

Spring 2024



GLOBAL AMBASSADOR

KEOUGH SCHOOL OF GLOBAL AFFAIRS



Letter From the Editors

Welcome to *The Global Ambassador*: a student-run, Keough School-supported digital magazine for Notre Dame undergraduates engaged in global affairs-related career development, research, and field experiences. We are *The Global Ambassador's* co-founders and editors-in-chief, Ashlyn Poppe and Jake Harris.

I (Ashlyn) am a junior studying global affairs with a minor in the Hesburgh Program in Public Service. I am passionate about the intersection of law and politics and hope to pursue a career in public service. I firmly believe that it is the drive to get our hands dirty that sets students at Notre Dame apart from other universities. *The Global Ambassador* is proof of this and I am deeply grateful to have played a formative role in this project.

I (Jake) am a junior studying anthropology and global affairs with a minor in health, humanities, and society. I hope to pursue a career in public health, combining my training in medical anthropology with applied health policy and practice. I have especially enjoyed my time here at Notre Dame thanks to the incredible work done by my peers in the Keough School, and look forward to sharing their insights with you.

A little over a year ago, we resolved to leave a legacy for future undergraduates interested in the ever-expanding universe of global affairs. What started as an impromptu hallway conversation became the vision for a student-run publication showcasing the remarkable efforts of Notre Dame students on campus and around the world. As we developed *The Global Ambassador*, we wanted to highlight student experiences in a way that is accessible to current and prospective students, as well as the greater Notre Dame community. With these goals in mind, we set out to create a legacy and *The Global Ambassador* was born!

Notre Dame students are global ambassadors. We are messengers and representatives connecting the university to the global community. We are committed to fostering dialogue, brainstorming solutions to the world's most pressing issues, and maintaining a distinct optimism about the future. In the written pieces and multimedia to follow, you will find the unique contributions of Notre Dame undergraduates not only to their personal and academic development, but also to the university's mission of being a force for good in the world.

Our classmates are interested in a diverse array of subjects ranging from international security and peacebuilding to climate change and global health. However, the work of students passionate about global affairs does not start and end in the classroom. The undergraduates featured in the inaugural edition of *The Global Ambassador* have secured internships in Washington, DC, established nonprofit organizations to support development in Ghana, and conducted fieldwork and service projects in countries like Morocco and Italy, to name just a few. We are privileged to call these changemakers our peers and friends, and we are incredibly excited to share their experiences with you!

We also want to recognize and thank our enthusiastic and hardworking staff for helping us realize our vision. *The Global Ambassador* would not be possible without all of you! We hope that you, our audience, enjoy engaging with the magazine as much as we did making it.

If you are an undergraduate interested in getting involved with *The Global Ambassador* during the 2024-25 academic year, please reach out to global-ambassador-keough@nd.edu. Our official call for submissions will go live in fall 2024 and we look forward to reading and amplifying your interesting and impactful work.

Cheers,

Ashlyn Poppe and Jake Harris,
Co-Founders and Co-Editors-in-Chief,
The Global Ambassador



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An invitation to tell stories

Theophilus Daniel

In full honesty, I did not expect to take classes on three continents this semester.

I arrived in Jerusalem on August 27 for the four-month study abroad program, ready to immerse myself among its diverse residents and learn as much as I could from being in the land. In those first six weeks, I got much of what I sought: cultural engagement, deep context, vibrant exploration, spiritual enrichment, and an abundance of unexpected moments.

In the next six weeks, I found quite a few more unexpected moments: a war, a relocation, a new dorm, and—dastardly—Zoom classes.

A growing list of contrasts soon formed. I took classes in Bethlehem and Trafalgar Square eleven days apart. In September I joined day trips to Tel Aviv and the West Bank; in November, to Oxford and Liverpool. I welcomed October with an evening church service in the Armenian Quarter of the Old City; I left October attending an evening church service in London's financial district. And Sunday I am going to Ohio. I will be taking online classes, with students from Asia and Europe, taught by professors from Jerusalem—while in Ohio.

It has been much. I am not sure I know how to begin or end reflecting on this period. I may have read an entire novel's worth of insightful, harrowing, touching, and galvanizing writings since October 7th. I expect my reading is not quite finished—if it ever can be. More importantly, I have continued listening to the people most affected by the continuing crisis in all its dimensions. I hope to bring the fruits of my reading and listening on this war and the mountainous context underpinning it to the readers of *The Global Ambassador*.

One way I will do this is through narratives, through stories. Why? Why stories?

Healing the century-old Israeli-Palestinian conflict demands encounters with facts, contentions, discussions, and arguments about real people and real events. Analyses and backgrounders and historiographical works matter. Op-eds and polemics and polls have a place. Many capable journalists, historians, and academics have written immensely valuable words on this subject over many years and even in these two months of war. I expect more to join from the pixelated pages of *The Global Ambassador*. In diverse ways, these writings and productions all seek to tell a story of the reality on the ground. They often paint pictures of how things are to tell how things should be.

I would venture to say that stories do the same, perhaps even more directly. Fiction is especially unbridled. Writing a fictional story is like writing an op-ed as God. It's one thing to argue for an idea of the world and another thing to creatively realize the world that that idea argues for. My opening paragraph might be something like creative non-fiction. It speaks just a bit to my personality, to my worldview, to my experience, to my concerns. It fleshes out your mental picture of me in a way that a thorough itinerary of my travel and courses this semester could not. It unites the events of my semester with my voice, the substance with the style.

What I hope to bring is a dimension that I don't imagine any other global affairs magazine quite has: a dedicated space for fictional and nonfictional narratives that shed light on the many-sided stories of this many-storied world. I believe a project like this provides the imaginative connection central to fulfilling the mission of integral human development: working to give all people the ability to achieve a holistic well-being that matches their inherent dignity.

I open this space for any person who wants to make a narrative contribution, fictional or nonfictional, that offers engaging windows into the world we're building through the discussions in *The Global Ambassador*.

Thank You, Tommy

Harry Peluso

While studying abroad in Perth, Australia, my fellow Notre Dame students and I all stayed at St. Thomas More (Tommy) Residential College. In a few words, I would describe my Tommy “fresher” experience as mind-opening, spontaneous, and new.

When I first got here, I was just overwhelmed by the friendliness of all of the residential assistants and committee members, but also by the vast number of countries represented in the fresher group. The amazing events of 2.0 fresher week—like the tour of downtown and the Caversham Nature Park—laid the foundation for what would become amazing friendships with fellow freshers and returners.

With these roots, it was the little things that began to make Tommy feel like home such as playing various games on the quad before dinner and spontaneously going to the beach after classes on a nice day. Though simple, these small moments culminated in deep, flourishing friendships. We may come from vastly different backgrounds, yet the community and friends I made have shown me that we have commonalities in ways that I never would have guessed.

Upon this realization, my confidence in showing sides of myself that I previously had not expressed also began to grow. For instance, I started a handstand class and at breakfast, my friends began asking: “How did handstand class go?” While easily overlooked, this action meant a tremendous deal to me. My peers’ genuine interest and care for one another’s lives broke down any cultural differences and began to form what I like to call more of an impromptu family. Much more than just a place to live for my exchange, Tommy has become a place that I can call home long after I have left. Tommy is where I have developed relationships I hope to maintain for years to come.



There's only one. A common phrase at Tommy, but what does that mean? Let me show you.

A unique moment where all of our paths intersect. One time you introduce yourself in your yellow fresher shirt. One night when we're all wishing the other colleges goodnight. One semester at Tommy. There's only one.

Sometimes you've got to go with the flow. Only so much you can control.

Take the leap.

Enjoy the ride.

The small interactions are where the magic forms, compounding into a beautiful reality. Bound by inside jokes and core memories, nonsense to the outside, but pivotal to us. There's only one.

So stay up a bit later talking with friends. Take that trip to Yochi on a random Tuesday. Ask that girl to lunch at Bayside. Play basketball after dinner. Try out for the new icy sport. Dive into relationships. Because there's only one.

It's not the place, neither a studio or standard, nor Aussie or international. Being present is the dream. Simple yet glorious. Temporary yet forever. Once gone, you can only relive how good it was. Living on in our hearts and minds, there's only one.

Thank you, Tommy More, for showing me the present is a gift. There's truly only one.

Curating an Empire: Researching British Museums and Their Connection to Imperialism

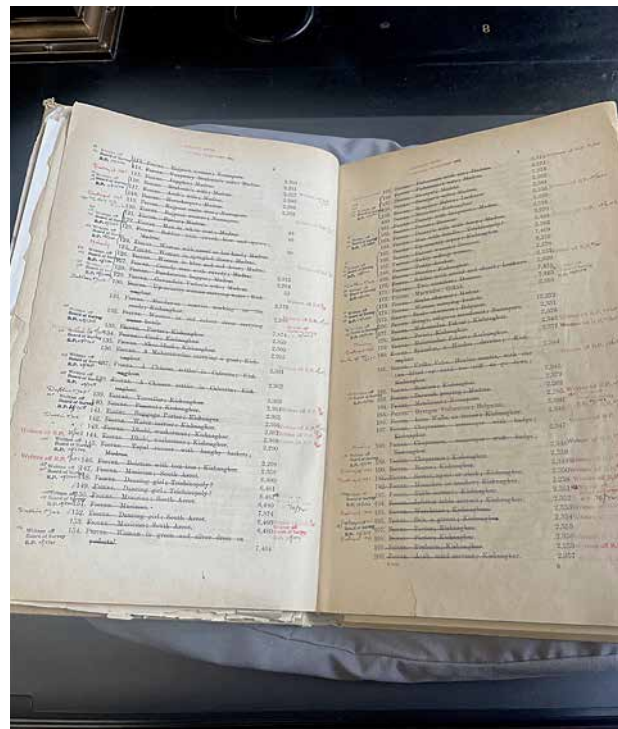
Elizabeth Bernath

The United Kingdom has excelled in two things throughout history: museums and colonialism. From the British Museum to the National Gallery to the Natural History Museum and beyond, England alone holds hundreds of millions of artifacts ranging across various continents, time periods, and cultures. Many of the collections in these museums connect to the history of the British Empire and its imperialistic missions. Early collections of ‘exotic’ art and artifacts were first displayed in ‘Cabinets of Curiosities,’ or wunderkammers, among Western European royalty and elites throughout the 16th and 17th centuries. However, as the British Empire expanded, so did its collections of foreign, and oftentimes stolen, artifacts and relics. In England, Victorian-era scholars and political figures would eventually turn these private collections into public exhibits, creating cultural institutions such as the Victoria & Albert Museum (V&A) in London and the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford.

As a history major with a concentration in Europe, I have long been fascinated by the nature of museums as well as the history of British imperialism. During my third year at Notre Dame, I started to work on ways to concentrate my interests into a larger project, which was a senior thesis. I realized that on-site research at museum archives and British libraries would greatly enhance the support for my thesis. After many Zoom meetings and emails with history professor Paul Ocobock, I was able to narrow down a potential topic and plan of action to research in England, once in May, and then again in early January. There are several opportunities to travel abroad for research as an undergraduate at Notre Dame for those who wish to use them.

For me, I was able to receive both a grant from the Nanovic Institute for European Studies and, more recently, a grant from the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts.

In preparation for my senior thesis project, I consulted archives in two museums: the Victoria & Albert Museum and the Pitt Rivers Museum. Both were constructed for the masses with the purpose of education during the Victorian era and have links to wunderkammers and private collections in their foundations. Throughout the two weeks, I was primarily working in the National Art Library of the V&A, where I spent several hours a day looking through archives and files related to the founding of the museum, early acquisitions, private collection donations, and more. I was also able to travel to Oxford, England, in order to work in the Balfour Library at the Pitt Rivers Museum, looking at similar files on the museum and its connection to the British Empire. While my research mainly involved myself and some old pieces of paper, I was also able to interact with many of the archivists and librarians at both museums who provided documents that would best complement my work.





This experience in England greatly enriched both my academic and personal goals. Academically, I was able to inspect and catalog hundreds of pages of files that will contribute to my history senior thesis. I hope that through my work, I will be able to expand upon existing historical research by inspecting how these cabinets and their influence on the establishment of the V&A and Pitt Rivers Museum provided 19th-century Britons a way to understand their ever-expanding world and uphold the country's imperial mission. It was eye-opening to be able to travel to a new country and dive so deeply into its history—one that has influenced global history as we know it today. I was also able to achieve personal goals that I have been yearning to accomplish for a long time, which were solo travel and conducting proper research. While traveling to a new country alone was daunting at first, being able to navigate, live in, and thrive in a new city taught me more about what I was capable of both as a student and as a person. Furthermore, being able to conduct research in world-renowned museums was an incredible experience that I will treasure throughout the rest of my academic and professional career.

Champions for Education: Three Notre Dame Student-Athletes Establish Ghana-Based Non-Profit

Ashlyn Poppe and Ivy Clark

This past fall, the University of Notre Dame's men's soccer team made an incredible run at the national title. The team's successful season culminated in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) national championship game against Clemson University. However, when most of the team was preparing for one of the most important games of their career, Daniel Boateng ('26), Cleveland Sellers IV ('25), and Liam Egan ('25) were busy putting the finishing touches on their first event for their non-profit, Changing Lives GH.

"We were trying to finalize planning in Louisville while we were waiting for the national championship game," Sellers said.

Changing Lives GH is a non-profit organization that works to improve the educational growth of children in Ghana by kindling a passion for learning that will pave the way for long-lasting progress in the nation. Changing Lives GH aims to revolutionize education and utilize a diverse array of educational programs to advance learning opportunities for Ghanaian youth. Boateng originally came up with the idea. He approached Sellers and Egan with his vision in August 2023, and the project has been growing ever since.

"We want to support Ghanaian kids—their educational pursuits in the country and then outside the country as well," the co-founders explained. "We want to help Ghanaians who are in America, the United Kingdom, and anywhere else by smoothing their transition to education. We want to give them whatever they need to ensure they excel in whatever they want to do in life."

Each player comes from a unique background—each with their own motivations to develop educational programs for underprivileged youth. Sellers' mother has been an educator for over 20 years and has instilled within him the value of a quality education; meanwhile, Egan's journey began at Notre Dame after countless conversations with his teammates.



"When I met [Sellers] and [Boateng], they really opened my eyes and made me aware of the educational changes that need to occur in some places. Seeing their passion really drove me to try and connect with them and stay involved with this project as much as possible," Egan reflected.

Boateng, however, grew up and attended school in Ghana. There, he witnessed the educational barriers facing his peers firsthand. He described how he was given the opportunity to pursue an education, while some of his friends did not. Boateng also acknowledged that because of these differences, it became difficult to maintain certain friendships. "I saw many kids not getting the opportunity to be in school. It made me feel like I was privileged and like those kids were not in the same bubble as me," expressed Boateng.

Recognizing the educational inequity present in Ghana, Boateng became passionate about breaking down these walls. "Growing up and coming to the United States, I had this motivation to go back and do something to help the younger kids coming up so they could see themselves at the same level. So there would be no disparities between them like what I had."

Changing Lives GH's inaugural project, CleanPlay, took place in December 2023 and garnered over 650 participants. The team traveled to the village of Edum Wamase in Kumasi, Ghana. CleanPlay included a large soccer tournament in which local children competed. Even more, CleanPlay provided free medical checkups and health education to 323 individuals. This incredible feat was made possible by the dedicated nurses who came from Accra, Ghana's capital and largest city, to offer their services.

According to Boateng, “[Changing Lives GH] tries to focus beyond the privileged kids —on those who do not have the means to get to where they want to be in their education.”

Boateng was physically present at CleanPlay and witnessed the far-reaching and—to an extent—unexpected impact of the project. The team had planned to host 250 attendees; however, they quickly needed to adapt the tournament to incorporate over 650. By the time Boateng arrived on-site, the field was already packed. He recounted a conversation with an older woman from the village. She said to him, “Thank you for doing this in our community. You brought a bigger impact on our lives. We didn’t get this growing up . . . [it] makes us feel like we are also a part of the world.” At that moment, Boateng knew that the team’s hard work had been worth it.

Despite CleanPlay’s success, Changing Lives GH has faced their fair share of challenges along the way. Establishing themselves as a non-profit organization on top of being full-time student athletes was not easy, especially since they had to meet tight deadlines and fundraising goals. The team faced hurdles such as fundraising, resource allocation, and obtaining a nonprofit status before any programming could occur. However, they were not alone. The Notre Dame men’s soccer team strongly supported the program—collecting gear to donate to tournament participants. Changing Lives GH also received guidance from faculty in the Mendoza College of Business.

Sellers explained: “We met with a couple of professors who work in the non-profit administration department just to give us some direction early on. Talking to them about our idea and how we could really get it off the ground was extremely helpful.” Boateng, Sellers, and Egan are very grateful for the resources and knowledge that the university has given them. They hope to continue utilizing the Notre Dame network in the future. Looking ahead, they hope to amplify and expand their outreach, participation, and health services. The teammates also plan to develop and execute more comprehensive and accessible educational programs to further their impact. They are excited to see what is next for Changing Lives GH. To follow along on their inspiring journey, visit their website <https://changinglivesgh.org/>.



Exploring the World

Grace Capko

This summer I had the privilege of interning at a local non-profit organization in Rabat, Morocco that works to train and educate African immigrants and refugees. My project was focused on investigating the creative solutions designed by non-state actors in Rabat to help alleviate the refugee crisis and explore migrants' roles in these situations. The non-profit provided great support to immigrants and refugees by giving them training in the restaurant, bakery, and hotel industries to give them a direct pathway to employment and economic independence. My experience was full of challenges and rewards that allowed me to understand both Morocco and refugee issues better.

While I was told that my workplace would be English-speaking (or have at least one employee who spoke English), I quickly discovered that this wasn't the case when I arrived for work on the first day. My boss, and the two women who worked there, only spoke French and Arabic. Thankfully, I speak high school-level French and was able to get by. However, there were many times when communication with my boss wasn't always perfect and it was sometimes unclear what tasks he wanted me to complete. Although this was an unexpected challenge, it was truly a learning experience that greatly improved my French, which I am very thankful for.

One day, my boss instructed me and my coworker to teach English lessons to the migrants. I had zero experience teaching English, let alone to French speakers with little ability to communicate in French. We quickly scoured the internet for online resources on how to teach English to non-native speakers and began developing lesson plans.

As this was my first time teaching, creating lessons was really exhausting and there was a huge learning curve. But it was one of the most rewarding experiences I've had.

It allowed me to develop trusting relationships with many of the migrants which led to deeper conversations as they were more willing to open up to me. Since my boss wasn't very clear on what he wanted us to teach or gave much oversight, we were really able to cater the lessons to what the migrants wanted and needed. We would ask them why they were learning English and what words and phrases they needed to know, and then integrate them into our lesson plans since we had so much freedom in developing the lessons. I think this helped them trust us more and appreciate our efforts to a deeper level.

One of the main obstacles to teaching was that the migrant group had extremely varied backgrounds in English. There were times when an advanced student would be frustrated while going through the alphabet, while another was struggling to grasp the pronunciation. However, I began to learn that this was a true blessing because the students began to help each other. A special moment that I encountered was before class one day when one of the advanced students, Joel, was writing the English alphabet on the board and sounding out the pronunciation to the rest of the class. It was a really beautiful moment that showed how they all came from different countries and backgrounds but were now connected and supported each other. In the other group, there was an advanced student who sat next to a younger woman who had virtually no English background. She was quiet, but he was not. So, each lesson, he would help her and answer any individual questions she was too scared to ask us. From these interactions, I learned that the relationships among the migrants were the most valuable to them. In a foreign country where many were without any family, they were able to meet others similar to them and support each other. This was a great thing and I think was one of my biggest takeaways from the work.



I am thankful for my experience in Morocco, and that I was able to make a foreign place seem so familiar. On my walk to work in the morning I enjoyed watching shopkeepers open their shops, bakers placing fresh pastries in the display fridge, men on bikes carrying cartons full of live chicken, fishermen walking carts of freshly caught fish to markets, and throwing extras to a corner where all the cats lived. It was quiet, yet bustling with energy in preparation for the day. I loved to go to my coffee guy every day, and he would know my order before I said it. My summer abroad was truly invaluable as it taught me about Moroccan culture, immigrant and refugee stories, and my own strengths. I will forever be grateful for this rewarding and illuminating experience.

Finally, the most important takeaway from this experience was that forming these connections allowed me to see these migrants and refugees as individual people. I learned the exact circumstances that led them to where they are now, and the struggles they faced, as well as the things they needed to escape their precarious situation. I believe that the non-profit's solution of training them in growing industries in Morocco was ingenious. It empowered them to feel that they had purpose, were contributing to society, and could achieve economic independence. Most were previously unskilled laborers because they lacked any training programs in their home country and were ignored in Morocco. I was proud to contribute to a project that respected the innate dignity of each migrant and understood that for migrants to become permanent residents, they needed economic independence as well as empowerment.

Beyond the Duomo: A Notre Dame Junior's Transformative Summer of Service and Self-Discovery in Milan

Thomas Dobbs

Bryan Fok ('25), a current junior at Notre Dame, took a life-changing trip last summer to Milan, Italy. He participated in the Serving (in) Europe program, an initiative by the Nanovic Institute for European Studies that offers students a chance to dive into European communities by engaging in service. An unexpected experience in Milan transformed Fok's perceptions of Italy's famed fashion hub. While immersing himself in different locales, he encountered challenges that went unnoticed by most visitors, who are often captivated by the allure of the "Duomo di Milano."

Fok's journey began at Refettorio Ambrosiano, a soup kitchen transforming excess food from local eateries into meals for the needy. He described the kitchen as "an eye-opening experience into the world of food waste and hunger." Commending the work of its dedicated and inventive staff, Fok added, "It was amazing to see how gourmet meals could come from ingredients that would have otherwise been thrown away."

While Fok explored Milan, he encountered the Casa Della Carità, a center offering comprehensive aid to the poor, homeless and immigrants. Here, Fok contributed in a number of ways, ranging from performing daily chores such as sanitizing showers to providing crucial legal services for immigrants. Reflecting on this, Fok concluded, "It was a humbling experience. I realized the extent of the struggles these individuals face, especially the complex relationship between health and legal status for poor immigrants."

Fok's time volunteering at Casa Suraya, a sanctuary for asylum-seekers in Milan, perhaps proved to be his most transformative. He organized activities to connect with children adjusting to life far from their home countries. Recalling a harrowing story about a child who had traveled from Pakistan to Italy with his father, Fok said, "Hearing about their journey was heart-wrenching. It puts into perspective the lengths people will go to for a chance at safety and a better life."



Beyond service, Fok immersed himself in exploring the city, forging deep friendships, enhancing his Italian language skills, and encountering the natural beauty of Northern Italy. Each experience refined his understanding of identity, contrasting American culture's diversity and openness with Italy's traditionally more homogenous society: "This journey has broadened my perspective on Italian culture," he noted, "and deepened my appreciation for America's embrace of diversity." As an Asian American in Italy, Fok often found himself explaining his American identity in a context where ethnicity and nationality are closely intertwined. "I had to constantly assert my Americanness," he explained, "which really opened my eyes to the experiences of immigrants and people of color in Italy, who are often marginalized due to societal

attitudes.” This challenging experience not only deepened Fok’s commitment to the principles of global citizenship but also seamlessly promoted greater cultural empathy and awareness.

Building on these insights, Fok’s immersion in a culture markedly different from his own underscored the significance of our global interconnectedness. “Walking the streets of Milan, interacting with locals, and living the city’s everyday life added depth to my understanding of global citizenship,” he shared. His reflections revealed a maturing perspective: “It’s about appreciating what we have in common and respecting our differences.”

Outside of service and personal reflections, Fok explored Italy’s rich history and culture. He visited landmarks like the Duomo di Milano and the Last Supper, delved into the vibrant art scene, and savored Italy’s renowned culinary offerings. “Every corner of Italy has its own story,” Fok said enthusiastically. “From the historic streets of Rome to the picturesque landscapes of Tuscany, each experience enriched my understanding of the country’s heritage and its global influence.” Reflecting on his summer in Milan, Fok acknowledges the profound impact it had on his worldview. “This trip was more than service or tourism. It was a comprehensive education in life, humanity, and our global community’s interconnectedness,” he concluded. Fok’s experience in Milan underscores the transformative power of immersive international experiences that go beyond the classroom. His journey through Milan’s multifaceted neighborhoods, his engagement with diverse communities, and his own personal development underscore the invaluable rewards of venturing beyond one’s comfort zone in the spirit of service.



Prevailing Over the Periphery: A Summer in Kyrgyzstan

Liam Gibson

Armed with my antiquated Zorki-4, I walk down the tree-lined boulevard and take in the vibrant greenery of Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. A mix of Soviet cars older than their drivers and brand new Lexuses pass on the road, diligently breaking every traffic rule known to Americans. I have been wandering through the city all afternoon taking photographs, and I am only minutes away from a home cooked meal and enthusiastic conversation with my tireless host father, Almaz. Suddenly, I spot the bright blue and red colors of a street vendor selling chalap and maksym, two of Kyrgyzstan's delicious national drinks. Glancing down at my sweaty shirt, which became soaked hours ago under the Central Asian sun, I eagerly approach the old woman and order a refreshing cup of chalap, a sort of salty, carbonated milk. She fails to hide a smile at my American-accented Russian and asks me where I am from. We chat a bit about my language studies, and I show her my camera, which is more commonly found sold in street markets as a broken knickknack. She mentions that her son is hoping to receive a visa to become a truck driver in America, and I wish her good luck. Finally, I arrive home and sit down to dinner: cold okroshka soup and beshbarmak. I cannot thank my host mother, Asel, enough.

This summer I received a Critical Language Scholarship to live with a family in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan and study Russian at the American University of Central Asia. Each day I rode bus number 49 to the university, where I took classes on Russian grammar, attempted to learn basic Kyrgyz, and practiced speaking with my professors and fellow American students. I usually spent my afternoons wandering the crowded bazaars or devouring shawarma. On the weekends, I went hiking in the Tian Shan mountains with my guide Sergey (and climbed my first 14er!), befriended

the congregation of the small but growing Catholic mission, and listened to Almaz's lectures on Kyrgyz culture and geopolitics. By the end of my eight weeks, I had thoroughly immersed myself into Kyrgyzstan: the culture, the nature, the food, and the people.

When I tell my friends and family that I spent my summer in Kyrgyzstan, the most common response is one of confusion: "Kurdistan? Isn't that in Russia?" Most Americans simply do not know the geography of Central Asia, a remote region largely forgotten in the West. I readily admit that I had to consult Google Maps when I realized that I could be spending my summer there. However, the most common follow up question, "Why?" merits more analysis.

The Nanovic Institute's 2021-2026 Strategic Plan, Engaging Big Questions and "Peripheries" in Europe, holds the answer to this question: "The scholarship and works of Nanovic community members seek to encompass the lived experiences of all people in Europe, including those marginalized by geography, poverty, policies of citizenship, and difference, in order to explore the humanity of those peoples and places Pope Francis has called 'the peripheries.'" Kyrgyzstan is quite far from Europe, firmly located on the geographic periphery between two global powers, China and Russia, and on the periphery of Western awareness. However, this does not diminish its people's humanity. *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis's 2013 apostolic exhortation from which Nanovic borrows the term "periphery," calls us "to go forth" to these regions simply because their peripheral status in the West does not change the fact that they too are our brothers and sisters.

On two particular moments the shared humanity of Americans and Kyrgyz shone through Kyrgyzstan's peripheral status. The first involves a devastating night of basketball and the second a trip to a mosque.



One evening I met two of my American friends at some basketball courts in one of Bishkek's vibrant neighborhoods. We stepped through the gate in the shadow of overgrown apartment blocks and paid a woman several Kyrgyz som to play. After first watching some of the locals, we found three men willing to play against us. I initially expected my significant height advantage to lead to some close matches, but their ridiculous accuracy behind the three-point line continuously blew us away. After two hours of relentless struggle, we came away with many losses and one paltry victory. While our Kyrgyz opponents were perhaps a little disappointed at how we Americans performed in spite of our country's reputation for basketball, in these games we transcended any cultural or linguistic barriers in the universally human enjoyment of sports.

Towards the end of the summer, I casually mentioned to a taxi driver, Abdikutuz, that I would like to visit a mosque before leaving. The very next day we met outside the Bishkek Central Mosque. Before entering, we stopped in a washroom where I tried my best to follow his lead and correctly perform the wudu, a Muslim washing ritual. Now clean, we stepped into the mosque together. As

Abdikutuz prayed, I respectfully walked around the mosque and observed the unfamiliar environment. Some men prayed, others engaged in a discussion in Kyrgyz, and a group of tourists loudly took photos of the whole scene unfolding under the intricate tile ceiling. Upon our departure 30 minutes later, Abdikutuz insisted on driving me home for free, although he failed to mention the lengthy stops at an auto shop and his friend Cuba's restaurant, at which I may have received an offer to marry Cuba's daughter. Despite these delays, we both parted with a greater understanding of and respect for each other.

Today, I am back at the University of Notre Dame on the brink of the second half of my junior year. Instead of exploring Bishkek or trekking in the Tian Shan, I will be exploring the origins of modern Ireland and trekking through the foothills of my senior thesis. Yet even now, almost six months since my return to the United States, my host father Almaz gladly refers to me as his "new American son" when we speak on the phone. I trust that the personal encounters I had this summer will continue to outlive my time in Kyrgyzstan and break down the barrier of the periphery.

Exploring the Digital Preservation of Ireland's Rich, Catholic Church Infrastructure

Evan Johnston

This summer I had the opportunity to study abroad and conduct research at Kylemore Abbey in the west of Ireland, where I photographed Notre Dame's wing of the abbey and the on-site Gothic Chapel (the latter is shown below). Funded by the fantastic research grant program at the Nanovic Institute for European Studies, and continuing a project within the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Earth Sciences, the trip was an effort in photographing a variety of interior and exterior spaces to construct corresponding digital 3D models.

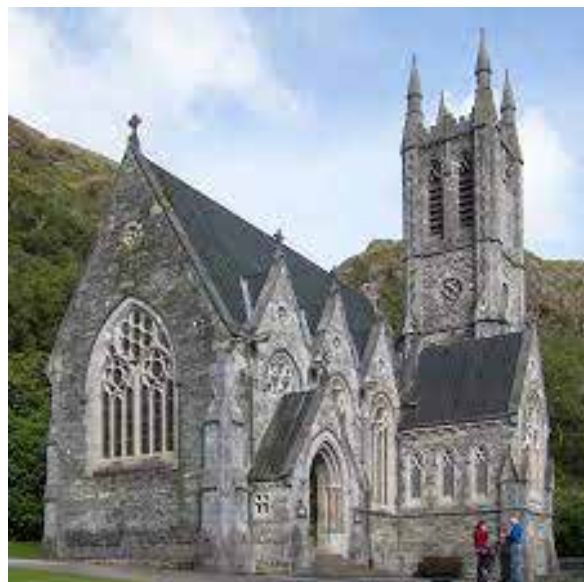
The purpose of the research project is to establish an efficient and reliable photography process which could be easily adapted to photograph and model up to three thousand identified Irish church properties that are in danger of being sold, restored, or repurposed. Such an endeavor will provide future students, researchers, and historians crucial visualizations of these historically significant structures.

This trend of the closure of Irish churches can be attributed to the declining religious participation in the Irish Catholic Church and the impact of the rainy Irish climate on structures. Since the 1970s, Ireland has experienced a rapid wave of secularization that has resulted in a steep decrease in mass attendance. Additionally, all regions of Ireland are generally experiencing heightened levels of rainfall, as well as more frequent heavy precipitation events in the period leading up to 2010. This is concerning as older drainage systems within aging Irish church infrastructure are unable to cope with more intense storms, thus increasing

the risk of water damage to structures. Church buildings in England are experiencing a similar situation.

Over the course of the trip I took about 10,000 pictures of six spaces, and this semester I learned the processing software and produced a model of the exterior of the chapel. The software used to construct these models, Bentley Software's ContextCapture (also known as iTwin), enables users to view the source photographs of the model, along with notes on each photo. Those including art, memorandum plaques, architectural elements, and other relevant objects can be accompanied by historical information, an exciting aspect yet to be fully explored. Photos of this complete model are shown below, and integrates camera photos from my trip, as well as existing drone photos taken by a Notre Dame group visiting just before the coronavirus pandemic.

The success of this model confirms our ability to use photos from different devices, photo shoots, and even trips, essentially enabling the possibility of revision of existing models rather than needing to restart unfinished or insufficient models. Such a feature is especially useful for intricate and large church buildings. With this in mind, I am continuing to learn the best methods of photography and photo selection to improve future models.





I am excited to put the finishing touches on the above model, expand my knowledge of Bentley iTwin, and begin processing the chapel interior and other spaces in order to more fully harness this exciting development in civil engineering, particularly its implications for the field of European Studies. I would like to thank the Nanovic Institute for their support and guidance in the proposal process, the Stephen and Ruth Barret Family for funding this particular grant

opportunity, and Dr. Brad Weldon and Dr. Kevin Walsh of the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Earth Science for being informative, reliable research advisors. If you would like to learn more about the project or minoring in European Studies, feel free to email me at ejohnst2@nd.edu!

Fortune Cookie Resilience: A Reflection from Kraków

Raleigh Kuipers

"Although you know it better, you are not teaching / Prima, Sie spielen nicht den Lehrmeister, auch wenn Sie vieles besser wissen," read the English and German fortune cookie slip handed to me by an Austrian academic. Though the reason he gave me this rolled-up slip over a traditional Polish Christmas dinner is irrelevant to this essay—it involved a dispute over whether the restaurant was playing an extremely slow version of "The First Noel" or "My Heart Will Go On" from the movie *Titanic*—what matters is that I slid it into my pocket and brought it home. While I'm rarely one to read into fortunes, especially those once encased in Chinese-Austrian cookies, this one stuck out because I sensed its relevance to our gathering in Kraków. I was at a workshop that brought together scholars and practitioners from the University of Notre Dame, the Ukrainian Catholic University, and elsewhere in Europe to share research on resilient institutions and communities in the context of Russia's 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

As I began to analyze the fortune's potential interpretations—which quickly multiplied due to its intentionally vague nature and my global-affairs-esque inability to view anything from a single perspective—I found that each of them applied in some way to the theme of resilience. Perhaps I've over-analyzed what was only intended to be a vague bromide (and whoever wrote the original fortune would read this piece with severe concern for my sanity), but regardless, the message has come to frame my reflections on the conference.

To begin with an incredibly zoomed-out application of the fortune, I find that it pertains to the United States' conception of itself in an increasingly multi-polar world. The United States (and even the West

in general) has broadly conceived of itself as an exceptional model society with the moral license to share with the rest of the world the correct way to construct a government, organize civil society, and conceive of what is ethical. Though I will refrain from making any definitive pronouncements on whether the United States' belief systems are the quintessence of humanity's progress—or whether those beliefs are consistent with the country's actions (since those opinions remain beyond the scope of this piece) I will point out that the geopolitics of today have complicated the United States' role in promoting its ideals.

Before continuing, it is worth briefly breaking down the semantics of the fortune. The dependent clause, "Although you know it better," can imply that the subject does know something better than another. However, it can also connote that the subject thinks they know something better than another; in this case, the speaker would be writing under the assumption that the subject believes they do indeed know better, so including "think" could be redundant and even jeopardize the subject's self-perception, thus dissuading them from considering the applicability of the fortune's words to themselves.

Irrespective of the implication under which one operates, it pertains to the example of US exceptionalism. No matter if the United States is correct or simply thinks it is correct, it does not change the fact that its hegemony is waning, autocracy is increasing in popularity around the world, and the United States has lost a certain level of moral authority on the international stage in the wake of the 2016 presidential election. Even so, the United States has repeatedly invaded and meddled in the political affairs of other countries, imposed sanctions that have not proven to be effective, pursued policies that have not led authoritarian countries to become less oppressive, and all the while acted under the assumption that its values are the moral absolute.



All of this is to say that the United States, ever the door-to-door ideology salesman with the subtlety of a marching band, tends to think and operate under the assumption that it is always right, regardless of outcomes—and this applies to its efforts to promote resilience, as it does through policy recommendations, development, and military aid. However, even if one thinks they know how to best achieve resilience, or even what resilience means, this will not be universally applicable. Throughout the presentations and discussions at the workshop, we learned that what constitutes resilience is unique to each community and situation—while a Croatian academic shared vital insights into what has made veterans of the Croatian War of Independence resilient, she acknowledged that it will be different for Ukrainian veterans. I presented a literature review on resilient institutions and communities worldwide but also recognized that specific points were not always applicable to Ukraine's situation. Resilience is not an outcome or a pre-fabricated plan, it is a continual process. While measurable

steps can be taken to build resilience over time, there is no infallible 10-step wikiHow guide that works for everyone.

Those on the outside cannot pontificate to a community, institution, or country on exactly what they must do to “achieve” resilience—it doesn't work that way. Though one may know best—or think they know best—they cannot effectively prescribe what will work for another community or institution in a different situation and context. The United States, and others to whom this applies, must show patience, self-restraint, and self-awareness when dictating what policies or steps another should take to promote resilience, not assuming that the American way will work for all. Instead of projecting selfish, monomaniacal reliance on their own knowledge, Western actors must amplify the voices of academics, advocates, and experts from within the target community, listening to and working with those who know the context best in order to craft bespoke plans.

That is something this workshop did well—it brought together students, academics, and professionals from Ukraine, Poland, Croatia, Austria, and the United States, enabling all participants to collaborate, hear Ukrainian voices, and share experiences and expertise from within and outside this conflict.

Another implicit meaning found in this fortune has to do with collaboration. The independent clause, “you are not teaching,” implies that there is a partnership or a collaboration between a teacher and a student. This, in turn, means that neither the teacher nor the student is alone—they have each other. No actor is facing questions, challenges, or dilemmas alone—they have others from whom they can look for advice, learn, and collaborate. Ukraine is facing a challenge to its existence and very identity, but its capability for resilience comes from passionate citizens supporting one another and from assistance from countries and organizations around the world, whether this support is academic, military, economic, or otherwise.

Furthermore, “you are not teaching,” is a reminder that the role of the student is also vital to the exchange. There is a time and a place to teach and a time where it is best to listen—even, perhaps especially, if one believes they know best. Notably, everyone (individuals, communities, institutions, and countries) can and will play both roles—the teacher and the student—at some point, but both roles are necessary conditions for the other. One of the takeaways from my literature review is that openness to new perspectives and diversity is vital for resilience—a failure to be open and include diverse voices leads to groupthink, one-dimensional strategies, and sclerotic operations that undermine the capacity for resilience. This is why cross-cultural academic exchanges, like this workshop, are so vital; we heard perspectives and analyses from people working on the ground in Ukraine while learning about insights from other countries and disciplines. All parties had the opportunity to both learn and teach.



Simultaneously, while it is vital to respect the learning journeys and expertise of others, “you are not teaching” can also be interpreted as an admonition to a subject who is failing to teach, even when the subject does, in fact, know best. If this is the case, vital expertise and insight are being withheld from those who need it most due to humility or hesitation on the part of the subject. If one knows best, they have a duty to teach—while, of course, being self-aware and not constantly dominating the discourse. One of the presenters, who worked for the Ukrainian Heritage Monitoring Lab, shared the process of 3-D scanning and documenting the damage to cultural heritage sites in Ukraine. This organization, which travels to each site after they are damaged or destroyed, has built a catalog of what has been lost and who is the culprit. Their project, whose reports are disseminated online, is an effort not just to document these tragedies, but also to teach about them. This work teaches future generations about Ukrainian cultural heritage, who destroyed these sites, and why we all must be attentive to efforts to destroy the cultural inheritance and identity of another. Without organizations like the Ukrainian Heritage Monitoring Lab documenting these sites, the opportunity for others to learn from their existence and destruction—and for this knowledge to contribute to cultural resilience—would be lost. If the subject is not teaching, it is assumed that they are at the other end of the dyad, learning instead. Learning implies that someone is actively listening to the teacher and paying attention to what is happening in an effort to find patterns, draw conclusions, and adjust one’s future course

of action. Suppose the student ignores the lesson by focusing on their own problems or imagination instead. In that case, they will not gain anything of value from the lesson and are at risk of failing to see patterns, drawing near-sighted conclusions, and neglecting to effectively adjust their future plans. They will miss the opportunity to build resilience to challenges in their life.

In much the same way, citizens of the world must pay attention to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the dire effects of climate change on small island developing states, the war crimes committed in Israel and Gaza, the rhetoric used by far-right politicians worldwide, the human exploitation occurring in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and all of the other ongoing lessons in the world. This is why efforts to ban books or rewrite textbooks, failures to proportionally cover events outside of the West, and endeavors to turn the media into a political tool are so concerning: these actions impede our ability to be attentive and learn. Not shocking, through my voracious consumption of news reports and journal articles, I tend to focus on the panoply of adversities occurring in the world—pernicious political trends, neo-colonization, feckless responses to global warming, etc. However, through the literature review on resilience I conducted for this workshop, I was able to learn about other forms of resistance and resilience: the cultural resilience of the Palestinian people under the Israeli occupation through the practice of *sumud*, the civic resilience of Syrian local governance councils, and the grassroots resilience of Muslim Crimean Tatar activists to Russian oppression. During others' presentations, I learned about the resilience of Ukrainian universities and medical facilities in the face of the full-scale invasion, an Austrian community's resilience after a deadly natural disaster, and an organization helping Ukrainian children affected by the war become resilient through education and art.

In the process of learning about the resilience of these communities and institutions, I—and many others—rekindled a sense of hope. While

we have an ethical duty to ourselves and others to pay attention to—and learn from—the tenebrous occurrences worldwide, at the same time, we cannot forget to be attentive to the resilience of people facing oppression, violence, and danger, because above all, maintaining hope is integral to resilience. Hope gives us a reason to take action. If we do not pay attention and take decisive action when we see violence and injustice—especially in today's increasingly globalized world, where single events tessellate into a mosaic of interconnected challenges and trends—we set ourselves up for more failures to live up to our professed ideals, protect the lives of our fellow human beings, defend what we value, and build a better world for our descendants.

Now, whenever I glance at the little fortune slip resting on my desk, I'm reminded to never stop listening, paying attention, and hoping for a future in which these efforts pay off.

Uncovering the legacy of work 'freedom' and 'unfreedom' in Southeast Asia

Jun Wei Lee

Almost everyone has had a bad work experience. Maybe it was a few weeks into your job when you realized that the work is just not for you. Sometimes internships go awry and all you want to do is go home and forget about it. Luckily, we have the freedom to quit. Many of us don't for one reason or another, but the option is always there. Most of us would probably consider this ability a fundamental part of labor freedom.

Not everyone enjoys the same privileges. In my Directed Readings in History class with Reverend Robert Sullivan, I learned that the British Empire relied heavily on indentured workers from India to prop up its labor-intensive colonial economies in the late 19th century and through the early 20th century. The British advertised the indenture system as a means for Indians to escape their domestic plight. They would sign binding labor contracts with agricultural employers in overseas colonies, voluntarily migrate to that colony to serve out their contracts, and be rewarded with free return passage or financial incentives after the contract expired. Here was the chance to migrate and start a new life.

But the history of indentured labor has also revealed the "unfreedom" of such work. Indentured labor contracts denied workers the freedom to quit, find new employment, or to re-negotiate their wages. Furthermore, indentured laborers' working conditions often mimicked those of slaves. British colonial administrators thus faced a conceptual puzzle: to what extent are indentured workers free, and what aspects of freedom matter the most when it comes to determining one's "labor freedom"?



My research explores how concepts of "freedom" and "unfreedom" in the British Empire were influenced by the experiences of Indian indentured workers on the imperial frontier. Specifically, I focus on colonial Southeast Asia since indentured labor in this region was explicitly marketed as legal, voluntary, and emancipatory, thus providing a morally palatable alternative to slavery in an era of post-abolition. After multiple meetings with my research advisor, Professor Paul Ocobock, and generous sponsorship from the Nanovic Institute for European Studies, I created a plan of action to spend three weeks in London examining archival documents at the British National Archives and the British Library. Combined, these two sites make up the world's most comprehensive collection of documents relating to Colonial Asia.

Though the life of a historian is not the most glamorous, it is incredibly rewarding! I spent most days in the archive reading rooms, poring over thousands of pages of government records and taking notes and photos for future reference. While I mostly worked alone, I never felt lonely. Many researchers like myself alternate between the British Library and the British National Archives.

Over time we began to recognize each other and exchanged warm smiles as we took the Tube back to the city. During those three weeks, I felt like I had entered a community filled with like-minded, passionate researchers. I found my people.

History research is also a lot like detective work. I initially thought that archival research was straightforward; I would look through catalogs to find relevant sources and then examine those sources to construct historical narratives. But the National Archives' catalog is thousands of pages long and written in nearly illegible penmanship. Thus, it took me three days to even begin to piece together my sources. To make matters worse, hundreds of files related to my project had been "DESTROYED UNDER STATUTE," meaning that these records are forever lost, and that our stories of this past will necessarily be incomplete. Even the archivists could not track down which documents had been preserved in other collections.

I began to think the project was doomed, but I refused to give up. With a great deal of creativity and luck, I managed to hunt down forwarded copies of destroyed sources. After a week of searching, nothing can describe what I felt when I finally found a stash of documents that were key to my research. In these triumphant moments, what once seemed like a wild goose chase suddenly seemed like a thrilling scavenger hunt.

The archives also provided fortuitous encounters. During my first year at Notre Dame, my seminar professor Eileen Hunt invited David Armitage, a professor of history at Harvard University, to give a guest lecture on his work. I remember being blown away by his class, but I never got a chance to talk to him. By some fortuitous coincidence, I bumped into him at the café at the British National Archives. We talked about our respective research topics and he even advised me on how to use the archives more efficiently. Of course, I had to tell Professor Hunt about this, and her reply sums it all up: "Truly amazing!"

At the end of three weeks, I emerged from the archives weary but satisfied. I had not only discovered avenues for further research, but also gained firsthand experience of how to navigate behemoths like the colonial archive. Above all, I learned that persistence and grit is the key to successful research. I began to embrace the feelings of frustration that came along the way because that was the surest sign of progress. As a current sophomore, I continue to build on the research and skills that I have gained from this trip, and I look forward to further engaging with what the Keough School of Global Affairs has to offer!

Winter Break Research in Montenegro

Julia Warden

Over winter break, I conducted research in Montenegro focused on the trajectory of the country's post-war recovery and use of soft power to shape religion, national identity, sports, and the economy, all of which contribute to broader narratives and geopolitical alignment. I am particularly interested in the influence on identity at the individual level from the post-war relationship between Montenegro and Serbia. The influence of Russia, the former Soviet Union, and the European Union are used to contextualize how Montenegro is developing over time. My goal is to understand the intricate details of these influences and to extract lessons to apply to similar challenges faced by Ukraine, particularly as related to their shared cultural, religious, and linguistic roots and amidst Russia's pursuit of each of them as allies. Inspired by my familial ties to the Balkan region, this project stems from a commitment to preserving and honoring my family's history.



In Montenegro, I interviewed a wide range of individuals such as professors, students, government officials, activists, and others with unique insights. The most valuable part of my experience was engaging in conversations with residents of Montenegro (and a few emigrants who returned for the holidays) who experienced the shift to independence in 2006. Many shared happy memories of parading the streets, and even in the very same location I had conducted most interviews (Independence Square in Podgorica). These personal experiences not only provided historical depth but demonstrated the resilience of Montenegrins in defending their cultural heritage. Additionally, practicing speaking in the local language and reading in Cyrillic during the trip not only allowed for a deeper connection with locals but also bridged cultural gaps.

Since Montenegro declared its independence from former Yugoslavia only 18 years ago in 2006, and its current population is 600,000, relatively little focus has been given to the country compared to other former Yugoslav republics. My goal is to shine a light on a topic often overlooked and provide a new perspective. I am currently following up with interviewees and dedicating time to reading as much as I can in the Slavic section on the eighth floor of Hesburgh to bridge research gaps. Most of all, I am so grateful to the Nanovic Institute and the Ansari Institute for their support of my project and this incredible opportunity! The funding and encouragement from both institutes have been invaluable.

Profile: Dr. Sharon Yoon

Alaina Reed

The first global affairs class I took at Notre Dame was a small seminar in Korean studies taught by Dr. Sharon Yoon. When perusing the course offerings, I found Globalization and Korean Migration and enrolled. I had never taken a class even resembling Asian studies, as most of my high school classes heavily focused on Western history and culture. Globalization and Korean Migration therefore introduced me not just to Asian studies as a field, but also to ethnography as a way of understanding the world. The following semester, I took Connecting Asia with Dr. Yoon as well. She graciously agreed to sit down with me and talk about her work.



Dr. Yoon is an experienced ethnographer, whose journey in the field began as a third-year undergraduate at Dartmouth. At the time, she had decided to conduct a research project about minorities in Asia. Reading more and more about the topic and previous studies, Dr. Yoon found that she was drawn to ethnographic work, as it allowed researchers to become a part of the communities they studied and observed. Through her research, she discovered that to truly learn about people's experiences, they must trust you, which takes time. Because of this, Dr. Yoon committed to investing at least a year into her next big research project in graduate school—a dissertation that would end up becoming her first book, "The Cost of Belonging: An Ethnography of Solidarity and Mobility in Beijing's Koreatown."

Starting this process, Dr. Yoon knew that she would have to build trust in the community to truly understand the experiences of the people she studied. However, this presented unique challenges. As a Korean American in a Korean Chinese community, people were reluctant to trust her. Dr. Yoon describes attending an underground Korean church in China, where she was not even welcome to volunteer. For the first four months, she attended the events while experiencing anxiety that no one wanted to speak with her. At an early morning prayer service, the stress mounted, and she began to cry. A woman in the church silently placed her hand on Dr. Yoon's and proceeded to sit with her. Recalling the situation, Dr. Yoon says, "The experience taught me that in order for me to ask them to be vulnerable, I had to also." This philosophy has colored her work since. Dr. Yoon's upcoming book looks at the historically oppressed, Korean Japanese minority, who used social media to mobilize and organize the community to pass laws to protect the population from hate speech. Despite this progress, Dr. Yoon explores how Korean Japanese people continue to struggle with marginalization despite the new laws. She states, "What I am struggling to understand is how social movements don't really have a beginning and an ending. In a way, for minorities, they experience a continuous struggle to raise awareness for their cause."

This semester, Dr. Yoon is teaching Global Korea, formerly Globalization and Korean Migration, which examines how the social construction of race forms in Korea and how the myth of a homogeneous Korea began to break down in the early 2000s. She is also teaching Race in Asia, which examines racial hegemonies in the Asian continent, including whiteness and Blackness and the influence of the United States. I asked if she had any suggestions for students wishing to pursue academia, and she said that often the best research is rooted in a personal question or struggle. She recommends articulating a particular discomfort, which often leads to the best research questions. I cannot recommend Dr. Yoon's classes enough. In both of her classes, I learned how to use case studies to think about the wider world and the human experience critically.

Study Abroad: A Truly Global Affair

Brigid Dunn

As an Arabic language learner and a Global Affairs major, I knew that studying abroad was always in the cards. Since my first day at Notre Dame, I was dead set on traveling to Amman, Jordan during my junior spring semester. (Spoiler alert: I'm in Jordan as I write this.) However, even though studying abroad was always in the cards, spending a summer in Morocco after my first year at Notre Dame was unfathomable . . . until it wasn't.

I knew I wanted to study global affairs in some capacity when I came to Notre Dame, so I took several courses in my first year in cultural anthropology, Arab culture, and peace studies to gain a deeper understanding of what global affairs means. Therefore, as someone who had studied the world from the confines of a classroom or the pages of a book, when the Center for the Study of Language and Culture offered me the opportunity to study abroad, I jumped at the chance. Scarcely three months later, I was on my way to Morocco, the country that would become my classroom.

Overall, my time in Morocco can be distilled into three key takeaways.

First, I gained so much knowledge in the Arabic language, from taking intensive courses, to speaking with the locals at shops, cafes, and in taxis, to living with a host family that only spoke Arabic. Even more crucially, I gained immense confidence in my language capabilities. Every time I initiated a conversation or responded to others in Arabic, I opened myself up to failure: failure of misunderstanding, failure in saying the wrong things, or not knowing the correct grammar. In all of these moments, I was willing to fail because I had developed the confidence needed to allow myself to be wrong—and, more importantly, to try.

Ultimately, I found the courage to find comfort in my discomfort and embrace that my discomfort was a sign of my progress in learning Arabic.

Second, I learned so much about Moroccan culture from living with my host family, taking trips around the country, walking through the streets of Meknes after school, talking with my Moroccan friends, and even just going to a cafe to study after class. These experiences enriched both my studies in global affairs (with a special focus on the Middle East and Islam) and Arabic (both the language and culture). Studying a region in a classroom is a great way to learn about the facts and history through a theoretical and academic lens. But learning about a place in the basement of Jenkins-Nanovic Halls or the second floor of Debartolo Hall is incomparable to being immersed in the actual place, personally encountering the language, people, and culture.





Finally, through my discomfort and uneasiness, I found the greatest rewards and the best memories. From listening to Fairuz every morning with my host mom during breakfast; to learning a Bulgarian wedding dance with my friends on the roof of our hotel with a yellow desert backdrop; to taking hundreds of photos with my host sister and roommate on the special holidays and the normal days just because; to sharing a look with my host sister from across the kitchen table that had us dying of laughter, even though most of the time we did not know what we were actually laughing about; to taking “American” cookies (aka chocolate chip) with my host sister, host mother, and roommate, while dancing around the kitchen listening to 50 Cent; these memories shaped my time in Morocco and have enriched my study of Global Affairs beyond the practical skills I learned. These memories are now the basis of why I continue to study Global Affairs and Arabic and have made me a greater global citizen.

The Decolonization of “Medicine Man”: What Does Agency Really Do?

Leah Brucal

In 2022, the Wellcome Collection closed the doors to the “Medicine Man” exhibition in an attempt to remain faithful to its mission of challenging the status quo in the modern understanding of health (Seymour). Many of the items on display in the exhibit depict an overtly romanticized story of medicine and global health. Henry Wellcome, the founder of the Wellcome Trust, accumulated over one million items relating to human health and medicine, many of which have origins in exploited communities (Seymour). The Wellcome Collection provides extensive knowledge in the medical field throughout history (McKie). At the same time, however, it failed to provide context for these items, showcasing them with no regard for their histories and agencies. I argue that the Wellcome Collection was ethically responsible in removing the “Medicine Man” exhibition, and should carefully reflect and examine its role in medical education moving forward.

What is the role of a medical museum in educating a community curious about human health? One can see the value of the Wellcome Collection as an encyclopedic museum, encouraging encounter with a “shared sense of being human” and finding the commonalities one may have with their history and recognition of a common future (Cuno 6-7). This shared sense of human experience is important because it decentralizes previous ways of understanding what it means to be human. This is integral to the mission of the Collection (Roberston). Yet, “Medicine Man” displays a narrative of ethical concern. It is a highly restricted understanding of medical triumphs, and it is not the only case of medical museums portraying a romanticized view of medical history. The Hunterian Museum has its own ethical concerns related to human remains, and the power structures that uphold colonialism and the objectification of these and other artifacts (O’Donovan). Health

and medical scholars are met with an imbalanced view of medicine and overtly exclusive “othering” of non-Western medicine thanks to this glorified imagery. Further, intellectual communities have the obligation to hold the Wellcome Collection accountable for its failure to place the shared sense of being human at the forefront of their displays. Throughout this paper, I employ an agency theory that considers the materiality that the Collection embodies and the sociocultural representation of contexts in the museum and its artifacts (Dobres and Robb 62). Agency of artifacts means that there is a voice to the medical antiquities on display, enabling them to ask us, the audience, difficult and thought-provoking questions related to the human experience and therefore participate in the process of making meaning (Caronia and Mortari 402). I argue that Wellcome should exercise ethical agency in recognition of their previous failure in their mission to inhabit a place of open conversation between the display and its viewers, and commit themselves to uphold the agency of the artifacts of “Medicine Man.”

Colonization of medicine is not just the practice of inserting Western ideals and values into the healing practices outside of the Western World. Colonization takes place in traces within places of persuasion—places like museums. As a site of persuasion, museums are rhetorical devices. Their materiality and location shape each visitor’s understanding of what is important to remember, to understand, and to know about the past (Aspel and Sodaro 193). In the case of medical museums, medicinal artifacts, tools, and items related to human health are often placed on a pedestal with an audience holding a medical gaze. Medical museums are sites where viewers are encouraged to question the evolution of healing practices. However, most pieces of medical history from outside the United Kingdom come from troubled pasts, their agencies revoked and violated by the trading and looting of such items. Their placement shares a story of medicine in which the categorization and development of hierarchical practices of medicine dominates healing practices. Much of

the literature surrounding medical artifacts holds that “medical knowledge manifests in materials” alongside encounters with the human person (Nott and Harris 9). With all of this considered, the Wellcome is part of the larger debate regarding the ethical agency of museums that have displays with troubled, even violent pasts. What does a display built on systems of oppression and exploitation manifest? What do these consequences entail for the ethical practices of medical museums? The paradigm shift towards decolonization opens a conversation surrounding the ethical practices of the Wellcome and its misalignment with the vision of itself as a museum that preserves different perspectives.

The presentation of medical antiquities in “Medicine Man” serves as one example of the overarching problems with colonialistic ideology in medical education. Such biased depictions of medicine illustrate a preference in the understanding of human health that favors Western contextualization as the predominant practice of medicine rather than equal emphasis of medicinal practices found in other cultures (Lokugamage et al. 267-268). As a center of knowledge, the Wellcome Collection should provide sufficient context, sharing important and crucial aspects of medicine’s evolution and how information was acquired. An attempt to recover agency requires that institutions “recognize that the making of their own identities is partly facilitated by engaging in the game” (Dobres and Robb 65). Thus, it would seem that both a recognition of the colonialist, hierarchical narratives that “Medicine Man” represents and an active effort to reshape this bias in medical education are necessary for the Wellcome to reclaim its ethical agency.

The removal of “Medicine Man” is not an act of forgetting the atrocities that come with antiquities of troubled pasts. Neither is it an undoing of the harm. Rather, the removal of the exhibit is an opportunity for the Wellcome Collection to move forward from the controversy and retain its ethical agency. One of the objectives the Collection made

for itself was to “encourage diversity by including a wider range of voices in our collections and programmes” (Robertson et al. 5). I support the immediate removal in 2022 because it halts the further proliferation of this hierarchical perspective of medicine. Instead of furthering rhetoric that supports racial differences and radical views that depend on the exploitation of non-Western communities, the Wellcome Collection has the opportunity to reframe its collection of medical antiquities to show both human wrongs and human rights.

In its role as a site of persuasion with materials of rhetoric, the Wellcome Collection should reflect its mission to promote diverse understandings of human health. Medical museums are crucial to articulating and challenging how medicine defines what is normal and abnormal in the past and present (Parry). The Wellcome Collection’s response to the “Medicine Man” is thus an opportunity for medical museums to act as movers and shakers in the decolonization of medical curricula. The reframing of narratives in medical history shares a nuanced understanding of health and healing practices to museumgoers. The Wellcome should therefore reexhibit items from “Medicine Man” that are integral to the understanding of medicine today, providing the necessary contexts that give the items breadth and depth. It is not a move that erases the colonialistic, troubled pasts of the artifacts, but rather acknowledges the wrongs of the past in a way that informs the future. This culturally sensitive approach to displaying items includes a conversation surrounding ownership. A collaborative effort to integrate the voices of these items and their owners facilitates the shift from lenses seen solely through the eyes of Henry Wellcome and towards the eyes of a global community.

One point of emphasis on the re-exhibition of items from “Medicine Man” is to display cultural humility within this reframe. Cultural humility requires a sense of openness and awareness to the biases that take place in museums (Lokugamage et

al. 266). For the Wellcome Collection, this should take form in the active reflection and critique of its current displays and what narrative the medical antiquities share. The Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford offers an interesting comparison that explores the decolonization of knowledge and acknowledgment of troubled acquisitions of items on display. Dan Hicks, a professor of Contemporary Archaeology at Oxford University, is a key figure in the decolonization of the Pitt Rivers Museum. In this effort, he shares that decolonization “begins with not pretending any longer that colonialism and its consequences are wholly in the past” (Hicks). Within the Pitt Rivers Museum is an array of different informative plaques that share the history of colonialism in the museum and the troubled pasts of artifacts previously and currently displayed. I find that informational signs centered around the hierarchy that colonialism shapes and the racial classification that is promulgated in centers of knowledge is one of the most transformational ways to recontextualize narratives. These efforts urge reflection within viewers on what narrative the museum presents. Interactive engagement then encourages cultural humility to take place within the experience of the Pitt Rivers Museum and gives the necessary context for the narratives the museum shares.

The Wellcome Collection can easily replicate this rhetoric in its own location and materiality. The power of words and framing does not erase colonial traces and human wrongs of the past. The effort of the Wellcome should be to inform its attendees of the complexities of the past, following the example set by Dan Hicks and the Pitt Rivers Museum. Decentralization from a single narrative enables the shift in medical curricula towards a more culturally informed practice of healing (Wong et al. 3). Outside of the attempt to acknowledge colonization in medicine and healing practices, why else should the Wellcome Collection re-exhibit items from “Medicine Man”?

The answer to that question is that the Wellcome and the medical artifacts of “Medicine Man” all

have agency. If anything, the re-exhibition of these items with a reframed context and justice to their pasts gives a voice to the life of the artifacts. Transparency is the ethically sound action that the Collection can take, but more importantly, it would enable the previously oppressed to be fully expressed. This gives life back to the objectified items and a voice to the communities that they come from. Artifacts may now ask viewers difficult questions surrounding ethics of medicine and self-reflection on human experience of health. In the case of medical training, the Wellcome in its reframe can serve as the invitation for students to immerse themselves in the healing practices of other cultures to better serve patients of today (Charlier 2). If the past is prologue, then the most nuanced understanding of the past will inform the practice of medicine today.

In conclusion, the first question the Wellcome should ask itself is the “why” behind removing “Medicine Man” and how it should respond to the ethical concerns of the display. Upon further reflection and critique of its now past display, I would advise the Wellcome to incorporate the human wrongs and uphold the human rights of the medical artifacts. As a site of knowledge and location of persuasion, any move forward or initiative towards re-exhibition should arguably involve a co-collaborative effort with other medical museums and institutions to show a narrative that aligns with its mission to cultivate diverse connections of a shared human experience of health. The Wellcome Collection was ethically responsible in removing the “Medicine Man” exhibition and sets itself as an example of a center for knowledge in the current effort to decolonize medical curricula.

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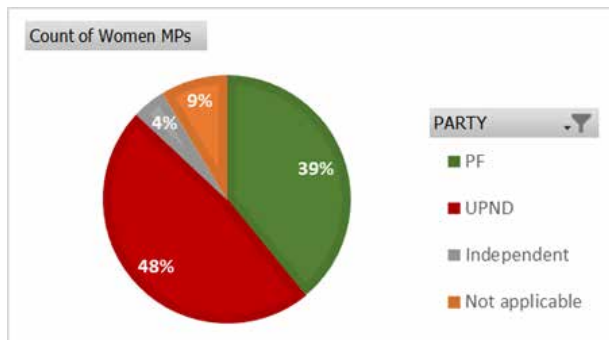
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Pathways For Women into the Zambian National Assembly

Bupe Lughano Kabaghe

Despite the progress in women heads of state and government and members of parliament in Africa, women still remain underrepresented in the Zambian National Assembly. According to the UN, at the current pace of development, it would take another 40 years for women and men to be represented equally in national political leadership (UN, 2022). This is even worse for a developing country like Zambia where currently, women only account for 15.24 percent of national leadership (NA of Zambia, 2023). This means that women only hold 25 out of 164 seats in government, and of these 25 women, only 21 are elected. Of the four other women who are Members of Parliament, 1 has been nominated by the President and the other 3 are the Vice President, the Speaker of the House, and the Deputy Speaker of the House by virtue of their role and title.



Zambia's low number of women parliamentarians can be attributed to the patriarchal society, culture, religion, lack of finances and the legal system (Kasomo, 2012). Additionally, the lack of quota system has contributed to the low number of women in parliament. Zambia, unlike several other African countries such as Rwanda, Lesotho, Namibia, and South Africa, has yet to utilize quota systems to ensure the representation of women in parliament. In this wider conversation on representation and participation, scholars argue that women's lobbies and advocacy groups often contribute to increasing

the number of women represented in parliament. What then are the pathways for women into political leadership in Zambia's National Assembly?

In June of 2023, I conducted a study in Lusaka, Zambia at the National Assembly of Zambia interviewing 16 out of 21 elected women parliamentarians. This research finds that for women to be successful in nomination/adoption and election in Zambia, family relation to a former or current male politician and work and education experience are the biggest pathways to their success. Furthermore, advocacy groups such as the Women's Lobby are not contributing as much as they are said to contribute to supporting Zambian women parliamentarians pre- and post-election.

In this paper I discuss the motivations and challenges women parliamentarians face and answer the main question, what are the pathways for women into the Zambian National Assembly? I conclude by putting these in conversation with each other and argue that other than work experience and education, the most significant pathway for women into the Zambian National Assembly is family relations and name recognition.

Motivations

According to my research findings, 40 percent of women in the National Assembly hail from political families. The influence of their upbringing and the individuals they know has shaped their desire for political engagement. MP 2 stated that she joined politics because she was inspired by the great work of late president Michael Sata and her grandfather, who was politically influential. Another woman asserted that, "My father was a politician...my journey in Foreign Service prepared me to become a member of parliament" (MP 8). Notably, family backgrounds emerge as the most significant motivators, with various family members playing a pivotal role in inspiring and mentoring these women. The familial support serves not only as motivation but also as a crucial factor in their political journeys.

Moreover, these women are driven by a genuine desire to serve and bring about positive change in their communities. For example, MP 18 narrated that “I thought of going back to the village because I thought it’s underdeveloped, it needs my presence, at least maybe my voice and my contribution will change the landscape of that place. Hence, it made me make a decision to stand as a member of parliament.” Another MP shared that she had been doing maternal health care assistance by building a maternity ward in a hospital because she did not have access to such when she fell pregnant many years ago. The narratives provided by the interviewed women highlight a selfless commitment to community development, dispelling notions of power-hungry ambitions. The emphasis on helping others, especially in areas where they have personal experiences, reinforces the notion that women in politics prioritize societal impact over personal power.

Challenges and Barriers

These results align with previous research by identifying intimidation, name-calling, male dominance, and financial constraints as common challenges. MP 18 said “the problem is a culture.” Cultural norms deeply rooted in Zambia’s patriarchal society manifest in ways such as women being told that politics is for men and that the Zambian political scene is mainly men and it is not a place for women. The women that I interviewed are all women who were able to get past the gender stereotypes and the discouragement that comes with it because they contended. However, the focus shifts to the obstacles encountered after deciding to run for office.

The strategy of character assassination, particularly through social media, is revealed as a tactic employed by the opposition to discredit women candidates. MP 3 said that “I was attacked as women you know.... social media was harsh, they will strip you off naked.” This form of attack not only undermines the credibility of women as leaders but perpetuates harmful gender stereotypes.

The findings also underscore the negative impact of campaign violence. MP 9 stated that men go to social media and threaten violence. Therefore, she asserted that “I think the political space in our country is not favorable for women. You know, there’s a lot of name calling, there’s a lot of violence against women, verbal, even abuse.” This reinforces the argument that the political space in Zambia is not favorable for women.

Additionally, running a political campaign in Zambia is a highly resource-intensive endeavor. According to a recent survey conducted by the Westminster Foundation, the cost of running a political campaign in Zambia ranges from \$30,000 to \$50,000 and even higher. This cost variation is influenced by factors such as the geographical location within the country, the political party involved, and the duration of the campaign (Wahman, 2023).

To put this into perspective, it is noteworthy that the average monthly earnings in Zambia stood at \$211 in December 2021, as reported by CEIC DATA. Interestingly, during the same year, political candidates spent over 20 times this monthly average on their campaigns. This stark contrast underscores the financial magnitude involved in political campaigning, rendering it a pursuit feasible for only a privileged few.

This financial barrier poses a significant challenge, particularly for women aspiring to engage in politics. In interviews with women parliamentarians, 100 percent of them emphasized the formidable hindrance posed by financial constraints. This obstacle becomes even more pronounced for women lacking robust family support or a substantial career that could serve as a source of financing. The financial demands of political campaigns thus emerge as a critical factor limiting the participation of women in the political arena.

Lastly, all the women interviewed identified the most significant challenge in their political journey as the process of nomination and adoption. MP 21

emphasized the difficulty of adoption and nomination, citing excessive monetary transactions and an unfair process. This sentiment was also echoed by the two aspiring candidates from different parties, both of whom asserted that the nomination and adoption process is often marred by irregularities. The women interviewed consistently argued that the process lacks transparency, is susceptible to corruption, and that committees often pre-determine their selections before conducting interviews. One woman highlighted the importance of connections in the process. These sentiments from the women interviewed go beyond partisanship and are valid shared experiences of women regardless of the political party they belong to.

This phenomenon establishes political parties as the ultimate gatekeepers, influencing who runs for office and who does not, irrespective of gender. In interviews with Secretary Generals of political parties, it becomes evident that party policies play a pivotal role in determining the adoption of candidates. A representative from political party 3 emphasized their party's commitment to gender inclusivity, noting that policies were formulated by gender experts to increase the number of adopted women candidates, a goal they claim to have achieved. In contrast, political party 1 secretary general emphasized that "the aim of the party was to win and men have an upper hand at winning so they are prioritized." Therefore, this prioritization of men, resulting in significantly lower numbers of adopted women candidates. This being the case because the Government of Zambia does not constitutionally mandate political parties to have equal gender representation, they just encourage it. While my research suggests that gender policies within political parties increase women's participation in politics and their candidacy for official office, it is crucial to note that further study is needed to comprehensively understand the impact of these policies on the actual representation of women in parliament. For now, this investigation sheds light on the role of party policies as influential factors in shaping the landscape of women's participation in political processes.

Policy and Institutional Analysis

The analysis extends to the institutional framework, highlighting the absence of deliberate efforts to increase women's representation in parliament. The lack of gender quotas and vague legal provisions is noted, emphasizing the need for clearer legislative language to ensure equal representation. Additionally, Zambia has yet to ratify international treaties on gender equality.

In regard to the vagueness of the constitution, it does not clear the set expectations and consequences of particular articles. Words such as shall and may are used and this does not give clarity. Article 259 (b) of the Zambian constitution states that, "Where a person is empowered to make a nomination or an appointment to a public office, that person shall ensure— that fifty percent of each gender is nominated or appointed from the total available positions, unless it is not practicable to do so." This article does not compel political parties or governments to do so and so it is often disregarded especially at nomination and adoption level. Therefore, the absence of deliberate policies within political parties is illuminated, with significant variation in adoption rates based on the existence of gender-sensitive policies.

The successful implementation of gender quotas in countries such as Rwanda where women make up majority of parliament, 61.3 percent (Parliament of Rwanda, 2023), and Uganda, 34 percent women in parliament (Parliament of Uganda, 2022), shows the positive impacts that gender quotas can have. The inclusion of recent statements from the Speaker of the National Assembly adds a timely perspective on potential constitutional reforms and the need for affirmative action to enhance women's participation. She asserted that, as the country undertakes constitutional reforms of non-contentious clauses, members of parliament must use the window to see the realization of a mixed-member proportional electoral system that will enhance the participation of women in governance. Furthermore, she mentioned the need for affirmative action as well as

reduction of ECZ fees to increase the representation of women (CamNet TV 2023).

Advocacy Groups and Lack of Substantive Support
When I ventured into the field, I hypothesized that advocacy groups, particularly the Women's Lobby, played a significant role in supporting women in attaining political leadership. Building on previous literature by Geisler, my hypothesis posited that advocacy groups served as a pathway for women into political leadership. However, my research uncovered that current women parliamentarians have not received substantive support from advocacy groups, such as the Women's Lobby. Only 20 percent of the women acknowledged receiving support in terms of campaign regalia, but beyond that, there was a widespread awareness of a lack of substantial assistance. In the interviews, women consistently defined support as financial backing and a visible display of support and solidarity in the media.

Following interviews with representatives from two advocacy groups, it was revealed that as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), they primarily rely on grants and, as a result, lack the financial resources to provide direct support to women. Moreover, most of these grants are earmarked for specific projects, limiting the extent to which advocacy groups can influence the representation of women in parliament.

In the absence of deliberate efforts, an essential question arises: what alternative pathways are available for women to gain access to political leadership? In essence, what strategies are currently being employed? This query prompts an exploration into the diverse channels that women, despite the limited support from advocacy groups, are utilizing to navigate the intricate landscape of political leadership.

The Pathways: Family Background and Experience
Certain factors exert a significant influence on women's engagement in political leadership. According to my findings, family background, experience, both education and work experience emerge as pivotal determinants for women's participation in

politics. Notably, a trend that has persisted since the 1960s in many African nations is the prominence of wives and daughters of former political leaders assuming parliamentary positions. This pattern underscores the considerable impact of familial ties to male political figures on a woman's likelihood of securing nominations and electoral success (Choi, 2019; Feinstein, 2010; Richter, 1990).

Furthermore, the cultural context within which women operate in politics necessitates substantial family support. Such support manifests in various forms, including financial assistance and moral encouragement. Campaigning in many African contexts can be resource-intensive, and women often rely on their families for the financial means to navigate these challenges. Moreover, the moral backing provided by family members can be crucial for women as they navigate the political arena, often fraught with gender-based biases and stereotypes (Trabelsi, 2023). Women have a lot more to lose if they do not have the support of their family. For example, a woman who did not have the support of her husband said, "At home, it was a bit difficult, I was threatened with divorce, my mother-in-law came in, we had a lot of discussions around my decision" (MP 4). Additionally, she added that it added a bigger financial burden because lack of support means that "... you will be denied financial support". On the other end, family support can significantly draw the odds in a woman's favor. When women are seen with their husbands, it gives them more credibility. One woman alluded in an interview saying that her husband is her biggest strategy as he goes with her to the constituency and has become known as the father of the constituency (MP 1).

Education stands out as another pivotal factor in women's political leadership journeys. Both formal and informal education equips women with the necessary skills and knowledge to access financial resources, establish influential networks, and better understand their constituents and constituencies. MP 4 stated that she has a very high-level education which has allowed her to work for a very long time

and have her own resources, so the initial lack of family support did not affect her access to resources, hence she was able to still make the decision to run for political office without her husband's support. Education enables effective communication and successful campaigning, empowering women to overcome obstacles in their pursuit of political leadership roles (Ballington, Julie et al, 2011).

Conclusion

This study unravels family ties and background as the most prominent pathway for women into political leadership in the Zambian National Assembly, given the persistently low representation of women in the country's political landscape. The findings shed light on political parties, financial constraints, and the institutional framework as significant challenges for women. Forty percent of the women in the National Assembly traced their political inspiration to their family, underscoring the impact of upbringing and familial connections on their political aspirations. Despite the potential positive impact of introducing gender quotas, Zambia has yet to implement them. The analysis of the institutional framework revealed the need for clearer legislative language and ratification of international treaties on gender equality to ensure equal representation. Contrary to the initial hypothesis, advocacy groups, particularly the Women's Lobby, were found to offer limited substantive support to women parliamentarians. The absence of financial resources and reliance on grants tied to specific projects restricted the capacity of advocacy groups to contribute significantly.

In light of these findings, the study recommends policy implications and interventions at the advocacy, political party, and government levels. Advocacy groups should explore avenues to enhance their financial capacity, and political parties should consider adopting gender-sensitive policies to foster increased representation. Additionally, the government should work towards clearer legislative language, ratification of international treaties, and the implementation of gender quotas to ensure

equitable representation.

This research not only contributes to the academic discourse on women's political representation but also serves as a call to action for policymakers, political parties, and advocacy groups to collectively address the identified challenges and create an enabling environment for women to actively participate and thrive in Zambian politics.

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(Re)Education: Emergent Trends of Russian Involvement in Ivorian Higher Education

Ben Martin

The beginning of the Russo-Ukrainian War has served as one of the most critical political junctures of the 21st century. Notwithstanding the Russian Federation's violation of Ukrainian statehood, the impacts of this onslaught have been felt across the globe. From American domestic politics being thrown into greater disarray due to concerns about funding the Ukrainian military or the rapidly increasing Russian share of wheat worldwide, this conflict has far-reaching, international implications that transcend usual political and economic boundaries. (Medvedev) This is arguably most apparent at the United Nations Emergency Special Session hosted on March 2, 2022, approximately two weeks after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Here, member states "overwhelmingly" adopted a resolution calling for Russia to "unconditionally withdraw" its military forces. (United Nations) While the five votes against the resolution are somewhat predictable due to similarities in lack of political rights and civil liberties, the more enlightening aspect of this vote was not necessarily in the "against" category but in those who chose to abstain.¹ (Freedom House) Out of the thirty-five abstentions, seventeen came from the continent of Africa. Furthermore, twenty-six of the fifty-four recognized African states elected to either abstain from voting or did not submit to a vote. (Mureithi) Given the prevalent ideas surrounding African state sovereignty and the sanctity of statehood for these formerly colonized nations, there is still a question as to why there seemed to be a dissonance between African political thought and the votes themselves, even two years after this unprecedented session.

Some political analysts believe that Russian hard power, such as the Wagner Group's paramilitary action and governmental economic sanctions, offers a realist argument to the African rationale of the

vote, citing that it may be safer to submit to Russian interests for the safety of their people. (Hudson) However, I hold that the emergence of Russian soft power in the continent ultimately better explains this line of reasoning, best expressed through Russian investment in the Ivorian population through education. While there tends to be a relative lack of scholarship in this field, Côte d'Ivoire offers an exemplary case study on the potential effects of Russian involvement in the civil sphere rather than through more Machiavellian means. Though Côte d'Ivoire voted for the resolution supporting Ukraine, its distinct governance history and current situation coincide well with democratic backsliding within the region. (Onapajo and Sanger) Considering Russia's continued and ever-present growth as an educational powerhouse within the state, Côte d'Ivoire may offer a more nuanced example of Russian interventionism in Africa, which could explain current trends surrounding attitudes towards the Russo-Ukrainian War, as expressed in the Emergency Special Session voting record.

Since Côte d'Ivoire was granted independence by France in 1960, the country has dealt with difficulties maintaining a peaceful democratic order. Particularly in the last thirty years, the country has dealt with numerous military coups, two civil wars, and jihadist attacks. (British Broadcasting Channel) While it is known that violence may lead to civil unrest and destabilization of a regime, the direct political nature of this societal distress is ultimately what provides understanding for the anomaly that is Côte d'Ivoire's democratic progress — or lack thereof — in part due to the Russian Federation's involvement in the state.

In the case of most African countries, the scar tissue of colonialism has led many African leaders to view democracy as a Western "cry of failure." (Conan 173) Russia can advocate for itself as a state that has no prior involvement in the pain of colonialism.

¹ The five countries who voted against this United Nations resolution — Belarus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Eritrea, Russian Federation, and Syria — average a Freedom House score 6.8 as of 2022.

Thus, Russia offers a non-Western, non-democratic state system after which countries may model themselves in an attempt to reject the colonizing West's liberal democracy. Furthermore, as Russia pushes themselves as a culturally conservative balancer to the West, African states who believe in traditional values such as "the defense of heterosexual marriage" and "patriotism" may find an understanding in Russia that the West will not tolerate. (Wengle) In the case of Côte d'Ivoire, which holds "strong opposition to LGBTQ+ rights," the Russian conservative world order will allow itself to avoid bending to the West's claims of "universality of human rights," particularly when concerning social issues. (Equaldex, Clifford, and Gruzd 1) While the Russian Federation may want to counteract the West and democratic ideals, it is becoming increasingly apparent that Ivorian individuals will not respond well to violence from outside forces, such as in the case of the French-Ivorian clashes of 2004 or Opération Licorne, in which great distrust was created between the French peacemakers and the Ivorian people due to their seemingly flippant use of violence and corruption. (Smith) Thus, investment in the civil sphere allows Russia to more efficiently and more peacefully influence Ivorian political thought.

Russia has used a considerable tactic to embed itself within the Ivorian state structure: its role in promoting education throughout the country. Finding its roots within the Soviet-African educational system in which training programs were offered to educate Africans on the superiority of the socialist system, the Russian Federation still seeks to offer educational support and diplomacy to Côte d'Ivoire today. (Katsakioris 274) While global Soviet education tended to focus on labor skills with the Marxist-Leninist lens, the Russian Federation's current objective is to provide pedagogy in all career fields. As Russia has proven with its immersion in the Ivorian economy and media systems, Russia seeks to embed itself within all aspects of Ivorian culture to influence policy decisions and civil society alike. Therefore, through education, Russia can influence Ivorian thought for generations.

Furthermore, the Russian Federation has provided ample support to Côte d'Ivoire within higher education. In January 2017, the Russian Peoples' Friendship University entered into a cooperative agreement with Felix Houphouët-Boigny University, the flagship university of Côte d'Ivoire, to support each other in education and science. (Министерство иностранных дел Российской Федерации) Furthermore, Russia has a storied history with Côte d'Ivoire and Russian state university scholarships.

In 2017 alone, the Russian government funded 56 Ivorian students to receive university degrees, with 55 students electing to study in Russia. A notable aspect of this involves the role of private funding in Russian scholarships. Just within the context of Côte d'Ivoire alone, over 270 students have received private Russian funding for higher education, with increases seen in the past five years. (Министерство иностранных дел Российской Федерации) This is important to note given the unique relationship between Russian oligarchs — an elite group of individuals with high social status and extreme material wealth — and the Russian state. While there is a lack of information regarding where this private funding originates, it does demonstrate the congruence between the state and the Russian high class regarding foreign investment in higher education.

As higher education is understood as the pathway to a prosperous future, the relationship between Russia and Côte d'Ivoire amplifies this belief in both the first-image and second-image international relations framings. Russia is one of the few countries globally that allows non-citizens to study at Russian public universities without paying tuition. To further illustrate this point, the Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad, and International Humanitarian Cooperation (Rossotrudnichestvo) mandates that Russian universities hold a quota for international students for scholarships. (Официальный сайт о высшем образовании в

России для иностранных студентов) As of 2023, around 60 Ivorian students per year study at Russian universities, often studying medicine. (Smetanina) When these students come back to practice, there is an underlying level of trust in the Russian government and society because, without them, there would be less desire to study medicine due to cost and, generally, fewer doctors. It is not lost on Ivorian students that France, its former colonizer, lacks any structure similar to Russia's robust foreign education system. This leads to greater contempt with France and, at large, the West, making citizens more open to Russian influence in other aspects of society. Thus, positive Russian sentiment is bolstered through higher education through the beneficial community interaction and engagement associated with Russian scholasticism.

Russian interventionism in higher education could significantly affect democracy in Côte d'Ivoire. This hypothesis is particularly substantial given that West Africa has dealt with four coups since 2020. Thus, if Western notions of democracy want to retain their power within Ivorian borders, Western governments must work with the existing state governments to assist in protective procedures, such as advancing internet and academic freedom, promoting anti-corruption measures, and strengthening the rule of law. Even so, Russia will work to embed itself further into the Ivorian cultural landscape as time progresses. Thus, while Côte d'Ivoire did not vote in favor of Russia during the United Nations vote, this may not always be a guarantee in the future. If the West truly cares about its role in protecting democratic norms, it must counteract this emergence of Russian soft power.

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“Prevention Through Deterrence” — Criminalizing Humanitarianism Physical and Political Prevention Through Deterrence

Francesca Masciopinto

Pushing migrants into hostile territory is a purposeful strategy of United States border policy. Officials achieved a high rate of border control in El Paso and played off the efficacy of targeting high crossing rate sectors and to people towards desired locations, creating the “prevention through deterrence” policy. The “Border Patrol 1994 Strategic Plan” outlined this strategy and predicted that with a combination of increased militarization and surveillance, “... traditional entry and smuggling routes disrupted, illegal traffic will be deterred, or forced over more hostile terrain less suited for crossing and more suited for enforcement.”¹ This report explicitly states under its “assumptions” section that, “violence will increase as the effects of the strategy are felt.”² No evidence has proven that the policy of prevention through deterrence conclusively deterred migrants from crossing the border without documentation nor did it lower the rate of migration to the United States by any measure, but it certainly weaponized the rugged terrain of the borderlands.

The activist group Coalición de Derechos Humanos confirmed that the remains of 3,199 migrants were recovered in Arizona between 2000 and 2017, but estimates over 6,000 remains have been found since the implementation of prevention through deterrence.³ The recovery rates of human remains in Arizona consistently increases despite fluctuations in overall immigration levels, resulting in a concerning ratio of deaths to migrations⁴ and the

¹U.S. Border Patrol, “Border Patrol Strategic Plan 1994 and Beyond,” Homeland Security Digital Library, July, 1994.

² *Ibid.*

³Coalición de Derechos Humanos, “Remembering the Dead,” Coalición de Derechos Humanos website, 2018.

⁴Geoffrey Alan Boyce, Samuel N. Chambers, and Sarah Lanuis, “Bodily Inertia and the Weaponization of the Sonoran Desert in US Boundary Enforcement: A GIS

number continued to rise, from 220 deaths per 100,000 apprehensions in 2016 to 318 deaths per 100,000 apprehensions in 2020.⁵ Fatalities in the El Paso sector tripled from 2022 to 2023⁶ and will likely continue to increase as climate change brings extreme temperatures to the American southwest. All statistics point to one conclusion, the rate of undocumented migrant deaths in the United States desert has become an urgent humanitarian crisis.

Conclusive evidence that prevention through deterrence is effective in its aim to force migrants into inhospitable desert areas has been collected using GIS (geographical information system) modeling to illustrate how the terrain crossed by migrants on foot has become more dangerous over time. Geographer Samuel Chambers documented this funnel effect, showing that as surveillance and militarization expands, pedestrian routes attempt to circumvent detection and thus become more physiologically taxing.⁷ These findings implicate that United States immigration policy intentionally pushes undocumented migrants into terrain that exhausts them to the point of death or surrender.

Prevention through deterrence does not stop at exacting physiological harm on undocumented migrants. Its political message negatively impacts both migrants and humanitarian aid work attempting to help them survive. The very thesis of prevention through deterrence opposes migrants human right to stay alive and counters humanitarian values, therefore imposing widespread negative consequences with its status as the longterm logic of

Modeling of Migration Routes through Arizona’s Altar Valley,” *Journal on Migration and Human Security*, 2019, Vol. 7(1) 23-35.

⁵ Emily Cataneo, “In the Sonoran Desert, GIS Helps to Map Migrant Deaths,” *Undark*, March 30, 2021.

⁶ Jose Luis Gonzalez and Diana Beth Solomon, “No shade, no water, and record heat: More migrants die in U.S. desert,” *Reuters*, October 13, 2023.

⁷Boyce, Geoffrey Alan, Chambers, Samuel N., and Lanuis, Sarah, “Bodily Inertia and the Weaponization of the Sonoran Desert in US Boundary Enforcement: A GIS Modeling of Migration Routes through Arizona’s Altar Valley,” *Journal on Migration and Human Security*, 2019, Vol. 7(1) 23-35.

federal immigration policy. These consequences are evident in the implementation of 8 U.S.C § 1324 (a) (1)(A)(i), harassment of humanitarian aid workers and destruction of their efforts in an effort to create a chilling effect — disincentivizing nonprofits efforts at the border.

Legal Harassment

Due to their de facto position as the secondary search and rescue resource for undocumented immigrants stranded in the desert, humanitarian workers and volunteers face a legal dilemma. While most aid work is legally permitted, they risk prosecution if they transport unauthorized migrants in distress to safety due to the misuse of 8 U.S.C § 1324 (a)(1)(A)(i). This federal law does not necessarily target aid workers, but can be easily weaponized against them. Over 11,264 federal convictions were made with the lead charge of transporting an undocumented migrant between 2018-May 2023.⁸ This means the most serious charge brought against them was simply moving an unauthorized person from one place to another.

In 2006 two No More Deaths volunteers were arrested by Border Patrol while attempting to drive three migrants in need of emergency medical assistance to a clinic in Tucson and subsequently charged with 8 U.S.C § 1324 (a)(1)(A)(i),⁹ facing up to 5 years in prison.¹⁰ In a context devoid of smuggling or any other illegality, this law was manipulated to criminalize humanitarianism itself. The charges were later dropped by a US District Judge in Tucson, implying that the intent of this law was not to target humanitarian workers and it had been misused as a tool for the deterrence

⁸TRAC Immigration, “Convictions for Transporting or Harboring Undocumented Immigrants Jump Under Biden,” TRAC (Syracuse University Affiliate), July 13, 2023.

⁹Marina Lorena Cook, “Humanitarian Aid is Never a Crime: Humanitarianism and Illegality in Migrant Advocacy,” 45 Law & Soc’y Rev. 561 (2011).

¹⁰ “1907. TITLE 8, U.S.C. 1324(A) OFFENSES,” The United States Department of Justice Archives, updated January 17, 2022.

agenda.¹¹ According to one law review article, “... the statute’s broad language and unclear definitions of these crimes has resulted in uncertainty about their proper application...the statute’s lack of clarity has enabled prosecutions of migrant solidarity.”¹² A recent white paper from the United States Attorney general also states that, “Humanitarian concerns are not a defense to a charge of transporting or harboring aliens...the statute’s plain language includes no exception for humanitarian assistance.”¹³ Even a border humanitarian group, the Samaritans, acknowledged that they were “pushing the envelope” with the medical evacuation protocol they implemented, in which volunteers regularly transported migrants in emergency situations to a hospital, but believed the policy was accepted by Border Patrol in the area.¹⁴ 8 U.S.C § 1324 (a)(1)(A)(i) does not directly attack nor protect humanitarian aid workers, leaving them in a gray area vulnerable to legal harassment by authorities.

In addition to the misuse of federal statutes, authorities often utilize selective prosecution as another criminalization tactic to deter humanitarian aid. “In these instances, officials re-defined specific actions of humanitarian volunteers as illegal by choosing to enforce laws and regulations in cases where these actions had once been tolerated.”¹⁵ The high profile and extreme case of Dr. Scott Warren serves as a distinct example of selective prosecution and legal harassment of humanitarian workers. On January 17, 2018 Warren was arrested by the Border Patrol while providing basic assistance to two undocu-

¹¹Natalie Hrubos, “Arizona judge dismisses case against humanitarians aiding illegal immigrants,” Jurist, September 3, 2006.

¹² Delphine Rodrik, “Solidarity at the Border: How the EU and US Criminalize Aid to Migrants,” Berkeley Journal of International Law 39, no. 1 (2021): 81-126

¹³Targeted News Service, “Congressional Research Service Issues In Focus White Paper on Immigration-Related Criminal Offenses,” *Targeted News Service*, February 1, 2023.

¹⁴Marina Lorena Cook, “Humanitarian Aid is Never a Crime: Humanitarianism and Illegality in Migrant Advocacy,” 45 Law & Soc’y Rev. 561 (2011).

¹⁵Marina Lorena Cook, “Humanitarian Aid is Never a Crime: Humanitarianism and Illegality in Migrant Advocacy,” 45 Law & Soc’y Rev. 561 (2011).

mented migrants. He was detained overnight and charged with three felony counts, two of harboring migrants and one of conspiring to transport and harbor, facing up to 20 years in prison.¹⁶ Examining blisters, providing food, and water, Warren was carrying out humanitarian work typically regarded as staying within legal bounds and yet suddenly punishable with felony charges. Many different sources covering the situation interpreted his arrest retaliatory, connected to a video released by No More Deaths the same week showing Border Patrol agents vandalizing food and water supplies. A representative from No More Deaths stated, “We see it as an escalation and criminalization of aid workers.”¹⁷ After the government failed to prove his guilt at the first trial, Warren was continuously targeted with legal measures including spurious criminal charges attempting to prosecute him a second time for harboring. Both Amnesty International¹⁸ and the United Nations condemned this legal harassment. “The prosecution of Scott Warren represents an unacceptable escalation of existing patterns criminalizing migrant rights defenders along the migrant caravan routes.”¹⁹ Warren endured multiple years as a criminal defendant due to selective prosecution of his humanitarian efforts.

Intimidation and Harassment

Humanitarian workers face harassment in a variety of manners that build upon the judicial sphere, including surveillance and intimidation. Federal authorities on many levels abuse their governmental power to exercise demoralizing tactics intended

to deter humanitarian efforts. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) began a surveillance and criminalization initiative titled ‘Operation Secure Line’ in November 2018, targeting human rights defenders and aid workers providing humanitarian assistance at the border.²⁰ Border Patrol and other DHS personnel began conducting targeted ‘secondary inspections’ on humanitarians who were subjects of the surveillance operation as they crossed the border. Two members of the humanitarian NGO Border Angels were on the ‘Operation Secure Line’ watchlist and subjected to secondary inspections. James Cordero was detained for two and a half hours on December 24, 2018 while crossing the border after delivering Christmas toys to a shelter in Tijuana and interrogated about his humanitarian activities. Hugo Castro, a board member of Border Angels, was subjected to a six hour secondary inspection and informed he was under investigation.²¹ In implementing a surveillance operation with the intent of criminalization under 8 U.S.C. §1324 and carrying out targeted secondary inspections, federal authorities harassed humanitarian workers through intimidation to deter them from carrying out their work of solidarity.

Obstruction of Work

Humanitarians themselves are not the only subjects of deterrence strategies, their efforts frequently fall victim to interference including vandalism and obstruction of grassroots search and rescue missions. No More Deaths stated that their water containers situated on an 800 sq. mile patch of desert were vandalized on average twice a week, over 415 times between 2012 and 2015,²² resulting in 3,586 gallons destroyed during the period of study.²³ Water jugs

²⁰Amnesty International, “Saving Lives is not a Crime: Politically Motivated Legal Harassment Against Migrant Human Rights Defenders by the USA,” AMR 51/0583/2019.

²¹Amnesty International, “Saving Lives is not a Crime: Politically Motivated Legal Harassment Against Migrant Human Rights Defenders by the USA,” AMR 51/0583/2019.

²²Rory Carroll, “Eight activists helping migrants cross brutal desert charged by US government,” The Guardian, January 24, 2018.

²³No More Deaths & Coalición de Derechos Humanos,

¹⁶Jasmine Aguilera (Ajo, Arizona) and Billy Perrigo (Berlin), “They Tried to Save the Lives of Immigrants Fleeing Danger. Now They’re Facing Prosecution,” Time Magazine, November 11, 2019.

¹⁷The Guardian, “Group accusing US border patrol of water sabotage sees member arrested,” Associated Press, January 22, 2018.

¹⁸Amnesty International, “USA: Drop abusive criminal charges against humanitarian volunteer Scott Warren,” Amnesty International, November 7, 2019.

¹⁹United Nations, “UN experts urge US authorities to drop charges against aid worker Scott Warren,” UN Human Rights Press Release, June 5, 2019.

are often stabbed or slit open to empty the contents and completely destroy them, cans of nonperishables left out for migrants are also punctured so the contents rot.

No More Deaths and Coalición de Derechos Humanos published a comprehensive study cataloging events of vandalism. It included information on the crucial nature of their humanitarian efforts and multifaceted research which found that while hunters and other actors play a minor role in vandalizing, the Border Patrol stands as the most impactful and widespread culprit. Hidden cameras and eyewitness accounts provide concrete evidence in many cases.²⁴ The incidence of vandalizing essential supplies in rugged, potentially lethal conditions physically represents the widespread culture of dehumanization and cruelty towards undocumented migrants among federal officials. It clearly aims to demoralize the aid workers providing these supplies and deter further humanitarian assistance.

“Crimmigration” and the Chilling Effect

The misuse of this law in prosecuting humanitarians creates two distinct issues, it both criminalizes their work and harasses them, imposing a “chilling effect.” The term “crimmigration” describes a rising phenomenon across the EU and United States as authorities apply the criminal legal theories of deterrence and retributive justice to immigration contexts (for example, the United States Federal Immigration Policy of “prevention through deterrence”).²⁵ This line of thought has spread to humanitarian workers involved with immigration, as the government seeks to punish them for their solidarity and condemn dissenting politics. In abusing the existing legal frameworks to scrutinize the legitimacy of and negatively frame humanitarian actions, they place an implicit burden of criminal guilt on

“Interference with Humanitarian Aid: Death & Disappearance on the US-Mexico Border,” No More Deaths & Coalición de Derechos Humanos, Report 2.

²⁴ *Ibid.* [Footage of vandalism](#)

²⁵ Delphine Rodrik, “Solidarity at the Border: How the EU and US Criminalize Aid to Migrants,” *Berkeley Journal of International Law* 39, no. 1 (2021): 81-126.

both aid workers and the migrants they serve. “By targeting actors perceived to challenge securitized and deterrence-based migration policies, this use of anti-smuggling legislation superimposes a focus on dissent and criminality on [humanitarian] actions...and by extension on migrants’ and asylum seekers’ need for protection in the first place.”²⁶

The concern with this new application of “crimmigration” onto humanitarian workers is that it will place an intentional “chilling effect” on their efforts. A chilling effect, defined as, “a law’s effect on activity outside the scope of its intended target,” can occur when laws or regulations are unclear, overbroad, or even misused, as in the case of 8 U.S.C § 1324.²⁷ This suggests that when humanitarian workers are criminalized, they fear legal retribution for legitimate work and stop giving aid. A group of United Nations Special Rapporteurs issued a letter to the United States expressing their explicit fear that a “chilling effect” would occur due to government persecution of legitimate humanitarian action in relation to the Dr. Scott Warren case.²⁸ One activist, Kaji Dousa, was a subject of Operation Secure Line, a federal security investigation that placed heavy surveillance on humanitarians along the border. She felt deeply disturbed by the personal knowledge held by Border Patrol²⁹ and sued the Department of Homeland security over the “chilling effect” their surveillance had on her legally legitimate work.³⁰ Amnesty International cites another human rights activist who said she started to fear providing humanitarian aid to undocumented migrants after criminal charges were brought against Dr. Warren and other activists.

²⁶ Delphine Rodrik, “Solidarity at the Border: How the EU and US Criminalize Aid to Migrants,” *Berkeley Journal of International Law* 39, no. 1 (2021): 81-126, p125.

²⁷ Harvard Law Review, “The Establishment Clause and the Chilling Effect,” 133 Harv. L. Rev. 1338.

²⁸ Bernard Duhamie, et al. “Letter to Mr. Allegra,” United Nations, AL USA 6/2018.

²⁹ Delphine Rodrik, “Solidarity at the Border: How the EU and US Criminalize Aid to Migrants,” *Berkeley Journal of International Law* 39, no. 1 (2021): 81-126, p

³⁰ “19-CV-1255 TWR (KSC)” *Dousa v. U.S. Dep’t of Homeland Sec.*, 19-CV-1255 TWR (KSC), (S.D. Cal. Mar. 21, 2023)

The “chilling effect” due to the criminalization of aid work will contribute to the gravity of the migrant mortality humanitarian crisis at the United States border by deterring humanitarian aid as the need for it continues to grow.

Conclusion

While immigration holds a foundational place in American history, the past two decades have brought unprecedented difficulty in the form of polarized politics and a humanitarian crisis at the border as undocumented migrants began to die with increasing frequency. Various nonprofit organizations sprung up across the southwestern deserts of the United States to mitigate this tragedy but felt hostility themselves. In order to impactfully mitigate the humanitarian crisis at the US southern border, humanitarian workers must be legally secure and their work must be validated. Why utilize a policy approach when considering nongovernmental actors and the fact that many infractions in this situation are rooted in national government action? The humanitarian crisis of migrant mortality resulted from federal immigration policy in the form of prevention through deterrence and therefore must be remedied by policy. By decriminalizing humanitarian work policy changes would not only expand nonprofits freedom and ability to carry it out but send a message that it is necessary. The UCLA Latino Policy and Politics Initiative has recommended a policy approach suggesting that the government should, “pass laws that clearly stipulate that providing humanitarian aid at the border is not a crime and should not be prosecuted as such,” and “prohibit Border Patrol agents from raiding humanitarian aid camps or destroying death-preventing supplies and equipment such as water bottles or water stations.”³¹

³¹Olivia Marti and Chris Zepeda-Millán, “Criminalizing Humanitarian Aid and the U.S.-Mexico Border,” UCLA Latino Policy and Politics Initiative, September 2020.

