and colleges in the area began to invite us to perform for their classes. We were pleased to accept. The Utah Humanities Council caught our act and booked



us under their aegis in libraries and auditoriums all over the state. Word got around. We were even asked to perform at an educator's convention in Chicago. Which we did. We were having a high time with the act. But we were teachers, not actors, and it was getting out of hand. I returned the Emersonian frock coat to the theater costume department, we filed the script with our press clippings, and we went back to our course work and our own writing.

Kenneth Eble died at the height of his career as an outstanding nationally celebrated educator and author. After a hot game of tennis he sensed the signs of heart attack and drove himself to the hospital. There he underwent heart surgery from which he began to rally but then succumbed. Ken was 62. At a grave-side ceremony and again at a campus-wide memorial, Bill Mulder and I read excerpts from Thoreau's *Walden* and key passages I had chosen from Ken's own works. The echoes seemed right." **P**



Edward Lueders'
The Salt Lake Papers,
University of Utah
Press, 2018.



Giving Back through Scholarships and Service

Jill Lamping
DEVELOPMENT OFFICER



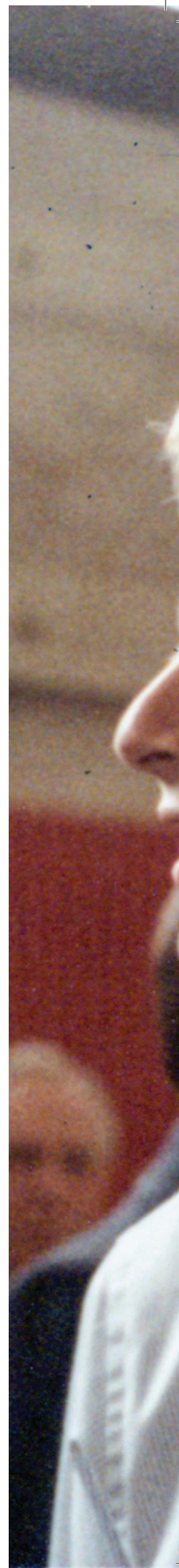
When Bryson Garbett started at the University of Utah he had two goals: To get a degree so he could go on to graduate school for an MBA, and to get involved. He received a degree but it would be years before he would pursue the business training from Harvard he wanted. His involvement, however, came much more easily.

During his first year, in addition to competing on the men's gymnastics team, for which he lettered, he also joined the Latter-day Saint Student Body Association (LDSSA). After serving a mission in Italy for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-

day Saints, Bryson returned to the U. It was his involvement in LDSSA that took him to a recruitment event where he met Jan VanDenBerghe, a Brigham Young University student home for break. After Bryson and Jan married, Jan transferred from BYU to the U where she continued her studies in English.

Along with his involvement with LDSSA, Bryson was involved in student government as treasurer and senator and later recruited Jan to join him on the activities committee. He also accepted a reporting position with The Daily Utah Chronicle. He covered the 1976 Utah state elections, interviewing candidates and sitting legislators as well as a Black Panther and an astronaut.

When Jan talks about her time at the U in the Department of English, she remembers fondly how the writing process intrigued her: "The paper unfolded while you participated in it. What you thought was going to be the end result isn't always the case. It can surprise you. That is what I loved about my major. Writing and reading and exploring the world through other people's eyes helps you be more refined







in your own approach. It helps you to make a decision with a little more compassion and evaluation.”

“The humanities is a field that teaches how to explore the world and your place in it,” she reflects. “No matter what you do, you are impacted by humanities. Studying language and community and thought, it opens you up till you feel like you can do anything. There is a confidence that comes with a humanities education.”

After Bryson graduated with a history degree and Jan graduated with an English degree, life didn’t go quite as planned. Bryson was not accepted to the MBA program he’d hoped to attend and didn’t have strong prospects for work, so he began working for his brother’s construction company. After learning the ropes and planning to apply again to graduate school, Bryson and Jan decided to open their own construction company. Bryson ran the contracting and construction work. With no one to do the books, Jan jumped in. With the help of a program at the U, Jan learned the ins and outs of bookkeeping and did so for the

company until she was pregnant with their eighth child. It was then that she “retired” to be with the family.

For many years and three recessions, Bryson and Jan were in survival mode. They worked hard to make sure they paid all their debts and kept everyone happy even during the hardest of times—giving their television to someone whom they owed money and their car to another. Eventually Bryson received acceptance from Harvard in the Owner/ Presidents Manager Program, finally fulfilling a lifelong goal he had set for himself when he started his undergraduate degree at the U.

The Garbetts’ work office has always been in their home—at first in the basement of their home in West Valley, then Sandy, and now in their remodeled 1905 home on Capitol Hill. Through the chaos of kids and workers, they say it was always a gift to have the business run out of their home. As their children grew up, because work was always part of their family and in their home, they were each able to help with the business in various capacities.

In 1997, somewhat by accident, their

lives took a new path. Jan had a family trip to Florida and Disney World planned. Flights were booked, everything was reserved and then Jan learned of a humanitarian aid trip to Mexico. She brought the idea to Bryson, who reminded her about the flights and the reservations. They took it to the family for a vote. The family voted for the service trip and their connection to the people of rural Mexico began. “Our lives were never the same. Every member of the family was truly impacted by the service we gave, the work we completed, and the dire support needed in this area of Mexico. All of us felt a strong desire to continue to be of help,” said Jan. And that is exactly what they did. They started a new tradition of Christmas in Mexico where they would find ways to really be of help. Eventually they landed on education support in the rural communities.

It was that first trip which opened their eyes to what a high school education could do for a young person. They soon established a foundation named Escalera (meaning ladder in Spanish), which provided scholarships for students to attend a private high school in Mexico City. This work has continued for over 25 years. The Garbetts continue to seek new ways to motivate students to stay in school and to follow their dreams. As of today, the Escalera Foundation has supported more than 125,000 students in being able to attend high school.

Bryson’s goals early in life to attain an education and get involved on campus and in the community were goals he shared with Jan, and together, they and their family have given thousands of people the same opportunities. Through the Garbett Family Foundation, they and their children have also continued their support of education in Utah. The Writing Studies Scholars Program, housed in the U’s Department of Writing & Rhetoric Studies, is a bridge program between Salt Lake Community College and the U which has received transformative, multi-year funding from the Foundation.

“The Writing Studies Scholars program is so exciting for us to support because we have done work down in Mexico and see the difference education can make in peoples’ lives when you give them that encouragement to move forward with their own education and open their own

doors,” Jan says. “So for a lot of first-generation students who are in a new country or are navigating a new system, this is such a nurturing and well thought out program at the U. We have studied other schools and other university’s programs and been less impressed. What the U is doing is unique and effective.”

Bryson and Jan are quick to share that as



donors, they have very critical eyes. They realized early on that they wanted to evaluate their program in Mexico. They sought to find out if they were making a difference, and if they were making the impact they intended to make. After completing the evaluations, they found they needed to make changes, and they did. It is important to them that Dr. Christie Toth has the same philosophy about the Writing Studies Scholars program. “It is gratifying to see someone take this so seriously. Someone who is willing to evaluate the program and make changes to make it better. We are happy to support the program and really appreciate the way they grow and learn on all fronts to better the lives of these students,” Jan says.

As Bryson reflects on his time at the U he says, “Entering the U, my goal was to get through. It didn’t have anything to do with an education. But a funny thing happened—once I got in that university atmosphere, I did have mentors and opportunities that headed me in the right direction. And I got an education despite myself.” Today, they devote an incredible amount of time and support to ensuring others have the same opportunities. **P**

Commencement 2021

Yutzil Valeria Roman
HONORS AT GRADUATION



2021 CONVOCATION SPEAKER

Yutzil Valeria Roman

HONORS AT GRADUATION

Yutzil Valeria Roman graduated Magna Cum Laude with a bachelor of arts degree in English and minors in Latin American Studies and Political Science. Yutzil chose to study both English and Latin American Studies because she wanted to explore the ways native and indigenous voices have been published and shared.

It was her commitment to attention and inquiry that distinguished Yutzil academically. She received several scholarships including the LEAP Diversity Need Scholarship, the LEAP Peer Advisor Scholarship, as well as the college's most prestigious award, the Steffensen-Cannon Scholarship.

Yutzil hopes to immerse herself in the world of stories, working in a bookstore or library, while she prepares her applications to graduate programs in creative writing and education.



Read a transcript of **Yutzil Valeria Roman's College of Humanities convocation speech** on the following page.





The Humanities: **Dancing & Storytelling**

Do you remember a time when you were afraid to dance? For me, it was seven years ago at my quinceañera. Part of the quinceañera ceremony includes these choreographed dances you do in front of everyone. My music included a little bit of Bruno Mars, Adele, and Nicki Minaj. It was 2014. When it was my turn to dance, I was so nervous. I didn't want to forget any of the moves; I didn't want to fall. There were so many things to keep track of. But as soon as the first beat came through the speakers, I took the first step and the rest followed. It wasn't a perfect dance, but I had a lot of fun. Muscle memory helped. But that's not always the case.

Lately, our bodies have been trapped in repetitive motions. We've been inside and the days have all blended together. Our spaces have stayed the same, but our lives have changed. Between a year ago and today, some of us have lost family members and friends. There were more people in our lives then than there are now. Some of us have felt the pain of targeted attacks and aggressions against our own communities, against our families. Some of us have had to deal with financial struggles and child care challenges. We had to continue working to pay electricity and internet bills. We realized just how much we need one another. If this year has shown us anything, it is that we are forever interconnected. We may move to our own rhythms, but we still move alongside others.

These past semesters have been some of the most difficult to navigate. We've had to transform living rooms and bedrooms into classrooms and offices. We've had to think about our family's safety and our own well-being. Not to mention that many of us continued to enroll full time in classes and be involved in extracurricular activities. There was no blueprint for any of this. We had to figure it out as we went along, one day at a time. Our professors, mentors, and family had to figure it out as they went along. The fact that we're all here today, that we've made it this far, should be celebrated, not forgotten. We've accomplished something extraordinary in such an uncertain time.

As I look back at the things that led me to be here today, I can't help but think of the small things. Being able to just open my window and breathe. Go on walks with my Mom. I'm sure all of you can

think of small things that kept you going this past year too. I can't tell you how many times I would turn in an essay or finish a zoom class and immediately start playing music in my room. I just had to move in any way I could. Because of the pandemic, some of us cannot dance like we used to. What will dancing even look like as we move forward? How will our bodies move through the future? No matter what our dancing looks like, we must remember to do it.

I think there are many ways to dance in this world. My time in college has only confirmed this belief. During my studies, I learned about the Inca civilization and the fascinating system of writing they developed using a series of knots and strings made from cloth: the quipu. Language can be spoken and written, but it also can be touched and moved with our hands. I read stories written by authors who look like me, whose families crossed borders like mine. The humanities taught me to dance through an exploration of new ideas and rhythms. The humanities teach us to actively seek out multiple voices, to create our own spaces if we cannot find them.

Whether it's for a quinceañera or a solo-party, dancing reminds us how goofy, spontaneous, and vulnerable we can be. It encourages us to both lose ourselves and feel part of something bigger. Dancing is a celebration. So, as we leave and graduate today, I ask you to think about who, and what will be part of your celebration? What rhythm and style will you dance to, will you create to? We must now take the steps we've learned and turn them into our own movements, into our own motivations and successes.

Lastly, I would like to thank the people who have danced with me the most: my family. My family here and in México. I see you watching the livestream. To my given and my chosen family: thank you for supporting and loving me. No estaría aquí sin ustedes, sin el apoyo que me han dado. Espero poder abrazarlos pronto y celebrar como debe de ser. Los quiero mucho y los extraño.

And to all who have taught us—Class of 2021—how to move and who have moved us, both on and off the dancefloor: thank you. You have given us the courage to dance with our words and with our everyday actions. I look forward to dancing with all of you again. **P**



2021 GRADUATING CLASS

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STATISTICS

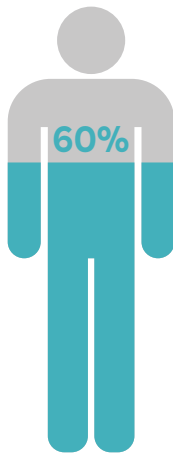
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES



859
GRADUATES



3.43
AVERAGE
UNDERGRAD GPA



520
FEMALE

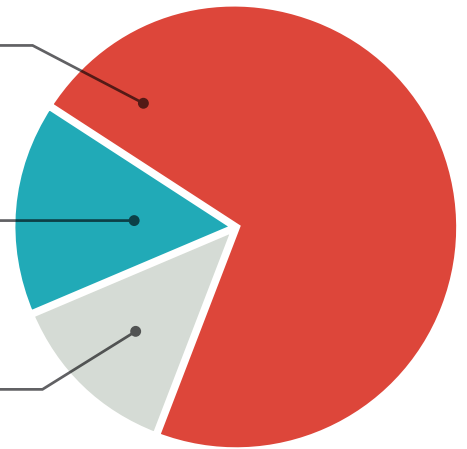
333
MALE

6
UNIDENTIFIED

72%
IN STATE

15%
RESIDENT
CHANGED

13%
OUT OF
STATE



95%
DOMESTIC



5%
INTERNATIONAL

MIN. AGE

19

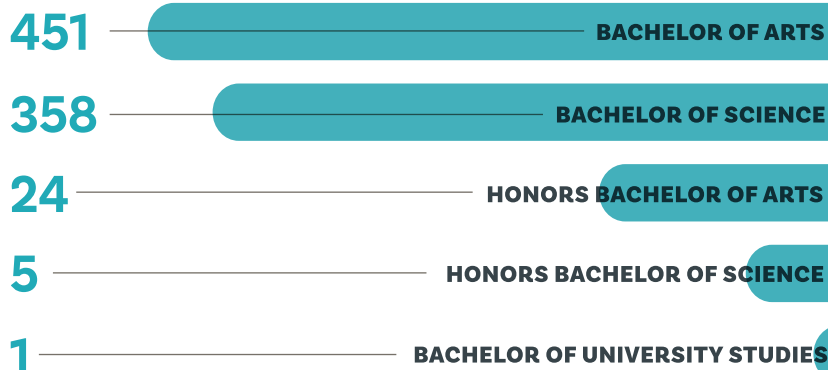
AVG. AGE

25

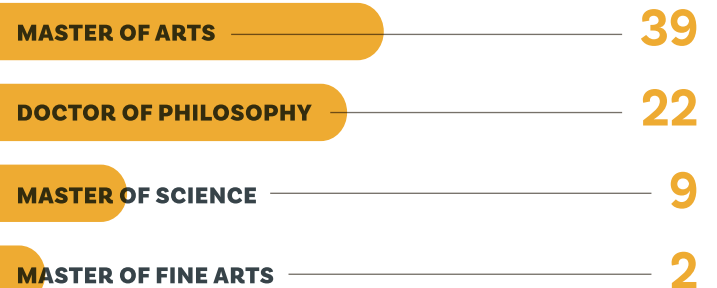
MAX. AGE

59

UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES AWARDED

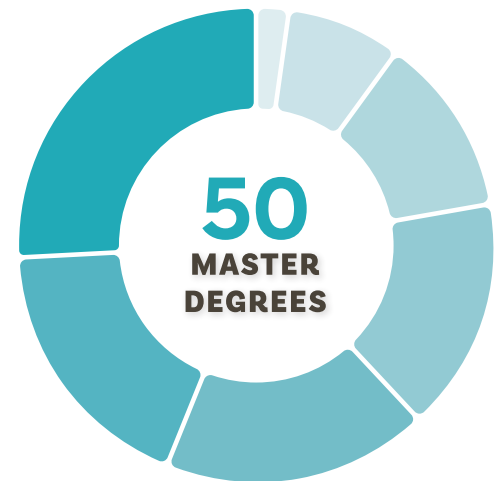


GRADUATE DEGREES AWARDED





354	COMMUNICATION	21	LINGUISTICS
144	INTERNATIONAL STUDIES	13	MIDDLE EAST STUDIES
93	ENGLISH	13	PEACE & CONFLICT STUDIES
65	WORLD LANGUAGES & CULTURES	10	ASIAN STUDIES
62	HISTORY	6	LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES
33	PHILOSOPHY	1	HUMANITIES MISC.
25	WRITING & RHETORIC STUDIES		

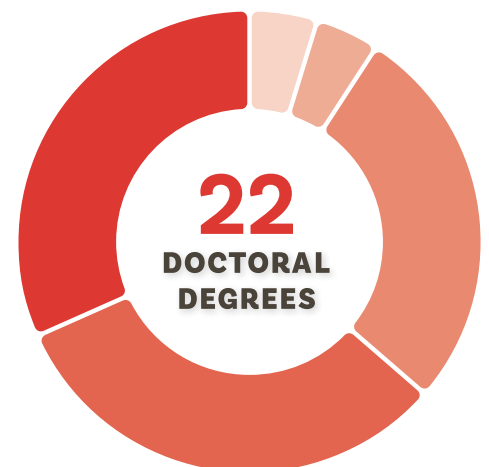


13	WORLD LANGUAGES & CULTURES
9	ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
9	HISTORY
8	ENGLISH
6	LINGUISTICS
4	COMMUNICATION
1	PHILOSOPHY



TOP 6 MINORS

50	SPANISH
26	STRATEGIC COMM.
20	HISTORY
17	FRENCH
14	COGNITIVE SCIENCE
12	WRITING & RHETORIC



COMMUNICATION	7
ENGLISH	7
HISTORY	6
PHILOSOPHY	1
WORLD LANGUAGES & CULTURES	1

FEATURED PROGRAMMING

Tanner Lecture on AI and Human Values
with **Shoshana Zuboff**
(virtual) 12pm | Oct. 28
2021

Author Meets Readers
with **Reginald Dwayne Betts**
(in-person) 7pm | Feb. 22
2022

Tanner Talk with Nnedi Okorafor
(virtual) 12pm | Nov. 18
2021

*David P. Gardner Lecture in the Humanities
and Fine Arts with Ayad Akhtar*
(in-person) 7pm | Mar. 29
2022

Tanner Lecture on Human Values
with **Isabel Wilkerson**
(in-person) 7pm | Feb. 3
2022

Tanner Talk with Raj Patel (April 14, 12pm) and
Documentary Film Screening (April 13, 7pm)
(in-person) | Apr. 13-14
2022

Author Meets Readers
with **Eric Herschthal**
(in-person) 1pm | Feb. 8
2022

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TANNER 2021-22
HUMANITIES CENTER



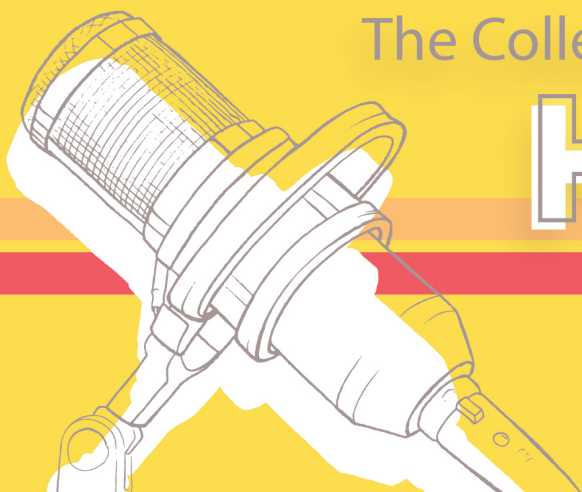
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