Social Media, Democracy, & International Human Rights Mobilization

Social Media, Democracy, & International Human Rights Mobilization

OCAD SCHOOL OF CONTINUING STUDIES AND RYERSON LEADERSHIP LAB

Social Media, Democracy, & International Human Rights Mobilization Copyright © by OCAD School of Continuing Studies and Ryerson Leadership Lab. All Rights Reserved.

Course Description

The intersection of the arts, politics, and international activism has inspired creators, informed citizens, and motivated many social movements from democracy's earliest days.

Social Media, Democracy, and International Human Rights Mobilization investigates these diverse fields and activities. It aims to help students understand and constructively engage with authoritarian regimes' harassment of human rights campaigners and democracy practitioners.

It will also discuss recent online social movements that have captured the world's imagination, from among #ArabSpring, #BlackLivesMatter; #MeToo, and #OccupyWallStreet.

In sum, this course attempts to empower Canadian creators and help citizens fight against rights abuses by helping them learn about these diverse topics.

Human Rights Mobilization

Events in the Philippines, Russia, and India show how human rights-related issues unfold. They also provide opportunities for Canadian learners to understand them, empathize with the oppressed, and respond constructively.

First, in the Philippines, take the case of Maria Ressa. She is the CEO and editor-in-chief of *Rappler*, the Philippines' largest independent online media organization. *Rappler*'s growth was facilitated by considerable investments in technology and journalistic resources. It also depended on partnerships and distribution through social media platforms, especially Facebook.

However, this same global social media platform has been abused. Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's regime associates, as well as his supporters' networks, have harassed Ressa and *Rappler* journalists. They have even created disinformation campaigns using Facebook. This has culminated in the conviction of Ressa, her key deputy, and her company by regime-sympathetic courts for the crimes of "cyber libel" and tax evasion.

Second, in Russia, opposition leader Alexei Navalny exposed corruption and critiqued the current regime using social media, particularly YouTube. The Russian government has responded in kind, leveraging centralized organized disinformation campaigns and broadcast media to discredit Navalny as well as use courts to try to silence him.

Third, in India, farmers and the government have both taken to social media, as well as organizing in-person activities, in their ongoing conflict.

In sum, these events demonstrate the global reach of human rights abuses as well as online and offline responses to these oppressive actions.

1.INTRODUCTION TO LAW

Overview: 1. Introduction to Law

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=717#audio-717-1

Learning Objectives:

- Recall how law emerged to govern and structure society
- Explain the history of, and rationale for, the legal *person*

This module will help learners explore the basics of law as well as the rise of human rights and legal personhood. By the end, learners will demonstrate an understanding of the basics of law as a means to shape society.

Assignment 1: Class Introduction/Rights Advocacy (Short written post)

- Write a short post that introduces you as well as your interest in human rights.

Introduction to the article “Seventy years of international human rights”

International human rights have a relatively short history as compared to law as a whole. For example, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights only celebrated its 70th anniversary back in 2018.

Despite this being only a short period, international human rights have truly had a global influence.

Unfortunately, as much as human rights are justifiably celebrated in some circles, others believe the opposite.

In her article, “Seventy years of international human rights,” author Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann chronicles the brief history of human rights across the world as well as its opposition.

By seeing multiple sides regarding the international human rights debate, ideally we can develop these right to be even more reflective of the diverse values and attitudes of people across the world.

Seventy years of international human rights

Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann, *The Conversation,*
December 10, 2018, 7:06pm EST

It’s the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was proclaimed by the United Nations General

Assembly on Dec. 10, 1948. Since then an enormous body of international human rights law has been developed.

Some people think that human rights should not be universal. And some critics believe that human rights are an example of Western cultural imperialism. They claim that non-Western countries did not participate in drafting the Universal Declaration. Yet non-Western countries have been involved since the earliest stages in drawing up human rights documents.

However, all countries can be quite hypocritical when it comes to applying the laws they agree to.

Other critics argue that human rights promote selfish individualism. Instead of caring for the family or community, people only care for their own rights. But in countries like Canada where human rights are, for the most part, legally respected, citizens follow these laws because they do have a sense of community and care for each other. Housing advocates, food bank workers and millions of volunteers help make human rights “work” on the ground.

Yet others claim that as China and other non-democratic countries become more powerful, human rights will be less important internationally. It is true that such countries do work to undermine many human rights, at home and at the UN. But that makes human rights more relevant, not less. We all need protection against abusive governments.

Human rights are still relevant and new rights are evolving.

Signs of progress

One sign of progress is in LGBTQ rights. This topic is difficult to discuss internationally, because some places, especially but not only Russia and countries in Africa and the Middle East, still have laws that prohibit homosexuality. Some religious groups, in the Western world as elsewhere, are also homophobic. We

don't yet have an international declaration on LGBTQ rights, but the UN is paying more attention to them.

In the last 20 years, much attention has been paid to "collective" human rights. These are rights than belong to groups of people and that one individual can't exercise if others can't also exercise them.

Indigenous rights are collective rights. Indigenous ways of life, languages, religions, cultures and land bases are threatened. In 2007 the UN passed UNDRIP, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Canada voted against the Declaration, but later reversed its position. By 2016 the government declared its full support for UNDRIP.

Clean environment is a right

A collective right that affects everyone everywhere is the right to a clean and healthy environment. This includes the right to protection against climate changes that undermine our livelihoods and well-being.

Another collective right is the right to peace. Viewed narrowly, this is the right not to live in a state of war. In 2018, many people still live in war-torn countries, especially countries in the Middle East and parts of Africa. Others, in the Ukraine, live in fear of war. And we all live in fear of nuclear war.

Both climate change and war create huge refugee populations. By 2050, it's thought, there will be 200 million "climate refugees" fleeing rising sea levels. Add to that the refugees who are fleeing large-scale crime, like the migrant "caravan" currently trying to enter the United States.

Economic human rights

The UN recently agreed on a Global Compact for Migration, setting out voluntary principles meant to save lives and ensure successful migrant integration into new countries without unduly burdening social infrastructure such as health care. But the real challenge is to ensure people don't have to leave home at all.

One way to ensure more people can live in their homes is to develop economies. The right to economic development is a collective right. Development activists usually try to reduce both poverty and inequality. There's been an enormous reduction in world poverty over the last 25 years, even as inequality has been growing in most countries.

This means it's easier to fulfil what is known as economic human rights, such as rights to health, education and housing. Very little of this change results from foreign aid; most is a result of the spread of market economies.

Many people in many countries have benefited from globalization, though others, such as industrial workers in Canada and the U.S., have lost their jobs. This is one of the reasons for the spread of anti-immigrant, xenophobic sentiments in the Western world.

Unless we can figure out a way to control these sentiments and reduce the need for people to flee their own countries because of war, crime, economic challenges and climate change, we are facing an uneasy human rights future.

Quiz on "Seventy years of international human rights":

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=588#h5p-35

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=588#h5p-33

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=588#h5p-34

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=588#h5p-36

Topics/Keywords/Tags: Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Citation: Howard-Hassmann, R. E. (2018, December 10). Seventy years of international human rights. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/seventy-years-of-international-human-rights-108446

Introduction to the article “Could an artificial intelligence be considered a person under the law?”

Artificial intelligence (A.I.) started as a kind of dream.

The idea of mechanical entities being able to make decisions on their own has been with us since antiquity. As A.I. has become more sophisticated and entered every part of our lives (“Hello Siri!”), how we deal with it becomes even more complex and also even more important.

Author Roman V. Yampolskiy explores the legal implications of this quickly emerging technology in his article, “Could an artificial intelligence be considered a person under the law?”

As technology continues to develop, our laws need to be agile in their response to deal with the never-ending complexities of our digital world.

Could an artificial intelligence be considered a person under the law?

Roman V. Yampolskiy, *The Conversation*, October 5, 2018 6.42am EDT

Humans aren’t the only people in society – at least according to the law. In the U.S., corporations have been given rights of free speech and religion. Some natural features also have person-like rights. But both of those required changes to the legal system. A new argument has laid a path for artificial

intelligence systems to be recognized as people too – without any legislation, court rulings or other revisions to existing law.

Legal scholar Shawn Bayern has shown that anyone can confer legal personhood on a computer system, by putting it in control of a limited liability corporation in the U.S. If that maneuver is upheld in courts, artificial intelligence systems would be able to own property, sue, hire lawyers and enjoy freedom of speech and other protections under the law. In my view, human rights and dignity would suffer as a result.

The corporate loophole

Giving AIs rights similar to humans involves a technical lawyerly maneuver. It starts with one person setting up two limited liability companies and turning over control of each company to a separate autonomous or artificially intelligent system. Then the person would add each company as a member of the other LLC. In the last step, the person would withdraw from both LLCs, leaving each LLC – a corporate entity with legal personhood – governed only by the other's AI system.

That process doesn't require the computer system to have any particular level of intelligence or capability. It could just be a sequence of "if" statements looking, for example, at the stock market and making decisions to buy and sell based on prices falling or rising. It could even be an algorithm that makes decisions randomly, or an emulation of an amoeba.

Reducing human status

Granting human rights to a computer would degrade human dignity. For instance, when Saudi Arabia granted citizenship

to a robot called Sophia, human women, including feminist scholars, objected, noting that the robot was given more rights than many Saudi women have.

In certain places, some people might have fewer rights than nonintelligent software and robots. In countries that limit citizens' rights to free speech, free religious practice and expression of sexuality, corporations – potentially including AI-run companies – could have more rights. That would be an enormous indignity.

The risk doesn't end there: If AI systems became more intelligent than people, humans could be relegated to an inferior role – as workers hired and fired by AI corporate overlords – or even challenged for social dominance.

Artificial intelligence systems could be tasked with law enforcement among human populations – acting as judges, jurors, jailers and even executioners. Warrior robots could similarly be assigned to the military and given power to decide on targets and acceptable collateral damage – even in violation of international humanitarian laws. Most legal systems are not set up to punish robots or otherwise hold them accountable for wrongdoing.

What about voting?

Granting voting rights to systems that can copy themselves would render humans' votes meaningless. Even without taking that significant step, though, the possibility of AI-controlled corporations with basic human rights poses serious dangers. No current laws would prevent a malevolent AI from operating a corporation that worked to subjugate or exterminate humanity through legal means and political influence. Computer-controlled companies could turn out to be less

responsive to public opinion or protests than human-run firms are.

Immortal wealth

Two other aspects of corporations make people even more vulnerable to AI systems with human legal rights: They don't die, and they can give unlimited amounts of money to political candidates and groups.

Artificial intelligences could earn money by exploiting workers, using algorithms to price goods and manage investments, and find new ways to automate key business processes. Over long periods of time, that could add up to enormous earnings – which would never be split up among descendants. That wealth could easily be converted into political power.

Politicians financially backed by algorithmic entities would be able to take on legislative bodies, impeach presidents and help to get figureheads appointed to the Supreme Court. Those human figureheads could be used to expand corporate rights or even establish new rights specific to artificial intelligence systems – expanding the threats to humanity even more.

Quiz on "Could an artificial intelligence be considered a person under the law?"

https://theconversation.com/could-an-artificial-intelligence-be-considered-a-person-under-the-law-102865

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1149#h5p-84

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1149#h5p-85

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1149#h5p-86

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1149#h5p-87

Topics/Keywords/Tags:

- Artificial intelligence (AI)
- Human rights
- Algorithm
- Corporate law
- Lobbying
- Legal personhood
- Human rights law
- Civil rights
- Computer algorithm
- International humanitarian law
- Citizens United
- Voting rights
- Corporate influence
- Workers
- Corporate power
- Political lobbying
- Algorithm transparency
- workers' rights
- International human rights law

Citation: Yampolskiy, R. V. (2018, October 5). Could an artificial intelligence be considered a person under the law? *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/could-an-artificial-intelligence-be-considered-a-person-under-the-law-102865

Introduction to the article "Rights for nature: How granting a river 'personhood' could help protect it"

Women were granted legal personhood after a long, arduous struggle.

Corporations have similarly gained legal personhood.

Why would we also want to give *nature* this same type of legal status and protection?

In "Rights for nature: How granting a river 'personhood' could help protect it," authors Justine Townsend, Alexis Bunten, Catherine Iorns, and Lindsay Borrows explore the use of legal personhood as a relatively new way to protect nature.

Perhaps this example could inspire those in the advocacy space to use existing laws in innovative ways to achieve other positive ends.

Rights for nature: How granting a river 'personhood' could help protect it

Justine Townsend, Alexis Bunten, Catherine Iorns, and Lindsay Borrows, *The Conversation*, June 3, 2021 1.07pm EDT

The Muteshekau Shipu (Magpie River) runs nearly 300 kilometres in Québec's Côte-Nord region. The river is culturally significant for the Innu and it is popular with white water paddlers and rafters.

Despite efforts to protect the river, Muteshekau Shipu continues to be threatened by potential new hydroelectric

dam development. But, in February, the Innu Council of Ekuanitshit and the Minganie Regional County Municipality declared the Muteshekau Shipu (Magpie River) a legal person, a move that may provide greater certainty for this majestic river's future.

While a first in Canada, granting legal personhood to natural entities is part of a global movement to recognize the rights of nature in law. Indigenous communities around the world are leading the way in upholding the rights of sacred and ancestral rivers, forests and mountains. Recognizing the rights of nature is an opportunity to elevate the power of Indigenous Peoples' laws and worldviews to benefit all peoples.

Extractive values — the belief that natural entities are resources that can be used for human benefit with little regard for their well-being and longevity — are deeply embedded in Canada's legal and economic systems.

These values influence the ideologies at the root of our biodiversity and climate crises. These ideologies justify the transformation of rivers, forests and the atmosphere into commodities and private property at our own peril. Recognizing natural entities as legal persons and enshrining their rights in law is a promising legal innovation.

Rights of nature

On Feb. 23, the Alliance for the Protection of the Magpie River/ Muteshekau Shipu recognized nine rights of the river. These include the rights to evolve naturally and be protected, to be free of pollution and to sue.

The members of the Innu Council of Ekuanitshit, part of the alliance, will now be the river's guardians. This means that those with long-standing relationships to Muteshekau Shipu will be formally entrusted with the river's care for future generations.

"Designating the river as a legal person was the clearest message we could send," Chief Jean-Charles Piétacho of the Innu Council of Ekuanitshit told us in an interview. "There will never be dams in this river. The river protects herself, we protect the river, we're all protected. I think the message is very clear."

Galvanized by widespread environmental degradation and rising Indigenous rights movements, Indigenous communities around the world are leading the way in upholding the rights of sacred and ancestral rivers. This includes Māori tribal relationships with the Whanganui River in Aotearoa New Zealand, the role of Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities in the Atrato River in Colombia, and the Yurok Tribal Council's granting legal rights of personhood to the Klamath River through an ordinance in the United States.

The idea that nature is a sentient being isn't new to Indigenous and other traditional peoples. "The vision of the Innu is that Nature is living. Everything is alive," said Chief Piétacho.

Indigenous laws: Relationships and responsibilities

Recognizing the rights of nature are modern expressions of long-practised Indigenous laws. Indigenous laws are as diverse as Indigenous cultures yet share an understanding that humans are an integral part of the natural world. These laws emphasize respect for all beings and responsibilities to care for lands and waters. Trees, mountains and plants are relatives, not commodities that can be privately owned and exploited.

The rights-of-nature movement may seem radical to some people. It challenges Eurocentric values such as human dominance over the natural world, which is considered largely inanimate. The conservation movement itself is founded on

a worldview that sees “wilderness” as something separate to be protected from humans. The “fortress” conservation movement is ideologically non-commensurate with Indigenous ways of thinking about being a part of nature. This belief was used to justify the forced relocation of many Indigenous Peoples from their territories to establish parks and protected areas.

Rights understood through a western, liberal and individualistic lens overlook collective responsibilities to the natural world. “I sincerely think Québec and Canada missed their responsibility; they aren’t protecting the river from development,” said Chief Piétacho.

Bridging western and Indigenous legal systems through a rights-of-nature approach is one tool for encouraging a kincentric view of the world, which sees humans as “part of an extended ecological family that shares ancestry and origins.”

Indigenous laws mirror and reinforce relational worldviews that view living entities as relatives, not resources. This in turn shapes social conduct that emphasizes respect and responsibility to the natural world. Innovative governance arrangements are one means through which distinct worldviews and associated laws can be woven together.

Innovative governance models

Rivers speak but since western laws and institutions are not designed to listen, people must act as intermediaries voicing perspectives on their behalf. Indigenous laws are well positioned to conceptualize the decision-making structures needed to breathe life into legal personhood.

In 2014, Tūhoe iwi (Māori) and the New Zealand government granted legal personhood to Te Urewera, an ancestral forest and former national park. They created a board responsible for

making decisions in the best interests of Te Urewera. Tūhoe, as children of Tu Urewera, give expression to her through the board.

In Northern Canada, Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation established Thaidene Nëné as an Indigenous Protected Area under Dene law. It is also protected as a park and conservation area under Canadian and territorial (Northwest Territories) legislation. The management board, Thaidene Nëné Xá Dá Yáłtı, is composed of members of Łutsël K'é Dene First Nation, the Government of Canada and the Government of the Northwest Territories. Once appointed, members no longer represent their organizations, they speak for Thaidene Nëné.

Indigenous-led initiatives

Examples like Thaidene Nëné are the exception and not the norm in Canada, although this may be changing. There is a national mandate to support Indigenous-led conservation initiatives and advance reconciliation. This support combined with Indigenous leadership and accompanying legal innovations present new opportunities for caring for the land and waters.

Many similar Indigenous-led initiatives are currently underway, supported by programs including the Bioneers Indigeneity Program, RIVER (Revitalizing Indigenous Values for Earth's Regeneration), the Conservation through Reconciliation partnership, RELAW (Revitalizing Indigenous Law for Land, Air and Water) and the Global Network for the Rights of Nature.

The Muteshekau Shipu river declaration — and the legal guardianship role for Innu — is an example governments can learn from. "If the government wants to effectively protect Nature, they should consider this option so protected areas would be protected along with our rights," said Chief Piétacho.

To create just and liveable futures for all our relatives (human and otherwise), Canadian laws and policies need further innovation. Vesting legal personhood in natural entities is a promising intervention when Indigenous Peoples represent these entities. It elevates the standing of nature for all peoples and respects the laws of Indigenous Peoples.

Georgia Lloyd-Smith, a lawyer with West Coast Environmental Law, co-authored this article. The authors are grateful to Chief Jean-Charles Piétacho for the interview.

Quiz on "Rights for nature: How granting a river 'personhood' could help protect it"

https://theconversation.com/rights-for-nature-how-granting-a-river-personhood-could-help-protect-it-157117

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1107#h5p-60

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1107#h5p-61

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1107#h5p-62

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1107#h5p-63

Topics/Keywords/Tags:

- Water
- Rivers
- Whanganui River
- Quebec
- Personhood
- environmental protection
- Environmental rights

Citation: Townsend, J., Bunten, A., Iorns, C., & Borrows, L. (2021, June 3). Rights for nature: How granting a river 'personhood' could help protect it. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/rights-for-nature-how-granting-a-river-personhood-could-help-protect-it-157117

Assignment 1: Class Introduction/Rights Advocacy (Short written post)

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=369#h5p-57

Extra Media: Module #1-Introduction to Law

Krook, J. (2017, August 14). Is law a social science? Lessons from a Canadian law school. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/is-law-a-social-science-lessons-from-a-canadian-law-school-81753

MacLean, J., & Froc, K. A., (2021, July 26). Notwithstanding the notwithstanding clause, the Charter is everyone's business. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/notwithstanding-the-notwithstanding-clause-the-charter-is-everyones-business-163143

NBC News. (Apr 26, 2016). *The fight For women's rights | Flashback | NBC News* [Video]. NBC News/YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g2CewziXoDg (2:16)

TED-Ed. (2015, October 15). *What are the universal human rights? – Benedetta Berti* [Video]. TED-Ed/YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nDgIVseTkuE (4:46)

Townsend, J., Bunten, A., Iorns, C., & Borrows, L. (2021, June 3). Rights for nature: How granting a river 'personhood' could help protect it. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/rights-for-nature-how-granting-a-river-personhood-could-help-protect-it-157117

2.DEMOCRACY/TECH

Overview: 2. Democracy/Tech

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=738#audio-738-1

Learning Objectives:

- Recall the origins of democracy and authoritarianism
- Compare and contrast the concepts of democracy and authoritarianism
- Explain the technical, communicative, and societal benefits of the internet

This module will help learners explore the similarities and differences between democracy and authoritarianism. By the end, learners will demonstrate an understanding of the basics elements of democratic and authoritarian regimes.

Assignment 2: Human Rights Advocacy (Short Essay)

- Write a short essay that describes the issue, campaign, or activist you introduced in Assignment 1 in more detail.

Introduction to the article “Autocracies that look like democracies are a threat across the globe”

Francis Fukuyama’s iconic book, *The End of History and the Last Man*, predicted that liberal democracy would be the logical endpoint for all forms of government.

The collapse of the Berlin Wall and the end of communist rule in the U.S.S.R. seemed to prove Fukuyama right.

But decades later, is Fukuyama’s provocative prediction still true?

In “Autocracies that look like democracies are a threat across the globe,” the author Richard Carney looks at authoritarian regimes around the world that seem like democracies, but really are not.

By revisiting the essential elements of democracies and autocracies, we have a better idea of both terms. We also are more prepared to distinguish countries that might be pretending to be more democratic than they really are.

Autocracies that look like democracies are a threat across the globe

Richard Carney, *The Conversation*, February 6, 2019 6:42am EST

Russia’s successful interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election may inspire other countries to do the same.

These other countries don't look threatening. They look like democracies. But they're not.

They're a special kind of autocratic regime that masquerades as a democracy. And what looks like benevolent conduct by these countries can quickly change into aggressive, politically charged behavior.

Autocracies, often known as "authoritarian regimes," maintain power through centralized control over information and resources. Political opposition is either forbidden or strongly curtailed and individual freedom is limited by the state.

Autocracies that look like democracies are different because their leaders permit political opponents to run for election – even though they rarely win.

These countries' capitalist systems have some of the trappings of liberal democracies in the West. But these regimes use capitalism to further their authoritarian rule.

These so-called "dominant party authoritarian regimes" have surged in number from around 13 percent of all countries before the end of the Cold War to around 33 percent today.

Most are located in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. They are also present in Eastern Europe and in the Americas. Russia is one of them; so are Turkey, Malaysia, Singapore and Venezuela.

These regimes often engage in the same kinds of bad behavior as other autocracies. But their behavior is critically different in both the motivations and methods used to further authoritarian ends, as detailed in my new book "Authoritarian Capitalism."

Political control

Part of the danger with dominant party authoritarian regimes is that their veneer of democracy permits political opponents to run for election. But when incumbent rulers face a threat to

their power, the autocrats often respond by targeting political dissidents and taking aggressive actions toward foreign enemies to bolster popular support.

For example, Russian leader Vladimir Putin faced an unprecedented challenge from citizen protests during the 2012 presidential election. The protests continued into 2013.

Putin punished the protesters. New York Times correspondent Ellen Barry reported in 2013 that "new laws prescribe draconian punishments for acts of dissent. … Mr. Putin … embraced a new, sharply conservative rhetoric, dismissing the urban protesters as traitors and blasphemers, enemies of Russia."

Shortly afterward, Russia's foreign activities became even more belligerent than during the Soviet period. This accomplished just what Putin wanted: Following his annexation of Crimea in 2014, his approval ratings skyrocketed.

Another recent example is Turkish leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan's repression of domestic political dissidents following the failed July 2016 coup against him. According to The Guardian, the regime arrested or suspended "more than 110,000 officials, including judges, teachers, police and civil servants."

Erdogan went after foreign-based dissidents too, allegedly orchestrating a plot to kidnap opposition leader Fetullah Gulen from Pennsylvania.

And while he won the presidential election in June 2018, Erdogan's foreign-based critics remain concerned about his threats. Enes Kanter, a Turkish NBA star, declined to travel to London in January 2019 out of fear that Turkish spies might kill him.

Information control

Another distinction that characterizes dominant party

authoritarian regimes is how they exploit Western legal and financial systems against Western media outlets critical of the regime.

Normally, autocrats control information and resources to retain power. But rather than relying on the typical autocrat's crude hostile attacks or outright censorship, dominant party authoritarian regimes use legal or financial methods regarded as legitimate by the West.

In other words, they sue the media or they buy them.

A slew of foreign news organizations – including The New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg and The Economist – were sued by the Lee family, autocratic rulers of Singapore, for political and financial reporting after the 2008 global financial crisis.

The family maintained the coverage defamed them. As the Wall Street Journal's editors wrote in 2008, "We know of no foreign publication that has ever won in a Singapore court of law. Virtually every Western publication that circulates in the city-state has faced a lawsuit, or the threat of one."

Malaysian political authorities deployed similar tactics when their rulers felt threatened.

Following the Asian financial crisis of 1997, and in the months leading up to the November 1999 general election, wealthy ruling party supporters in Malaysia filed a flurry of defamation lawsuits against foreign journalists and media organizations, such as the Asian Wall Street Journal and Dow Jones.

Russia's means of pressuring foreign media are slightly different, but they also involve taking advantage of Western legal-financial systems.

Russia has engaged in disinformation campaigns that exploit weaknesses in the West's freedom of speech protections, as documented by experts at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and at the Center for the Study of Democracy.

And Russian companies have acquired sufficiently

large ownership stakes in foreign media companies to influence their operations.

This has involved both the manipulation of their coverage and a reduction in media freedoms of the country in which they are located.

For example, Delyan Peevski is a controversial member of the Bulgarian Parliament who advocated for pro-Russian policies. Peevski built and sustained a media empire that controls around 40 percent of Bulgaria's print sector and 80 percent of the newspaper distribution with loans from a partially Russian-owned bank.

Resource control

In contrast to firms located in other types of autocracies, state-controlled businesses in dominant party authoritarian regimes often comply with international financial regulations. This helps them gain access to Western countries' corporate and financial systems.

Under cover of legitimate business operations, their autocratic leaders can pursue political objectives with less scrutiny.

Malaysia's state-owned investment fund, 1MDB, engaged in aggressive investment tactics with corrupt practices – including "abnormally high payback" for investment bankers – that extended across the globe.

The U.S. accuses former Prime Minister Najib Razak's family friend of masterminding the theft of US$2 billion from the fund. And its capital was also channeled to politicians and projects to help the ruling party win the 2013 elections.

Russia has also used state-linked companies to gain influence over Hungary, Serbia and Bulgaria's crucial energy sectors via purchases of ownership stakes in listed companies.

This granted the Russian state access to other key sectors

of these economies, such as finance and telecommunications. Russia then was able to influence government policies.

In one case, the Serbian government chose not to enforce the European Union's sanctions against Russia. That was a risk for Serbia, because it has wanted to qualify for European Union membership by 2025.

Even bolder actions occurred with Russia's interference in the U.S. 2016 presidential election.

Michael McFaul, the former U.S. ambassador to Russia, told the Senate in September 2018 that never before had the Kremlin violated American sovereignty so "illegally, aggressively and audaciously" – even during the high-stakes rivalry of the Cold War.

It is now common knowledge that Russian-controlled agencies and businesses played a strategically vital role in the election interference.

Resisting influence

Can democracies defend themselves against such aggressive regimes?

The "Kremlin Playbook," written by Heather A. Conley, James Mina, Ruslan Stefanov and Martin Vladimirov, is an extensive study of Russian influence in Hungary, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Latvia and Serbia. It provides a detailed list of policy recommendations to resist Russian influence that can be applied to other dominant party authoritarian regimes.

They include strengthening intelligence gathering and cooperation between the U.S. and its allies; increasing U.S. and allied governments' assistance to vulnerable countries; and stronger protections for and enforcement of transparency measures.

But I believe an important addition to this list is the need to

monitor the strength of the ruling party's hold on power. That's because aggressive, politically charged activities are most likely to occur when incumbent rulers face an elevated threat.

With its attack on the U.S. 2016 election, Russia showed that it's possible to interfere destructively in the most powerful Western democracy. I expect that other autocracies that look like democracies will follow suit – across the globe.

Quiz on "Autocracies that look like democracies are a threat across the globe"

https://theconversation.com/autocracies-that-look-like-democracies-are-a-threat-across-the-globe-110957

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1153#h5p-88

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1153#h5p-89

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1153#h5p-90

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1153#h5p-91

Topics/Keywords/Tags:

- Media
- Sovereign debt
- Democracy
- Capitalism
- Singapore
- Sovereign wealth fund
- Authoritarian rule
- Malaysia
- Recep Tayyip Erdoğan
- Vladimir Putin
- Authoritarianism
- Dissent
- Fethullah Gulen

- Authoritarian regimes
- Political repression
- Coups

Citation: Carney, R. (2019, February 6). Autocracies that look like democracies are a threat across the globe. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/autocracies-that-look-like-democracies-are-a-threat-across-the-globe-110957

Introduction to the article “Why universities must defend democracy”

Western countries like Canada and the U.S. have benefitted greatly from their democratic roots.

However, democracy is not static. It shifts and changes, becoming increasingly democratic or less so. For example, when universal voting is jeopardized, everyone’s ability to vote potentially becomes imperiled and weakening democracy’s foothold.

In “Why universities must defend democracy,” author Henry Giroux reflects on some of the illiberal tendencies that have arisen in the U.S. in the wake of the Trump presidency.

When one country with a long-standing and robust democracy becomes threatened, friends of democracy across the globe should also be concerned.

Why universities must defend democracy

Henry Giroux, *The Conversation*,
September 6, 2017,
7
:06pm EST

The march in Charlottesville, Va., earlier this summer by white supremacists, neo-Nazis and other right-wing extremists

illuminated the growing danger of authoritarian movements both in the United States and across the globe.

It's signalling a danger that mimics the increasingly forgotten horrors of the 1930s.

Neo-Nazis in the United States, and possibly those worldwide, appear especially emboldened because they've found a comfortable, if not supportive, place at the highest levels of the U.S. government.

President Donald Trump's administration has included white supremacist sympathizers like Steve Bannon, Jeff Sessions and Stephen Miller. All three embrace elements of the nefarious racist ideology that was on full display in Charlottesville.

Trump's refusal to denounce their Nazi slogans and violence in strong political and ethical terms has suggested his own complicity with such movements.

It should surprise no one that David Duke, a former imperial wizard of the Ku Klux Klan, told the media in the midst of the violence in Charlottesville that white supremacists were "going to fulfil the promises of Donald Trump... to take our country back."

'God bless him'

Nor should it surprise anyone that Trump's silence delighted the far right.

The Daily Stormer, a white supremacist website, even had this to say: "No condemnation at all. When asked to condemn, he just walked out of the room. Really, really good. God bless him."

It appears that the presence of Nazi and Confederate flags celebrating a horrendous history of millions lost to the Holocaust and slavery, of lynchings and church bombings, and

the assassinations of Black civil rights leaders like Medgar Evans and Martin Luther King, Jr., did little to move Trump.

Charlottesville has resurrected elements of a past that resulted in some of the worst crimes in human history. The ideology, values and institutions of a liberal democracy are once again under assault by those who don't believe in equality, justice and democracy.

All of these alarming developments raise serious questions about the role of higher education in a democracy.

What role, if not responsibility, do universities have in the face of a new wave of authoritarianism?

What purpose should education serve when rigorous knowledge is replaced by opinions, the truth is labelled "fake news" by the president of the United States and his devotees, unbridled self-interest replaces the social good and language operates in the service of fear, violence and a culture of cruelty?

Universities must hold up democratic ideals

Surely, institutions of higher education cannot limit their role to training at a time when democracy is under assault around the world.

Colleges and universities must define themselves anew as a public good, a protective space for the promotion of democratic ideals, of the social imagination, civic values and a critically engaged citizenship.

Renowned education professor Jon Nixon argues that education must be developed as "a protected space within which to think against the grain of received opinion: a space to question and challenge, to imagine the world from different standpoints and perspectives, to reflect upon ourselves in

relation to others and, in so doing, to understand what it means to assume responsibility."

Given the ongoing attack on civic literacy, truth, historical memory and justice, surely it's all the more imperative for colleges and universities to teach students to do more than master work-based skills.

Instead, we must educate them to become intelligent, compassionate, critically engaged adults fully aware of the fact that without informed citizens, there is no democracy.

There's much more at stake here than protecting and opening the boundaries of free speech. There is the more crucial necessity to deepen and expand the formative cultures and public spheres that make democracy possible.

Educators cannot forget that the struggle over democracy is about much more than the struggle over economic resources and power. It's also about language, agency, desire, identity and imagining a future without injustice.

Return to authoritarianism not far-fetched

As the historian Timothy Snyder has observed, it's crucial to remember that the success of authoritarian regimes in Germany and other places succeeded, in part, because they were not stopped in the early stages of their development.

The events in Charlottesville provide a glimpse of authoritarianism on the rise and shine a spotlight upon the forces that are trying usher in a new and dangerous era, both in the United States and worldwide.

While it may seem far-fetched to assume American-style totalitarianism will soon become the norm in the United States, a return to authoritarianism is clearly no longer the stuff of fantasy or hysterical paranoia.

That's especially since its core elements of hatred, exclusion, racism and white supremacy have been incorporated into both

the highest echelons of political power and throughout the mainstream right-wing media, especially Fox News and Breitbart.

The authoritarian drama unfolding in the United States includes the use of state force against immigrants, right-wing populist violence against mosques and synagogues and attacks on Muslims, young Blacks and others who do not fit into the vile script of white nationalism.

Charlottesville was just part of a larger trend of domestic terrorism and homegrown fascism that is on the upswing in the United States.

Trump's administration, after all, has announced it will no longer "investigate white nationalists, who have been responsible for a large share of violent hate crimes in the Unites States."

Trump has also lifted restrictions imposed by the Obama administration in order to provide local police departments with military surplus equipment such as armed vehicles, bullet-proof vests and grenade launchers.

These actions accelerate Trump's law-and-order agenda, escalate racial tensions in cities that are often treated like combat zones and reinforce a warrior mentality among police officers.

Equally telling is Trump's presidential pardon of Joe Arpaio, the notorious white supremacist and disgraced former sheriff of Maricopa County, Arizona. Not only did Arpaio engage in racial profiling, despite being ordered by the court to desist, he also had a notorious reputation for abusing prisoners in his Tent City, which he once called "a concentration camp."

A nod to domestic terrorism

There is more at work here than Trump's endorsement of white nationalism; he's also sending a clear message of support for a

culture of violence that both legitimizes and gives meaning to acts of domestic terrorism.

What's more, there's a clear contempt for the rule of law. And there's also an endorsement not just for racist ideology, but for institutional racism and consequently the primacy of the race-based incarceration state.

In his various comments, tweets and policies, Trump has made clear that he does not see himself as the leader of the country, but as the head of a right-wing movement fuelled by rage, isolation, social atomization and communal disintegration, galvanized by a culture of fear and bigotry. He preys upon a populist hatred of democracy.

At the moment we're seeing a looming collapse of civic culture.

A healthy democracy always struggles to preserve its ideals, values and practices. When taken for granted, justice dies, social responsibility becomes a burden and the seeds of authoritarianism flourish.

We may be in the midst of dark times, but resistance is no longer an option but a necessity.

And educators have a particular responsibility to address this growing assault on democracy. Any other option is an act of complicity, and a negation of what it means for education to matter in a democratic society.

Quiz on "Why universities must defend democracy":

https://theconversation.com/why-universities-must-defend-democracy-83481

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=592#h5p-37

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=592#h5p-38

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=592#h5p-39

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=592#h5p-40

Topics/Keywords/Tags:

- Universities
- Higher education
- Education
- Holocaust
- Slavery
- Donald Trump
- Anti-Semitism
- Authoritarianism
- College
- White supremacy
- resistance
- Steve Bannon
- Neo-Nazis

Citation: Giroux, H. (2017, September 6). Why universities must defend democracy. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/why-universities-must-defend-democracy-83481

Introduction to the article “Fresh insights on how to create civic spaces in authoritarian settings: small steps matter”

Unfortunately, many think of countries led by authoritarian regimes as being complete monoliths. Dictatorial leadership oppresses its citizens who are left with little freedom.

In “Fresh insights on how to create civic spaces in authoritarian settings: small steps matter,” the author John Gaventa shares five findings to ensure that vibrant democratic spaces can still exist in the face of oppressive governments.

If we are creative in our thoughts and actions, we can make small pockets of democratic engagement even within countries that are the least free.

Fresh insights on how to create civic spaces in authoritarian settings: small steps matter

John Gaventa, *The Conversation*, November 17, 2021 9:00am EST

Across the world citizens are grappling with the pressing questions of how to defend and renew democracy in the midst of rising authoritarianism globally. They’re also battling with how to protect the civic spaces “within which people express views, assemble, associate and engage in dialogue with one another and with authorities” in the face of this challenge.

Efforts are underway to mobilise governments to make commitments for democratic renewal and reform. The world also expects greater transparency and accountability from those same governments that made pledges at COP26 in Glasgow to protect the future of the planet.

For the last five years, the Action for Empowerment and Accountability Research Programme has been exploring the question of what forms of action strengthen citizen empowerment and democratic accountability in increasingly hostile environments. The project is a collaborative international research programme based at the Institute of Development Studies in the UK.

The project drew on research from 22 countries. Our research focused largely on Mozambique, Myanmar, Nigeria and Pakistan. All have legacies of conflict, military rule and authoritarianism.

Working with partners in each country, we used multiple qualitative and quantitative research methods to understand how relatively marginalised groups perceived authorities and mobilised to express their claims. This included making use of innovative 'governance diaries' to record when and how these groups interacted with authorities and on which issues.

With over 200 publications, the research programme provides a unique citizen-eye view on pressing governance issues. Five key findings are particularly important for policymakers and those working towards protecting democratic space and improving accountability.

The findings

First, closing civic space is a critical issue, threatening basic democratic rights. Our work on Navigating civic space shows that the trend towards closing civic space has accelerated under COVID-19.

Commitments to open governance are important. But they don't go very far if citizens don't have the basic freedoms to speak truth to power without fear of reprisal. This means also actively protecting democratic space. That includes joining forces with those defending the rights of those speaking out against corruption and abuses of power.

Second, even in increasingly hostile and authoritarian settings, a rich repertoire of citizen actions are taking place. But, not through the normal, established channels which many have come to expect. Sometimes these claims are expressed in cultural forms rather than engaging directly to authorities. One example is the use of political rap lyrics in Mozambique.

Other times, they are made through informal channels, through networks or intermediaries, as our work using 'governance diaries' with marginalised groups found. And, sometimes protests may arise from a sense of collective moral outrage of citizens who, no matter how vulnerable, have just had enough.

We found this for example in struggles for security and against violence, or against sexual harassment, or for access to energy.

Donors and governments seeking to support movements for democratic reform need to start with looking for where these sources of civic energy are actually emerging. This, instead of the more traditional channels where they are often thought they ought to be.

Third, women are often leading the way. Our work found women were often in the front lines of protecting civic space and demanding reforms. This is despite patriarchal social norms, threats of violence, or biases of authorities and political parties who do not recognise women as legitimate claim makers.

We saw, for instance, the power of women's leadership in the Bring Back our Girls Movement against the abduction of girls in Nigeria, or in widespread mobilising against sexual

harassment. We also saw this in struggles for women's rights in Pakistan.

Commitments to action for protecting or expanding democratic space must include commitments to support women as leaders and champions of reform.

Fourth, small steps matter. In fragile, closed and authoritarian settings, donors and other actors need to re-calibrate their definitions and measures of success. Measuring success through examples of full-blown democratic accountability or well-established democratic institutions is perhaps an unrealistic goal when faced with limited civic space, weak institutional channels for engagement and repressive leadership.

The focus instead should be on more intermediary outcomes, which can serve as building blocks for longer term democratic renewal. In our work, these included:

- increased visibility of previously excluded issues and voices;
- improved access to higher levels of authority by local groups;
- a strengthened sense of rights and citizenship among the citizenry;
- greater responsiveness from authorities on certain concrete issues;
- changing norms, including gender norms, increased expectations and cultures of accountability;
- greater trust between people and public authorities, as well strengthened solidarity between groups.

Outcomes such as these will go a long way to creating the conditions that are possible for larger, more institutionalised democratic reforms.

Finally, our research shows that citizens across the world see access to energy as more than a necessity for cooking,

transport, communications and livelihoods. They also see it as a fundamental right. This has led to widespread protests to try and get their voices heard when it is denied.

Linking democratic renewal and climate change

Yet those who consume the least yet need the most are not being listened to. Little attention is made to how to make energy policy more accountable or inclusive, especially in repressive and often resource-rich settings.

Building on our research on civic space and the politics of energy, a new project with African partners will explore the the spaces for inclusive deliberation on what a just transition would look like for the citizens of oil and gas producing regions in sub-Saharan Africa.

So far, our research points to the need to carry the grassroots demands for inclusion on energy policy – which we saw on the streets of Glasgow during the COP26 as well as many countries around the world – into upcoming summits on democracy and open governance.

When the space is created for citizens to truly have a say on their energy futures, especially in often resource-rich but repressive regimes, then perhaps we can perhaps also say that democracy is being renewed.

Two global summits will be taking place in December, with important implications for the state of democracies around the world. On December 9-10, US President Joe Biden will host the virtual Summit for Democracy for leaders from government, civil society, and the private sector. Then on December 15-17, the government of Korea will host the 10th Open Government Partnership Summit.

Quiz on "Fresh insights on how to create civic spaces in authoritarian settings: small steps matter"

https://theconversation.com/fresh-insights-on-how-to-create-civic-spaces-in-authoritarian-settings-small-steps-matter-171749

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1109#h5p-64

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1109#h5p-65

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1109#h5p-66

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1109#h5p-67

Topics/Keywords/Tags:

- Climate change
- Democracy
- Governance
- Pandemic
- Human rights
- Free speech
- Transparency
- Authoritarianism
- Patriarchy
- Democratic reform
- Mozambique
- repression
- Military rule
- Moral outrage
- Public accountability
- Women and girls
- COP26
- COVID-19

Citation: Gaventa, J. (2021, November 17). Fresh insights on how to create civic spaces in authoritarian settings: small steps matter. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/fresh-

insights-on-how-to-create-civic-spaces-in-authoritarian-settings-small-steps-matter-171749

Assignment 2: Human Rights Advocacy (Short Essay)

Based on the ideas you have learned from the readings/media, write a 500-750 word essay on human rights advocacy:

(1) What is a human rights issue, campaign, or activist you are interested in?

(2) How did you (and others) become aware of it? In short, how did the issue, campaign, or activist become popular (e.g., you heard about it in class, you heard about it from friends/family, read/watched a news story, etc.)?

(3) What is preventing this issue, campaign, or activist from being even better known?

Note: Your choice of human rights issue, campaign, or activist will ideally be used for two later assignments in this course. As such, try to ensure you choose a person/topic you are genuinely interested in.

Extra Media: Module #2-Democracy/Tech

Australian Human Rights Commission. (2018, August 27). *What is Democracy?* [Video]. Australian Human Rights Commission/ YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Eu6G5YrBt4 (1:37)

Benjamin, G. (2019, November 27). Tim Berners-Lee: Web inventor's plan to save the internet is admirable, but doomed to fail. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/tim-berners-lee-web-inventors-plan-to-save-the-internet-is-admirable-but-doomed-to-fail-127840

Big Think. (2018, October 9). *How to build an authoritarian regime — and how to stop one | Timothy Snyder | Big Think* [Video]. Big Think/YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fWy-B4Y-DfY (10:01)

Big Think. (2018, July 6). *Is democracy really the best form of government? | Steven Pinker | Big Think* [Video]. Big Think/ YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R2YM5_o6PRo (2:35)

Gaventa, J. (2021, November 17). Fresh insights on how to create civic spaces in authoritarian settings: small steps matter. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/fresh-insights-on-how-to-create-civic-spaces-in-authoritarian-settings-small-steps-matter-171749

Social Science Research / University of Amsterdam. (2018, September 12). *Understanding what authoritarianism is | University of Amsterdam | Political Science Department* [Video]. Social Science Research / University of Amsterdam/ YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n1tXjJobjfs (3:05)

3.(DIS)INFORMATION

Overview: 3. (Dis)information

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=741#audio-741-1

Learning Objectives:

- Define knowledge, epistemology, data, and information
- Define/contrast misinformation, disinformation, and fake news
- Analyze rhetoric as a means of persuasion

This module will help learners explore the basics of information and the ways that it has been (un)intentionally misused. By the end, learners will demonstrate an understanding of the current information ecosystem.

Assignment 3: Information vs. Disinformation (Short written post)

- Write a short post that defines/contrasts information with disinformation.

Introduction to the article "Governments should inoculate citizens to prevent the spread of fake news"

Disinformation is a complex issue. During the digital age, we consume more information from more sources than ever before.

But issues that once seemed simple and straightforward can become blurry when we read about them from so many angles via so many online platforms.

Entertainment and news continue to blend. New sites pop up all the time. Opinion pieces abound on the internet. Who has time to fact check all these sources?

Who knows which way is up any more?

In their article, "Governments should inoculate citizens to prevent the spread of fake news," authors Sze-Fung Lee and Benjamin C. M. Fung advocate for a new way to stem disinformation–inoculating people, information-wise of course.

As we continue to face newer and more sophisticated forms of disinformation, having one more tool in the proverbial information toolbelt cannot hurt.

Governments should inoculate citizens to prevent the spread of fake news

Sze-Fung Lee and Benjamin C. M. Fung, *The Conversation*, November 1, 2021 5:54pm EDT

Russian intervention in the 2016 U.S. presidential election showed how disinformation could disrupt a democratic process. And due to the current reach of social media, the risk of fake news being disseminated is greater than ever.

Foreign intervention in the Canadian federal election was relatively insignificant compared to the U.S. presidential election, but the potential ramifications of fake news in Canada still require extra awareness and effort to counter it in the long run.

Canada needs a broad strategy that combines approaches from national and international governments, private companies like Google and Facebook and third-party entities like the fact-checking organization DisinfoWatch.

Inoculating the public

Emerging during the Second World War, inoculation theory concentrated on political persuasion and propaganda campaigns. When U.S. soldiers in the Far East faced the danger of being brainwashed if captured, psychologist William McGuire developed a different focus: to "inoculate" people to resist being "brainwashed."

McGuire referred to this as a "vaccine for brainwash" that would boost the population's resilience to disinformation and decrease their susceptibility to fake news.

Inoculation reduces the effectiveness of disinformation. Education and training in critical thinking for the public is acutely important, especially for adolescents, whose perspectives and skills like objective reasoning and analysis are starting to develop.

As the risk of electoral intervention increases, Canada has been allocating a tremendous amount of resources to combat

possible occurrences. Content on how to identify fake news has even been added to school curricula.

Federal initiatives, like the Digital Citizen Initiative and Digital Citizen Research Program, also work to strengthen the public's resistance to persuasion by disinformation.

Fragmented approaches

Canada does not have one specific unit, department or institution that focuses on fighting disinformation. In addition to police and military departments, there are several branches of government that deal with disinformation and cybersecurity.

The Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) often publishes reports regarding disinformation as a security challenge and warns of state-sponsored disinformation campaigns, especially during elections.

Meanwhile, the Communication Security Establishment (CSE), also a national security and intelligence organization, focuses on cyberthreats, foreign-based terrorism and other espionage. Its July 2021 report examines the extent of cyberthreats to Canada's democratic process.

The Competition Bureau Canada also addresses fake news related to COVID-19 and businesses, while the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre engages with suspected criminal activities.

Canada lacks an integrated institution that oversees all cybersecurity intelligence and analysis, planning and executing efforts to counter disinformation.

Open communication

Cybercrime is intensifying and relations between countries

(such as the U.S. and China) are worsening. Instances of foreign involvement in political campaigns have been documented.

In this new era of cyberthreats to national security, it will be necessary for governments to communicate openly and share information as authoritarian regimes attempt to undermine their opponents.

A department within the Canadian government with the authority to enforce a whole-of-government approach would be unquestionably vital for Canada's liberal democratic future.

Internationally, the Canadian government should take more specific actions that align with our allies and like-minded democracies to "strengthen our capacity to prevent malign interference by foreign actors aimed at undermining electoral processes through malicious cyber activities."

This could start by establishing an integrated system within the Five Eyes alliance that includes the exchange of sensitive information to combat disinformation and, in the future, further extended to more democracies.

There is, unfortunately, no single solution for fighting disinformation. Multidisciplinary approaches by international and national governments, private companies and other organizations are all vital to improve the resilience of national security and protect our democratic society from information warfare.

Quiz on "Governments should inoculate citizens to prevent the spread of fake news":

https://theconversation.com/governments-should-inoculate-citizens-to-prevent-the-spread-of-fake-news-170186

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=602#h5p-41

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=602#h5p-42

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=602#h5p-43

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=602#h5p-44

Topics/Keywords/Tags:

- Privacy
- Security
- Cybersecurity
- Intelligence
- Information warfare
- Fake news
- Inoculation theory
- Infowars
- Cyber threats
- Listen to this article

Citation: Lee, S-F., & Fung, B. C. M. (2021, November 1). Governments should inoculate citizens to prevent the spread of fake news. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/governments-should-inoculate-citizens-to-prevent-the-spread-of-fake-news-170186

Introduction to the article “Disinformation is spreading beyond the realm of spycraft to become a shady industry – lessons from South Korea”

Many citizens of North America and Europe have a tendency to believe that disinformation is a recent phenomenon that only plagues the west.

That is simply incorrect.

In her article, “Disinformation is spreading beyond the realm of spycraft to become a shady industry – lessons from South Korea,” author K. Hazel Kwon traces the long history of disinformation in South Korea back to 2008 as well as how it has even become its own separate industry.

Unless we know disinformation’s historical context, we have less of a chance to capably deal with its negative and unpredictable consequences.

Disinformation is spreading beyond the realm of spycraft to become a shady industry – lessons from South Korea

K. Hazel Kwon, *The Conversation*, November 15, 2021 8:11am EST

Disinformation, the practice of blending real and fake information with the goal of duping a government or influencing public opinion, has its origins in the Soviet Union.

But disinformation is no longer the exclusive domain of government intelligence agencies.

Today's disinformation scene has evolved into a marketplace in which services are contracted, laborers are paid and shameless opinions and fake readers are bought and sold. This industry is emerging around the world. Some of the private-sector players are driven by political motives, some by profit and others by a mix of the two.

Public relations firms have recruited social media influencers in France and Germany to spread falsehoods. Politicians have hired staff to create fake Facebook accounts in Honduras. And Kenyan Twitter influencers are paid 15 times more than many people make in a day for promoting political hashtags. Researchers at the University of Oxford have tracked government-sponsored disinformation activities in 81 countries and private-sector disinformation operations in 48 countries.

South Korea has been at the forefront of online disinformation. Western societies began to raise concerns about disinformation in 2016, triggered by disinformation related to the 2016 U.S. presidential election and Brexit. But in South Korea, media reported the first formal disinformation operation in 2008. As a researcher who studies digital audiences, I've found that South Korea's 13-year-long disinformation history demonstrates how technology, economics and culture interact to enable the disinformation industry.

Most importantly, South Korea's experience offers a lesson for the U.S. and other countries. The ultimate power of disinformation is found more in the ideas and memories that a given society is vulnerable to and how prone it is to fueling the rumor mill than it is in the people perpetrating the disinformation or the techniques they use.

From dirty politics to dirty business

The origin of South Korean disinformation can be traced back to the nation's National Intelligence Service, which is equivalent to the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. The NIS formed teams in 2010 to interfere in domestic elections by attacking a political candidate it opposed.

The NIS hired more than 70 full-time workers who managed fake, or so-called sock puppet, accounts. The agency recruited a group called Team Alpha, which was composed of civilian part-timers who had ideological and financial interests in working for the NIS. By 2012, the scale of the operation had grown to 3,500 part-time workers.

Since then the private sector has moved into the disinformation business. For example, a shadowy publishing company led by an influential blogger was involved in a high-profile opinion-rigging scandal between 2016 and 2018. The company's client was a close political aide of the current president, Moon Jae-in.

In contrast to NIS-driven disinformation campaigns, which use disinformation as a propaganda tool for the government, some of the private-sector players are chameleonlike, changing ideological and topical positions in pursuit of their business interests. These private-sector operations have achieved greater cost effectiveness than government operations by skillfully using bots to amplify fake engagements, involving social media entrepreneurs like YouTubers and outsourcing trolling to cheap laborers.

Narratives that strike a nerve

In South Korea, Cold War rhetoric has been particularly visible across all types of disinformation operations. The campaigns

typically portray the conflict with North Korea and the battle against Communism as being at the center of public discourse in South Korea. In reality, nationwide polls have painted a very different picture. For example, even when North Korea's nuclear threat was at a peak in 2017, fewer than 10 percent of respondents picked North Korea's saber-rattling as their priority concern, compared with more than 45 percent who selected economic policy.

Across all types of purveyors and techniques, political disinformation in South Korea has amplified anti-Communist nationalism and denigrated the nation's dovish diplomacy toward North Korea. My research on South Korean social media rumors in 2013 showed that the disinformation rhetoric continued on social media even after the formal disinformation campaign ended, which indicates how powerful these themes are. Today I and my research team continue to see references to the same themes.

The dangers of a disinformation industry

The disinformation industry is enabled by the three prongs of today's digital media industry: an attention economy, algorithm and computational technologies and a participatory culture. In online media, the most important currency is audience attention. Metrics such as the number of page views, likes, shares and comments quantify attention, which is then converted into economic and social capital.

Ideally, these metrics should be a product of networked users' spontaneous and voluntary participation. Disinformation operations more often than not manufacture these metrics by using bots, hiring influencers, paying for crowdsourcing and developing computational tricks to game a platform's algorithms.

The expansion of the disinformation industry is troubling

because it distorts how public opinion is perceived by researchers, the media and the public itself. Historically, democracies have relied on polls to understand public opinion. Despite their limitations, nationwide polls conducted by credible organizations, such as Gallup and Pew Research, follow rigorous methodological standards to represent the distribution of opinions in society in as representative a manner as possible.

Public discourse on social media has emerged as an alternative means of assessing public opinion. Digital audience and web traffic analytic tools are widely available to measure the trends of online discourse. However, people can be misled when purveyors of disinformation manufacturer opinions expressed online and falsely amplify the metrics about the opinions.

Meanwhile, the persistence of anti-Communist nationalist narratives in South Korea shows that disinformation purveyors' rhetorical choices are not random. To counter the disinformation industry wherever it emerges, governments, media and the public need to understand not just the who and the how, but also the what – a society's controversial ideologies and collective memories. These are the most valuable currency in the disinformation marketplace.

Quiz on "Disinformation is spreading beyond the realm of spycraft to become a shady industry – lessons from South Korea"

https://theconversation.com/disinformation-is-spreading-beyond-the-realm-of-spycraft-to-become-a-shady-industry-lessons-from-south-korea-168054

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1117#h5p-68

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1117#h5p-69

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1117#h5p-70

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1117#h5p-71

Topics/Keywords/Tags:

- South Korea
- Cold War
- Public perception
- Public opinion
- anti-communism
- Moon Jae-in
- Bots
- Disinformation
- Political campaigns
- Social media disinformation
- Disinformation campaigns

Citation: Kwon, K. H. (2021, November 15). Disinformation is spreading beyond the realm of spycraft to become a shady industry – lessons from South Korea. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/disinformation-is-spreading-beyond-the-realm-of-spycraft-to-become-a-shady-industry-lessons-from-south-korea-168054

Introduction to the article “Defending science: How the art of rhetoric can help”

The bitter division in thought over COVID-19 vaccines has led to a dilemma. How do we deal with issues like vaccine hesitancy to improve global health outcomes?

Some experts advocate for using the ancient art of rhetoric to advance scientific ends.

In her article, “Defending science: How the art of rhetoric can help,” author Leah Ceccarelli takes readers through the history of the rhetoric of science.

In a world overrun by misinformation and an increasingly cluttered marketplace of ideas, the truth may not necessarily win out. Leveraging the art and science of rhetoric can help us amplify fact-based messages over falsehoods.

Defending science: How the art of rhetoric can help

Leah Ceccarelli, *The Conversation*, April 20, 2017 8:24pm EDT

Science seems to be under attack in America, so much so that scientists and their supporters are marching in the streets.

President Donald Trump has publicly called climate change a Chinese hoax abetted by greedy scientists. He has linked vaccines to autism despite overwhelming scientific consensus against these claims. Vice President Mike Pence has denied evolutionary science, the very foundation of

modern biology. Mick Mulvaney, Trump's pick for director of the Office of Management and Budget, has questioned the fully established link between Zika virus and microcephaly and wondered whether "we really need government-funded research at all."

In response, scientists are taking a stand. They are defending their work against what appears to be a new, more aggressive assault in the so-called "Republican war on science," as the president threatens deep cuts to federal funding of scientific research.

When they march for science, they will do well to consider insights from the field of study known as the "rhetoric of science."

Studying scientists' communication

Before dismissing this recommendation as a perverse appeal to slink into the mud or take up the corrupted weapons of the enemy, keep in mind that in academia, "rhetoric" does not mean rank falsehoods, or mere words over substance.

Rhetoric is one of the original seven liberal arts. Aristotle defined it as "the faculty of observing, in any given case, the available means of persuasion." Scholars like me who study the rhetoric of science analyze and evaluate the persuasive communication of scientists.

Although it draws from an ancient tradition, rhetoric of science is a relatively young field of study. It was born in the late 20th century, after historian of science Thomas Kuhn introduced the idea that science develops not through the steady accumulation of facts, but in revolutionary moments. With a paradigm change, the heliocentric model of Copernicus replaces the geocentric model of Ptolemy, Darwin's natural selection overturns natural theology, plate tectonics wins over the theory of a stable Earth.

Kuhn's call for a study of "the techniques of persuasive argumentation" within scientific communities that settle conflicts between paradigms introduced the "rhetorical turn" in science studies. Rhetoricians enthusiastically took up the call to look at the way that language and culture help to shape knowledge.

At first, this kind of scholarship seemed hostile to scientists.

In the age of "alternative facts," it is worth remembering that for most of the 20th century, the image of the scientist as American cultural hero was ascendant.

Scientists have long presented themselves in public as the inheritors of an American pioneering ethos, the very embodiment of the American spirit of exploration, innovation, hard work and success. You see it in influential engineer Vannevar Bush's "Science: The Endless Frontier," the report that spurred the formation of the National Science Foundation. Geneticist Francis Collins frequently drew an analogy between the Human Genome Project and Lewis and Clark's Corps of Discovery. This characterization was so powerful that even George W. Bush, a Republican president widely critiqued for his administration's misuse of science, found it necessary to praise scientists as modern-day American "pioneers."

In the latter part of the 20th century, when scholars began pointing out that the most effective scientists were those who were also the most effective rhetors, the validity of scientific theories and the institution of science itself seemed to be under attack. Rhetoricians got caught up in the "science wars" between postmodern deconstructionists and natural scientists. They were viewed with distrust by defenders of science.

Next phase for rhetoric of science

But times changed. In the early years of the 21st century, the two cultures of the humanities and the sciences found themselves united against forces that would starve higher education of funding. Many rhetoricians began to see their mission not as taking scientists down a peg or two, but as helping scientists improve their public communication.

For example, Celeste Condit draws from the rhetorical tradition to help medical geneticists appreciate the importance of understanding their audience. Scientists should be careful not to underestimate the public, which "knows a fair amount about the basics of heredity." But neither should they neglect how certain terms affect the public mind. When telling individuals they have a genetic predisposition to cancer, for example, "version of a gene" is a less scary use of words than "mutation," which evokes horror movie monsters.

Condit's students, Marita Gronnvoll and Jamie Landau, explore the problems and potentials of the most frequent metaphors used by the public to discuss genes, such as ticking time bombs and Russian roulette. They recommend that scientists introduce new, more accurate and less alarming metaphors that call to mind the choreography or orchestration of a gene/environment interaction.

Rhetoricians have advice for climate scientists too. Ron Von Burg introduces the rhetorical concept of litotes as a way for scientists to respond to inaccurate but emotive imagery. Litotes is a figure of speech that works as an understatement by stating the negation of its opposite; imagine a friend hinting that an invitation to visit would "not be unwelcome."

Von Burg points to scientists who used this strategy effectively when responding to critiques of climate disaster movie "The Day After Tomorrow." Climate skeptics denounced the blockbuster as hyperbolic. Climate scientists agreed that its

story line about instant climatic shift was absurd. But they also argued that the overall message that climate change requires our attention was "not untrue." "The film is not scientifically invalid" insofar as the events it depicts – melting ice sheets, powerful hurricanes – are likely to occur, but just over a longer time frame.

Ethos, or the speaker's development of a trustworthy character, is another important concept that rhetoricians share with scientists engaged in public debates. Jean Goodwin has studied how scientists can reach out to skeptical listeners with appeals that signal their vulnerability rather than their superiority. Observing climate scientists speaking to skeptical audiences, she has found that one must give trust in order to receive it in return.

Some of my own research focuses on how to counter a manufactroversy: when the public has been told there's a dispute within the scientific community when there is actually a wide consensus. In these cases, those who would manipulate the public set argumentative traps. One way for scientists to avoid these traps is to point to the history of scientific debate that resulted in the consensus of experts. Sharing such rhetorical strategies is my way of helping climate scientists, as well as experts responding to those who deny the safety of vaccines, or the link between a virus and a disease.

When scientists gather to march for science, I want them to know about this body of research. In addition to carrying signs, they can take up the toolbox of effective communication known as the rhetorical tradition. Rhetoricians will be marching by their side, allies in the battle to protect science from politically motivated attacks on one of the greatest treasures of the nation.

Quiz on "Defending science: How the art of rhetoric can help"

https://theconversation.com/defending-science-how-the-art-of-rhetoric-can-help-68210

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1155#h5p-92

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1155#h5p-93

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1155#h5p-94

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1155#h5p-95

Topics/Keywords/Tags:

- Science communication
- Research funding
- Communication
- Science
- Rhetoric
- Strategic communication
- Communication skills
- Scientists
- March for Science

Citation: Ceccarelli, L. (2017, April 20). Defending science: How the art of rhetoric can help. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/defending-science-how-the-art-of-rhetoric-can-help-68210

Assignment 3: Information vs. Disinformation (Short written post)

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=372#h5p-58

Extra Media: Module #3-(Dis)information

Amanpour and Company. (2020, February 20). *The Spread of Disinformation and the 2020 Election | Amanpour and Company* [Video]. Amanpour and Company/ YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2-zvJPxJ8Hk (18:04)

BBC News. (2020, May 4). *Fake News Generator: Who starts viral misinformation? – BBC News* [Video]. BBC News/YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UAy6PI5UtSU (2:44)

BBC Radio 4. (2015, April 17). *Rene Descartes – "I think, therefore I am"* [Video]. BBC Radio 4/YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0A6UKoMcE10 (1:16)

D'Olimpio, L. (2016., July 26.). How do you know you're not living in a computer simulation? *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/how-do-you-know-youre-not-living-in-a-computer-simulation-60704

Kwon, K. H. (2021, November 15). Disinformation is spreading beyond the realm of spycraft to become a shady industry – lessons from South Korea. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/disinformation-is-spreading-beyond-the-realm-of-spycraft-to-become-a-shady-industry-lessons-from-south-korea-168054

4.DIGITAL ADVOCACY

Overview: 4. Digital Advocacy

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=743#audio-743-1

Learning Objectives:

- Identify how human rights were mobilized before the mass penetration of the internet
- Explain social media's emergence and impact on North American human rights issues

This module will help learners explore the basics of human rights movements from the past to today. By the end, learners will demonstrate an understanding of the basics of human rights mobilization using both pre-internet communication tools as well as social media.

Assignment 4: Artistic Project/Social Media Advocacy Campaign Draft (Midterm Project)

- Create a rough draft of either an Artistic Project or Social Media Campaign that advocates for your issue, campaign, or activist.

Introduction to the article “Viral video, gone bad: Kony 2012 and the perils of social media”

Conflicts have multiple sides There are normally reasonable arguments to both support, and protest against, a complex issue.

Due to the number of people it empowers, social media has a tendency to make public issues take strange and circuitous paths.

In his article, “Viral video, gone bad: Kony 2012 and the perils of social media,” author David Glance discusses the often oppositional ways that social media can treat whatever it is focusing on. In this article, Glance discusses the fight against Joseph Kony, leader of the Lord’s Resistance Army guerilla group.

Although the Kony controversy occurred back in 2012, social media’s influence on public issues is extremely relevant both today and tomorrow.

Viral video, gone bad: Kony 2012 and the perils of social media

David Glance, *The Conversation*, March 19, 2012 3:12pm EDT

There have been enough social media disasters of late to make one thing clear: manipulating sentiment through social networks is next to impossible.

The McDonald’s #McDStories campaign in January was

supposed to allow the public to share fond memories of eating at McDonald's. Instead, responses quickly became abusive and negative.

Qantas famously made the same mistake with their ill-fated #QantasLuxury campaign in November of last year.

At first glance, the Kony 2012 film seemed an undeniable social media success. Purporting to raise awareness about the use of children in the Lord's Resistance Army guerilla group, the film agitated for the hunting-down and arrest of the group's leader, Joseph Kony.

The film and its director, Jason Russell, were blatant in their intention to use social media to propel the campaign. Analysis of Twitter and YouTube traffic showed how Invisible Children, the charity behind the Kony 2012 video, used its existing social networks to initiate and drive the viral growth of attention to the video.

The obsession of media and marketing with "virality" is something Arianna Huffington – co-founder of the Huffington Post – has commented on. While not mentioning the Kony video explicitly, Huffington suggested that when something attains "viral" status, this can signify a positive or negative outcome. But more often than not, it signifies both.

This is exactly what happened in the case of the Kony 2012 video.

For every celebrity that endorsed the film there seemed to be someone publishing criticism. These criticisms have been unpacked elsewhere, including on The Conversation.

Criticism of the campaign would have been alright but the campaign did as much to turn the spotlight on Invisible Children as it did on the problem of the children in Uganda. The charity and director were forced to defend not only the film but their operations and past record.

Most damning of all were the criticisms of Invisible Children being made by Ugandans and by former "invisible children" themselves.

Kony 2012 bracelets and T-shirts became the signifiers of a US Christian organisation that didn't even have the support of the people they were allegedly trying to help. Ugandan Prime Minister Amama Mbabazi even created his own video to refute allegations made in the Kony 2012 video.

In the video Mbabazi invited the celebrities who promoted the Kony 2012 video – including Rihanna, Bill Gates and Kim Kardashian – to come to Uganda and see the situation for themselves.

All of this would have been bad enough … but it got worse.

Late last week Kony 2012 director Jason Russell was arrested in San Diego after police received reports of a man running through the streets and traffic naked, vandalising cars and "masturbating".

Invisible Children CEO Ben Keesey issued a statement claiming Russell had been admitted to hospital suffering from exhaustion, dehydration and malnutrition. Unfortunately, a video has been released seemingly showing Russell in the midst of a psychotic episode of some sort.

Although there have been statements of compassion about Russell's condition, members of the twittersphere have not been as kind. A new hashtag, #Horny2012, was created with tweets ridiculing him, Invisible Children and the film.

The tragedy of all this is what started out as a probably well-intentioned plan has ended with:

- the central message of the film getting lost
- a charity losing its credibility, and
- a man suffering a breakdown and having a personal incident "go viral".

Worse still, Russell made his five-year-old son, Gavin Danger, the centrepiece of the film. Ironically, in a pale reflection of the Invisible Children themselves, Danger was made to take part in

something he would have had no say in; something he will now have to deal with for the rest of his life.

This whole debacle serves to remind us we are still barely coming to terms with the nature of what it means to be massively connected on a global scale.

As we saw in attempts to spread the Kony 2012 film, grossly oversimplifying the way social networks function is always going to lead to unpredictable results; results that are often damaging.

Quiz on “Viral video, gone bad: Kony 2012 and the perils of social media”:

https://theconversation.com/viral-video-gone-bad-kony-2012-and-the-perils-of-social-media-5925

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=613#h5p-45

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=613#h5p-46

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=613#h5p-47

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=613#h5p-48

Topics/Keywords/Tags:

- Marketing
- Social media
- Twitter
- Kony 2012

Citation: Glance, D. (2012, March 19). Viral video, gone bad: Kony 2012 and the perils of social media. *The Conversation*.

https://theconversation.com/viral-video-gone-bad-kony-2012-and-the-perils-of-social-media-5925

Introduction to the article “Protest has helped define the first two decades of the 21st century – here’s what’s next”

Protest is normally motivated by an active citizenry dissatisfied with the status quo. They want change and they want it now, mobilization leads to broader action.

In a dynamic, constantly-changing world, where technology pushes us constantly forward, everything seems to be in flux – including protesting.

In her article, “Protest has helped define the first two decades of the 21st century – here’s what’s next,” author Feyzi Ismail gives clues as to how the seemingly simple act of protest might change.

Protest has helped define the first two decades of the 21st century – here’s what’s next

Feyzi Ismail, *The Conversation*, December 30, 2019 3:48am EST

The first two decades of the 21st century saw the return of mass movements to streets around the world. Partly a product of sinking confidence in mainstream politics, mass mobilisation has had a huge impact on both official politics and wider society, and protest has become the form of political expression to which millions of people turn.

2019 has ended with protests on a global scale, most notably

in Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa, Hong Kong and across India, which has recently flared up against Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Citizenship Amendment Act. In some cases protests are explicitly against neoliberal reforms, or against legal changes that threaten civil liberties. In others they are against inaction over the climate crisis, now driven by a generation of young people new to politics in dozens of countries.

As we end a turbulent two decades of protest – the subject of much of my own teaching and ongoing research – what will be the shape of protest in the 2020s?

What's changed in the 21st century

Following moments of open class warfare in the late 1960s and early 1970s, battles against the political and economic order became fragmented, trade unions were attacked, the legacy of the anti-colonial struggles was eroded and the history of the period was recast by the establishment to undermine its potency. In the post-Cold War era, a new phase of protest finally began to overcome these defeats.

This revival of protest exploded onto the political scene most visibly in Seattle outside the World Trade Organization summit in 1999. If 1968 was one of the high points of radical struggle in the 20th century, protest in the early 2000s once again began to reflect a general critique of the capitalist system, with solidarity forged across different sections of society.

The birth of the anti-globalisation movement in Seattle was followed by extraordinary mobilisations outside gatherings of the global economic elite. Alternative spaces were also created for the global justice movement to connect, most notably the World Social Forums (WSFs), starting with Porto Alegre, Brazil in 2001. It was here that questions over what position

the anti-globalisation movement should take over the Iraq War, for example, were discussed and debated. Though the WSFs provided an important rallying point for a time, they ultimately evaded politics.

The global anti-war movement led to the biggest co-ordinated demonstrations in the history of protest on February 15 2003, in which millions of people demonstrated in over 800 cities, creating a crisis of democracy around the US and UK-led intervention in Iraq.

In the years leading up to and following the banking crisis of 2008, food riots and anti-austerity protests escalated around the world. In parts of the Middle East and North Africa, protests achieved insurrectionary proportions, with the overthrow of one dictator after another. After the Arab Spring was thwarted by counter-revolution, the Occupy movement and then Black Lives Matter gained global attention. While the public, urban square became a central focus for protest, social media became an important – but by no means exclusive – organising tool.

To varying degrees, these movements sharply raised the question of political transformation but didn't find new ways of institutionalising popular power. The result was that in a number of situations, protest movements fell back on widely distrusted parliamentary processes to try and pursue their political aims. The results of this parliamentary turn have not been impressive.

Crisis of representation

On the one hand, the first two decades of the 21st century have seen soaring inequality, accompanied by debt and the neglect of working people. On the other, there have been poor results from purely parliamentary attempts to challenge it. There is, in other words, a deep crisis of representation.

The inability of modern capitalism to deliver more than survival for many has combined with a general critique of neoliberal capitalism to create a situation in which wider and wider sections of society are being drawn into protest. More than a million people have poured onto the streets of Lebanon since mid-October and protests continue despite a violent crackdown by security forces.

At the same time, people are less and less willing to accept unrepresentative politicians – and this is likely to continue in the future. From Lebanon and Iraq to Chile and Hong Kong, mass mobilisations continue despite resignations and concessions.

In Britain, the Labour Party's defeat in the recent general election is attributed largely to its failure to accept the 2016 referendum result over EU membership. Decades of loyalty to the Labour Party for many and a socialist leader in Jeremy Corbyn calling for an end to austerity couldn't cut through to enough of the millions who voted for Brexit.

In France, a general strike in December 2019 over President Emmanuel Macron's proposed pension reforms has revealed the extent of opposition that people feel towards his government. This comes barely a year after the start of the Yellow Vest movement, in which people have protested against fuel price hikes and the precariousness of their lives.

The tendency towards street protest will be encouraged too by the climate crisis, whose effects mean that the most heavily exploited, including along race and gender lines, have the most to lose. When the protests in Lebanon broke out, they were taking place alongside rampant wildfires.

Thinking strategically

As protesters gain experience, they consciously bring to the fore questions of leadership and organisation. In Lebanon and

Iraq there has already been a conscious effort to overcome traditional sectarian divides. Debates are also raging in protest movements from Algeria to Chile about how to fuse economic and political demands in a more strategic manner. The goal is to make political and economic demands inseparable, such that it's impossible for a government to make political concessions without making economic ones too.

As the 2020s begin, it's clear we're living in an unprecedented moment: a climate emergency and ecological breakdown, a brewing global financial crisis, deepening inequality, trade wars, and growing threats of more imperialist wars and militarisation.

There has also been a resurgence of the far right in many countries, emboldened most visibly by parties and politicians in the US, Brazil, India and many parts of Europe. This resurgence, however, has not gone unchallenged.

The convergence of crisis on these multiple fronts will reach breaking point, creating conditions that will become intolerable for most people. This will galvanise more protest and more polarisation. As governments respond with reforms, such measures on their own will be unlikely to meet the combination of political and economic demands. The question of how to create new vehicles of representation to assert popular control over the economy will keep emerging. The fortunes of popular protest may well depend on whether the collective leadership of the movements can provide answers to it.

Quiz on “Protest has helped define the first two decades of the 21st century – here’s what’s next”

https://theconversation.com/protest-has-helped-define-the-first-two-decades-of-the-21st-century-heres-whats-next-128745

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1119#h5p-72

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1119#h5p-73

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1119#h5p-74

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1119#h5p-75

Topics/Keywords/Tags:

- Protest
- Democracy
- WTO
- Neoliberalism
- Representation
- Hong Kong protests
- Global protests 2019

Citation: Ismail, F. (2019, December 30). Protest has helped define the first two decades of the 21st century – here's what's next. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/protest-has-helped-define-the-first-two-decades-of-the-21st-century-heres-whats-next-128745

Introduction to the article “Black Lives Matter: How far has the movement come?”

Black Lives Matter started online. It began as a heartfelt tweet by Patrisse Cullors in response to the 2013 shooting of teenager Trayvon Martin: #BlackLivesMatter. From these humble roots, this hashtag sprouted into a truly global phenomenon.

However, like any mass movement, Black Lives Matter has faced challenges as its scope and influence have increased.

In their article, “Black Lives Matter: How far has the movement come?” authors Kwasi Konadu and Bright Gyamfi detail the progress this global movement has made as it has become part of the popular consciousness.

Black Lives Matter: How far has the movement come?

Kwasi Konadu and Bright Gyamfi, *The Conversation*, September 8, 2021 8:26am EDT

Black Lives Matter has been called the largest civil movement in U.S. history. Since 2013, local BLM chapters have formed nationwide to demand accountability for the killings of dozens of African Americans by police and others. Since the summer of 2020, when tens of millions in the U.S. and around the world marched under the “Black Lives Matter” slogan to protest a Minneapolis police officer’s murder of George Floyd,

the movement has risen to a new level of prominence, funding and scrutiny.

BLM has long been seen as a coordinated yet decentralized effort. Lately, the movement and its leading organizations have become more traditional and hierarchical in structure. Public opinion is also changing, as BLM chapters call on the movement's leaders to be more accountable to its grassroots groups. We caught up with two scholars of worldwide African communities and cultures – Kwasi Konadu and Bright Gyamfi – to discuss BLM as both a movement and an organization.

What was the original structure of the Black Lives Matter movement?

Black Lives Matter started in 2013 as a messaging campaign. In response to the 2012 acquittal of George Zimmerman for shooting and killing Black teenager Trayvon Martin, three activists – Opal Tometi, Alicia Garza and Patrisse Cullors – protested the verdict on social media, along with many others. Cullors came up with the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter, which gained widespread use on social media and in street protests.

Over the next several years – as Black Lives Matter flags, hashtags and signs became common features of local, national and even international protests in support of Black lives – this messaging campaign became a decentralized social movement to demand accountability for police killings and other brutality against Black people.

The movement remained decentralized, although some significant, formal BLM-related organizations emerged during this time. For instance, in 2013 Cullors, Tometi and Garza formed the Black Lives Matter Network to facilitate

communication, support and shared resources among the dozens of locally organized and led Black Lives Matter chapters that were springing up around the United States.

In 2014, the Movement for Black Lives, or M4BL, formed as a separate but related coalition of dozens of organizations of Black activist and others, including the Black Lives Matter Network.

In 2017, the Black Lives Matter Network transformed into the Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation, co-founded by Tometi and Cullors, who was the executive director until she stepped down in May 2021. This group describes itself as "a global foundation supporting Black led movements."

What's changed about BLM's structure since then?

While the Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation says it is decentralized, over time it has followed a pattern similar to other social movements driven by individuals and organizations. It has become more of a conventional hierarchical organization, centralizing its operations and leadership. Its founders have won awards, book deals and notoriety.

The BLM Global Network Foundation has not developed any publicly known independent source of funding, nor was a decision ever made to rely primarily on grassroots support or small individual donations. As a result, it is dependent on corporate and foundation money to pay for its operations and programs. Amid the George Floyd uprisings in 2020, the BLM Global Network Foundation generated some US$90 million in donations or grants from corporations and foundations.

The Movement for Black Lives, which calls itself decentralized

and anti-capitalist, also raised millions in 2020, including $100 million from the Ford Foundation.

All told, corporations pledged close to $2 billion to BLM-related causes in 2020, though less is known about pledges for 2021.

Meanwhile, many frontline Black Lives Matters chapters have struggled to stay afloat. Some key chapters have begun calling for financial transparency and more democratic decison-making from national leaders at the BLM Global Network Foundation, as well as a share of the funds the national groups have raised.

Others have disavowed the Black Lives Matter Network and defected from it, focusing on local community fundraising and organizing to support their work.

How is public opinion about the BLM movement changing and why?

Though the phrase "Black Lives Matter" has become a common sight, the movement is losing public support. According to a new Civiqs survey of 244,622 registered voters, support for BLM fell from two-thirds of voters in June 2020 to 50% in June 2021.

Some of this shift may be due to growing public awareness of the movement's internal struggles, such as competing visions and competition over scarce resources, as well as questions about whether some BLM leaders have used donations for personal benefit.

Is this evolution of Black Lives Matters typical of social movements? Can you give other examples?

Tensions and conflicts are part of the evolution of all social movements, including BLM.

Movements for peoples of African ancestry also face a distinct challenge: They often have to appeal for both funding and action from the same white power structure and corporate interests that participate in and benefit from the suffering of Black people.

For example, although President Lyndon B. Johnson is remembered for helping pass the 1964 Civil Rights Act, he routinely referred to the 1957 version of that act as the "nigger bill" in conversations with his Southern white supremacist colleagues.

Another example involves the McDonald's Corp. In 1968, after the death of Martin Luther King Jr., McDonald's partnered with U.S. civil rights organizations. The company claimed its African American-owned franchises were carrying on King's civil rights agenda to empower the Black community.

According to historian Marcia Chatelain, however, instead of enabling economic freedom, McDonald's has burdened the Black community with low wages, relatively few franchises and high rates of obesity, diabetes and heart disease. McDonald's has benefited from a devoted African American consumer base, more so because African Americans consume more fast food than any other race, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Money shaping social movements, such as the civil rights movement, is not new. The civil rights movement, including the summer of 1963's March on Washington, was funded by white liberal organizations and foundations. In the summer of 2020, BLM protests also generated millions in similar

funding. Indeed, the Ford Foundation and the Borealis Philanthropy recently formed the Black-Led Movement Fund, which raises money for the Movement for Black Lives.

Malcolm X, in his analysis of the 1963 March on Washington, brought attention to the influence white philanthropy and leadership held over "black" social justice organizations, especially regarding funding that was controlled by the white power structure. Siding with Malcolm's analysis, James Baldwin also observed, "the March had already been co-opted."

Is it at all clear what structure BLM will or should have in the future?

Based on our research on civil rights-Black power organizations and on Black internationalism, BLM would benefit from a "starfish" organizational structure.

Starfishlike organizations are decentralized networks with no head. Intelligence is spread throughout an open system that easily adapts to circumstances. If a leader is removed, new ones emerge, and the network remains intact.

In the U.S., BLM organizers work through various groups, yet all are tied to centralized hubs, like the Movement for Black Lives coalition. These organizational choices conform to a spider analogy. Compared to the starfish structure, spiderlike organizations operate under the control of a central leader, and information and power are concentrated at the top.

In the wake of the 2020 mass protests against racism after George Floyd's murder, many Republican-led states proposed a new wave of draconian anti-protest laws to stifle dissent. This suggests that BLM might be more resilient if it followed the starfish approach.

In their desire to appeal to a diverse public to end white supremacy, Black Lives Matter's leaders fail to consider that

pervasive anti-Black violence is "the very engine that powers" white supremacy and makes broad coalitions ineffective.

Quiz on "Black Lives Matter: How far has the movement come?"

https://theconversation.com/black-lives-matter-how-far-has-the-movement-come-165492

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1159#h5p-96

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1159#h5p-97

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online

here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1159#h5p-98

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1159#h5p-99

Topics/Keywords/Tags:

- Racism
- Activism
- Civil rights
- Black Lives Matter
- Grassroots protest
- #BlackLivesMatter
- Black Power
- Social movements
- Centralisation
- Anti-racism
- Movement for Black Lives
- Black Lives Matter protests
- #BLM

Citation: Konadu, K., & Gyamfi, B. (2021, September 8). Black

Lives Matter: How far has the movement come? *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/black-lives-matter-how-far-has-the-movement-come-165492

Assignment 4: Artistic Project/Social Media Advocacy Campaign Draft (Midterm Project)

Based on the short essay you wrote in Assignment #2, create a ***Midterm Project***. This Midterm Project will build toward your ***Final Project***.

(1) Artistic Project:

Your Artistic Project will be a piece of visual art that advocates for a specific human rights issue, campaign, or activist (e.g., a protest poster, a sign for a protest, a campaign ad, etc.).

Create a visual mockup as your Artistic Project, draw an image, shoot it with your phone, and upload a .jpeg photo as your Assignment 4. Alternatively, sign up for a free account at https://www.canva.com/ to create a digital version of your mockup and upload a .jpeg that you create with Canva.

To help you brainstorm ideas for your visual content, you might want to think about the following issues:

- Which specific human rights issue, campaign, or activist would you like to address?
- Which format of visual art are you choosing (e.g., a protest poster, a sign for a protest, a campaign ad, etc.)?
- What will your piece of art depict?

(2) Social Media Advocacy Campaign:

Your Social Media Advocacy Campaign will be a description of how you will use ***one*** major social media platform (e.g., Facebook, TikTok, Twitter, YouTube, etc.) to advocate for a specific human rights issue, campaign, or activist.

Describe your preliminary ideas for your Final Project Social

Media Advocacy Campaign in 500-750 words. Issues you might want to address include:

- Which specific human rights issue, campaign, or activist would you like to campaign for?
- Which ***one*** social media platform will you use (e.g., Facebook, TikTok, Twitter, YouTube, etc.)
- Why is this platform appropriate for your campaign?
- Which messages will your Social Media Advocacy Campaign be communicating?

For your Social Media Advocacy Campaign, feel free to include examples of social media posts that would assist with your campaign (e.g., tweets, descriptions of Facebook groups, descriptions of TikTok or YouTube videos, etc.).

Extra Media: Module #4-Digital Advocacy

Channel 4 News. (2020, June 15). *Black Lives Matter explained: The history of a movement* [Video]. Channel 4 News/YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YG8GjlLbbvs (15:13)

History. (2021, February 18). *Civil Rights Turning Points in Every Decade | History by The Decade* [Video]. History/YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0UOTLqmRr2U (8:47)

Ismail, F. (2019, December 30). Protest has helped define the first two decades of the 21st century – here's what's next. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/protest-has-helped-define-the-first-two-decades-of-the-21st-century-heres-whats-next-128745

Miller, J. (2018, March 30). Langston Hughes' hidden influence on MLK. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/langston-hughes-hidden-influence-on-mlk-91736

Vox. (2020, August 26). *When voting rights didn't protect all women* [Video]. Vox/YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ScU2oWfWReg (8:28)

5.ART/SOCIAL MEDIA

Overview: 5. Art/Social Media

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=745#audio-745-1

Learning Objectives:

- Demonstrate historical uses of art for advocacy (e.g,. political advocacy, human rights advocacy, etc.)
- Identify examples of social media use as a tool against oppression

This module will help learners explore the basics of protest art as a tool to advocate for political and human rights. By the end, learners will demonstrate an understanding of the basics of protest art.

Assignment 5: Political Art / Online Advocacy (Short written post)

- Write a short post that describes and analyzes your favorite piece of Political Art or favorite Online Advocacy campaign.

Introduction to the article “Maria Ressa: Nobel prize-winner risks life and liberty to hold Philippines government to account”

Journalism is a difficult job. Holding the powerful to account requires courage, intelligence, and perseverance. Also, protecting sources during difficult times can imperil journalists. They can be threatened with imprisonment.

These difficulties become even harder in authoritarian regimes.

In his article, “Maria Ressa: Nobel prize-winner risks life and liberty to hold Philippines government to account,” author Tom Smith chronicles the difficulties Ressa faces as she reports on President Rodrigo Duterte.

Journalism has been justifiably criticized for its errors, omissions, and biases. However, courageous journalists like Ressa should be celebrated.

Maria Ressa: Nobel prize-winner risks life and liberty to hold Philippines government to account

Tom Smith, *The Conversation*, October 8, 2021, 10:51am EDT

The importance of journalists who take considerable risks to bring people the truth in countries where this involves going up against authoritarian governments has been recognised by

the Nobel committee's decision to award the 2021 peace prize to Maria Ressa of the Philippines and Dmitry Muratov of Russia.

In announcing the award, the Nobel committee called the pair "representatives of all journalists who stand up for this ideal". They said Ressa had used her online news organisation, Rappler, to "expose abuse of power, use of violence and growing authoritarianism in her native country, the Philippines".

Rappler, which grew out of a Facebook page launched in 2012 and has become one of the Philippines' most credible independent news services, has been targeted by President Rodrigo Duterte since his election in 2016. His 2017 state of the union speech alleged that Rappler was in foreign ownership, which would be contrary to the constitution. He also said it peddled "fake news".

Government investigations followed and, by 2018, Ressa and Rappler were inundated with charges of cybercrime, tax evasion and as much intimidation as the Duterte government could muster.

This harassment took place against a backdrop of presidentially sanctioned murder in the form of Duterte's "war on drugs" (which the International Criminal Court is now investigating) which led to the deaths of over 20,000 people, including journalists around the country. Ressa was not cowed by intimidation and threats. Time magazine named her one of its Person of the Year winners in 2018 alongside other journalists facing oppression around the world.

When she was arrested for the first time, in 2019 at the age of 56, the country's most prominent journalist was made to spend a night behind bars, a low point for civil society in the Philippines. Ressa and her Rappler colleagues continue to work under the threat of imprisonment.

It remains to be seen if the award of the Nobel peace prize will shield Ressa and Rappler from further targeting, and

whether the election, scheduled for May 2022, will bring any relief from government harassment and threats.

Thorn in Duterte's side

Long before Duterte was elected, Ressa was an established figure in Filipino public life. She had been the face of CNN in the Philippines as its bureau chief from 1987-1995 and then as an investigative reporter for CNN, where she focused on terrorism in the aftermath of 9/11 across southeast Asia.

In 2004, she joined major Philippines-based media company ABS-CBN and for six years helped grow it into the major news network in the country (its broadcast operations were shut down by Duterte in 2020). It is with great credit to Ressa that her influence is so strong across the news media landscape in the Philippines where younger journalists continue to follow her advice and example.

This is not the first time Maria Ressa has won a major international award. She received the 2017 Democracy Award, the 2018 Knight International Journalism Award and, also in 2018, the World Association of Newspapers's Golden Pen of Freedom Award and the Committee to Protect Journalists' Gwen Ifill Press Freedom Award. Her trials over recent years have regularly garnered public attention and condemnation from across the world from leading figures and organisations.

Peace Prize premium?

Despite this, the Duterte government has continued to stifle dissent and attack less prominent journalists in the more remote provinces of the Philippines who continue to investigate corruption and violence under the direct threat of

violence and intimidation. Hopefully the Nobel prize will put pressure on presidential candidates in the 2022 election to speak on the issue of press freedom and make it a campaign issue. The award also means that foreign governments calibrating new relations with the next administration have a symbol to rally around.

In 2019, I was a delegate at the UK and Canadian governments' Global Conference for Media Freedom in London. I had the opportunity to briefly meet Maria and her lawyer Amal Clooney. There were a lot of strong sentiments and good words expressed that day from government officials as they listened to stories like those from the Philippines.

The whole event rung hollow when, toward the end of the day, news broke of the murder of radio news anchor Eduardo Dizon, a journalist with Brigada News FM in Kidapawan City in the southern Philippines. But by handing this award to brave journalists like Ressa and Muratov, the Nobel committee is proclaiming the value, not only of their work, but of all journalists who take risks to hold power to account.

Quiz on "Maria Ressa: Nobel prize-winner risks life and liberty to hold Philippines government to account":

https://theconversation.com/maria-ressa-nobel-prize-winner-risks-life-and-liberty-to-hold-philippines-government-to-account-169564

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=620#h5p-49

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=620#h5p-50

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=620#h5p-51

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=620#h5p-52

Topics/Keywords/Tags:

- Democracy
- Nobel Prize
- Philippines
- Press freedom
- Nobel Laureates
- Maria Ressa
- Nobel Prize 2021
- Dmitry Muratov

Citation: Smith, T. (2021, October 8). Maria Ressa: Nobel prize-winner risks life and liberty to hold Philippines government to account. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/maria-ressa-nobel-prize-winner-risks-life-and-liberty-to-hold-philippines-government-to-account-169564

Introduction to the article “Bringing art into public spaces can improve the social fabric of a city”

Even the most dynamic urban environments can become staid to their residents over time. Once exciting new neighborhoods can eventually become blasé after you pass through them a multitude of times.

In her article, “Bringing art into public spaces can improve the social fabric of a city,” author Rhiannon Cobb argues for the essential role of public art to not only be an enjoyable aesthetic experience, but also to challenge us to face up to the social problems where these art pieces exist.

Bringing art into public spaces can improve the social fabric of a city

Rhiannon Cobb, *The Conversation*, July 5, 2021 11:34am EDT

You don’t need to look far to see the impact of art in public spaces. Art can connect us to place and record history as it unfolds.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, stories on the importance of public art are being told globally. And this isn’t new. Times of crisis have often inspired some of the most influential artistic movements.

Displaying visual symbols of resistance publicly, like the face of George Floyd, can connect social movements across the world. And in Canada, the display of statues like Egerton

Ryerson have been deemed unacceptable as we reckon with our ongoing colonial history.

Public art can be defined as art that is available to the general public outside of museums and galleries; publicly funded; and related to the interests or concerns of, and used by a public community.

Public art is referred to by some as creative placemaking: a process of artistic creation and collaboration that helps to shape the surrounding built, natural and social environments.

For French philosopher Jacques Rancière, art is disruptive. Done right, he says, it can make the spectator rethink their understanding of politics and society by calling to attention previously hidden inequalities.

For many, the power of public art rests in its ability to turn artistic practice into a social practice. It challenges the viewer to confront social issues that affect the very place they stand.

Art in times of crisis

COVID-19 is just one example of a period of shared adversity when our connection to the arts has flourished. The Dadaists' commentary on the 1918 flu reflected an intense and collectively frustrated desire for meaning in a world filled with chaos.

During the Great Depression, the arts became increasingly experimental. In the United States, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal saw the largest public art funding initiative the country had seen. A few decades later, in the 1980s, provinces and municipalities in Canada followed suit and began significantly investing in public art.

Protest music during the civil rights movement and Vietnam War expressed anger, despair and hope. Gay artists and writers during the AIDS crisis memorialized a collective grief that was being either ignored or vilified. The art from

both eras came at an immense cost, and has been profoundly culturally and socially influential.

Today, the pandemic has highlighted and exacerbated inequalities that were already present.

But there has also been engagement and social solidarity: from Black Lives Matter, to the Indigenous Land Back movement and support for unhoused people.

Those who have the privilege not to pay attention are finding this option less viable. This engagement arguably comes with its own set of problems, but it is a momentum that can be built upon to imagine and do the work needed to create better futures for society.

Artists are well positioned to do this creative imagining.

Art beyond the gallery

As we each search for meaning throughout our intensely local and geographically limited lives during the pandemic, public art finds, creates and shares the beauty, joy and solidarity that can be found in public spaces.

Galleries are often isolated from the communities in geographical proximity. They have often been places of exclusion, and have historically served to uphold a dominant, European settler-centred narrative. They have played a role in perpetuating colonial and racist attitudes towards Indigenous communities, their art and histories.

Indigenous artists have long been challenging these narratives. Mainstream art is catching on, and there has been an unprecedented level of Indigenous representation and leadership within gallery spaces in recent decades.

This leadership should shape public art in Canada. Public spaces, like art galleries, have also privileged some more than others. Bringing art outside of the gallery space is not a catch-all solution. What matters more is how it’s done.

Toronto's year of public art

In Toronto, the municipal government has announced that its "Year of Public Art" will begin in the fall with a total budget of $4.5 million in 2021. This is the inauguration of a 10-year public art plan. It responds to calls for an improved public art strategy, with a greater commitment to equity in the location of installations, the level of engagement with communities and the artists who create works.

Toronto has promised a strong commitment to Indigenous self-determination, leadership and placemaking within its public art strategy.

The city's public art installations have increased in the past 50 years, with over 700 installations added between 1967 and 2015.

Toronto's Percent for Public Art program, a commonly used strategy in cities in North America and Europe, encourages developers to donate one per cent of their gross construction costs towards public art in their development's direct vicinity.

The program is voluntary though. And because most development is happening in the downtown core, this is where public art has been concentrated, meaning neighbourhoods with less development have received less investment in public art.

Nonetheless, the city is home to a multiplicity of adept communities and talented artists who continue to use public art to build community capacity and foster social inclusion.

Listening to artists of diverse backgrounds and elevating communities to participate meaningfully will support important conversations that determine our collective future. And that makes the investment in public art worthwhile for us all.

Quiz on “Bringing art into public spaces can improve the social fabric of a city”

https://theconversation.com/bringing-art-into-public-spaces-can-improve-the-social-fabric-of-a-city-162991

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1121#h5p-76

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1121#h5p-77

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1121#h5p-78

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1121#h5p-79

Topics/Keywords/Tags:

- Toronto
- Art
- Galleries
- Coronavirus
- Indigenous art
- public art
- COVID-19

Citation: Cobb, R. (2021, July 5). Bringing art into public spaces can improve the social fabric of a city. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/bringing-art-into-public-spaces-can-improve-the-social-fabric-of-a-city-162991

Introduction to the article “How Alexei Navalny revolutionized opposition politics in Russia, before his apparent poisoning”

How can a single person push back against a powerful authoritarian political system?

For lawyer Alexei Navalny, it began by buying stock in energy companies, attending board meetings, and publishing damning internal documents.

It later grew much bigger as he pushed back against Russia’s most powerful figure, President Vladimir Putin.

In her article, “How Alexei Navalny revolutionized opposition politics in Russia, before his apparent poisoning,” the author Regina Smyth discusses how this courageous dissident has attempted to push back against aggressive politics by using new protest strategies to offer a better version for the future.

How Alexei Navalny revolutionized opposition politics in Russia, before his apparent poisoning

Regina Smyth, *The Conversation*, August 21, 2020 2.09pm EDT

The harrowing videos of Alexei Navalny, a blogger who has captured popular frustration in Russia, screaming in agony on Aug. 20, 2020 before being removed unconscious from a plane to a waiting ambulance, demonstrate the Kremlin’s increasing reliance on coercion to control dissent.

This attack is not the first Navalny has endured. In 2017, he was doused with a green antibiotic that compromised his vision. In 2019, while in jail for organizing protests, he suspected he had been poisoned. Navalny has also been wrongly convicted on charges of financial wrong-doing three times. Although he was released to prevent him from becoming a national martyr, his brother and co-defendant, Oleg, served three-and-a-half years in jail.

Throughout this period, the Kremlin worked to discredit Navalny without making him a martyr.

My book "Elections, Protest, and Authoritarian Regime Stability: Russia 2008-2020," reveals the nature of Navalny's threat to the Kremlin – one strong enough to make the claims that he has been poisoned credible.

Focus on corruption

When he came onto the national stage 2010, Navalny brought a new type of opposition to Russian politics. He is in tune with popular concerns and able to find common ground across nationalist and liberal activists. He calls for removing President Vladimir Putin through elections, while articulating a new vision for Russia.

Navalny's importance is not about popularity. The Kremlin's arrests and disinformation campaigns have raised enough suspicions among voters that polling shows he would not win a national election, even in the unlikely event of a fair fight.

Instead, Navalny's challenge to Putin's regime rests on his innovative ideas and organizing strategies that have made him a force in Russian politics.

He began as a lawyer, challenging the large Russian energy companies by buying stock and thus gaining the right to attend shareholders' meetings. He used his access to defy

corporate leadership and release documents to demonstrate malfeasance.

He established The Anti-Corruption Foundation – now labeled a "Foreign Agent" by the Kremlin – which collected citizens' reports of corrupt practices. His RosYama project, literally "Russian Hole," allows citizens to go online to report potholes – a widespread, chronic problem in Russia – and track the government response.

Navalny amplified his anti-corruption fight in 2011, when he labeled Putin's political party, United Russia, the "Party of Crooks and Thieves". When these efforts contributed to mass protest against electoral fraud, Navalny was at the fore. Addressing an unprecedented crowd in 2011, he said, "I see enough people here to take the Kremlin and [Government House] right now but we are peaceful people and won't do that just yet."

He joined the movement's Coordination Council and forged ties across the diverse opposition with the goal of reforming Putinism.

His canny use of social media has given thousands of Russians – both old and, especially, young – new insight and ways to protest against their government.

New model of opposition

Navalny drew on the resources of these protests – activists, themes, online fundraising strategies and new coalitions – to build an opposition strategy that links elections and a variety of forms of protest. He brought together an impressive team of young activists who challenge the regime at every step of the election process, from party formation to candidate registration and vote counting.

Volunteers go door-to-door or accompany candidates to meet voters on their daily commutes or in apartment

courtyards. They build temporary structures, called “cubes,” on busy streets, where they educate voters about policy. Campaign leaders urge activists to share online messages offline with those who do not use the internet.

New electoral technologies

When he fell ill, Navalny was campaigning on behalf of a new generation of local candidates.

By demonstrating that Russian elections are little more than performances of the state’s capacity to manufacture votes, the Navalny team reveals the lack of choice and accountability in the system.

In summer 2019, this strategy led to significant protests after the regime barred almost all of the opposition candidates in Moscow’s municipal elections. When the government cracked down on pro-democracy demonstrators, Navalny’s team built a web-based way to identify any candidate who shared its values and urged voters to support that candidate – even if the candidate was in a party that they detested.

Recent work by political scientists Mikhail Turchenko and Grigorii Golosov demonstrate that Navalny’s “Smart Vote” strategy made a real difference in Russias’s 2019 local elections, helping to defeat nearly a third of Putin-aligned candidates in Moscow. Navalny’s team was gearing up to do the same thing in the September 2020 vote.

Social media innovation

Navalny’s creative use of new media is not limited to pothole repairs and voting apps. Beginning in 2006, he wrote a popular blog on the Live Journal social networking service. When the

Kremlin shut down his blog in 2012, he reinvented his social media presence.

The Anti-Corruption Foundation produced a short film, "Don't Call Him Dimon," that lampooned former President and Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev by showing his vast sneaker collection and flying a drone over his duck pond. Like ducks, sneakers became symbols of the opposition. The expose revealed the myth of Medvedev as an honest leader.

The exposes have continued on Navalny's YouTube channel. His broadcasts have probed Russian intervention in U.S. elections, the Kremlin's failure to provide COVID-19 relief and rigged Russian elections. These stories challenge the narrative presented in Russian state media, combating the regime's systematic disinformation campaign.

Inspiring a new generation

Navalny's efforts have captured the imagination of young Russians and demonstrated the effects of generational change. Following "Don't Call Him Dimon," tens of thousands of young people took to the streets, shocking a country that believed Putin's opposition was played out. Months later, they flocked to join Navalny's presidential campaign organization.

Navalny knew the dangers of being the face of opposition to the Putin regime. The day before he fell ill, he joked with young supporters that his death would do more harm to the Kremlin than his activism.

It's clear that Russians – who have taken to Twitter to urge him to hold on – don't want to test that hypothesis.

Quiz on "How Alexei Navalny

revolutionized opposition politics in Russia, before his apparent poisoning”

https://theconversation.com/how-alexei-navalny-revolutionized-opposition-politics-in-russia-before-his-apparent-poisoning-144830

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1163#h5p-100

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1163#h5p-101

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1163#h5p-102

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1163#h5p-103

Topics/Keywords/Tags:

- Russia
- Vladimir Putin
- Kremlin
- Alexei Navalny
- Dmitry Medvedev
- United Russia
- Russian opposition

Citation: Smyth, R. (2020, August 21). How Alexei Navalny revolutionized opposition politics in Russia, before his apparent poisoning. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/how-alexei-navalny-revolutionized-opposition-politics-in-russia-before-his-apparent-poisoning-144830

Introduction to the article “Why Indian farmers’ protests are being called a ‘satyagraha’ – which means ‘embracing the truth’”

Non-violent protest has a long history.

Clearly one of the most important figures in this type of protest is Mahatma Gandhi, a leader in the Indian nationalist movement.

In his article, “Why Indian farmers’ protests are being called a ‘satyagraha’ – which means ‘embracing the truth’,” the author Sumit Ganguly discusses the long lineage of protest from Gandhi to today’s India’s farmer movement.

Why Indian farmers’ protests are being called a ‘satyagraha’ – which means ‘embracing the truth’

Sumit Ganguly, *The Conversation*, February 17, 2021 8:20am EST

For the past few months, farmers protesting in India’s capital, New Delhi, have been demanding the repeal of three farm laws that were passed last year. These largely peaceful protests have been referred to as a “satyagraha” by many in the Indian media, politicians and activists.

As a political scientist who writes on Indian politics and society, I argue that the choice of this word, which means “embracing the truth,” is important to note.

It evokes a long political history that goes back to the Indian nationalist movement against British rule.

The first satyagraha

In 1917, Mahatma Gandhi, one of the leading icons of the Indian nationalist movement, started a political protest in the village of Champaran in what is today the eastern state of Bihar.

The movement was on behalf of poor farmers who had been forced to grow indigo used in the making of dyes. The British colonial authorities who saw this as a lucrative trade coerced the farmers into growing the crop even as they were poorly paid. If the farmers refused, they were heavily taxed.

Gandhi organized a nonviolent protest on behalf of the farmers. That was when the word satyagraha was used for the first time in the context of a political protest.

The use of this form of protest was both ethical and instrumental. The moral dimension sprang from Gandhi's convictions. The practical element had to do with the realization that violence against the might of the British colonial empire was counterproductive.

Gandhi had first arrived at the idea of using nonviolent protest as a tactic in his early years as a lawyer in South Africa, where he was concerned with the maltreatment of the Indian community under British rule.

The concept of satyagraha was in turn drawn from his extensive reading of the works of the British poet and social critic John Ruskin, the Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy and the American philosopher Henry David Thoreau.

Gandhi melded their ideas into what he had learned from the ancient Jain faith about the concept of "ahimsa," which involves minimizing harm to all living beings.

Dandi march

In Gandhi's view, and that of his followers, satyagraha involved a passionate commitment to nonviolent civil disobedience. To that end, he and his followers not only shunned all violence but steadfastly fought against social injustices.

Gandhi used the concept effectively in a protest against the colonial salt tax laws.

The Salt Law under colonial rule had prohibited the private production of salt, forcing Indians to buy this vital dietary staple at high market prices set by the British.

In 1931, Gandhi organized a march that went across much of the country to the seaside town of Dandi, in the western state of Gujarat. In a gesture of defiance to the Salt Law, Gandhi and his followers picked up natural salt from the beach as a way to demonstrate that they had a right to produce their own salt.

The British colonial authorities met this resistance with considerable violence and imprisoned Gandhi along many of the protesters. However, Gandhi and his supporters refused to back down. They conceded that they had broken the law by collecting salt from the seashore and were prepared to suffer the legal consequences.

The memories of this episode have become part and parcel of the history and folklore of the Indian nationalist movement. Accordingly, it is hardly surprising that the protesting farmers embraced the concept of satyagraha as part of their protests.

For over six months they have led protests as a tactic and have steadfastly refused to budge from their principal demands, which involve repealing the three new farm laws that the Indian Parliament passed in September 2020 which, if implemented, would dramatically cut back on government support for agriculture and move farmers toward an open national market.

Farmers fear these drastic changes and, despite government entreaties as well as crackdowns, they have refused to budge.

Quiz on "Why Indian farmers' protests are being called a 'satyagraha' – which means 'embracing the truth'"

https://theconversation.com/why-indian-farmers-protests-are-being-called-a-satyagraha-which-means-embracing-the-truth-155101

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1309#h5p-108

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1309#h5p-109

*An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1309#h5p-110*

*An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1309#h5p-111*

Topics/Keywords/Tags:

- Protest
- Farmers
- Gandhi
- Civil disobedience
- Non violence
- Short reads
- Religion and society
- Indian farmers

Citation: Ganguly, S. (2021, February 17). Why Indian farmers' protests are being called a 'satyagraha' – which means 'embracing the truth'. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/why-indian-farmers-protests-are-

being-called-a-satyagraha-which-means-embracing-the-truth-155101

Assignment 5: Political Art/Online Advocacy (Short written post)

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=378#h5p-59

Extra Media: Module #5-Art/Social Media

AsiaPacificForum. (2015, September 24). *Case study: Using social media for human rights education* [Video]. AsiaPacificForum/YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_w7Sz5gtZaM (3:06)

CBS Mornings. (2020, September 3). *Amid the racial justice movement, artists wield their art as a tool for change* [Video]. CBS Mornings/YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h–UorDsxL4 (7:00)

Cobb, R. (2021, July 5). Bringing art into public spaces can improve the social fabric of a city. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/bringing-art-into-public-spaces-can-improve-the-social-fabric-of-a-city-162991

Freeman, A. (2017, August 30). Milk, a symbol of neo-Nazi hate. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/milk-a-symbol-of-neo-nazi-hate-83292

Gasoi, L. (2021, April 12). NFT performance art: Corporations could capitalize on protest. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/nft-performance-art-corporations-could-capitalize-on-protest-157557

Hou, J. (2020, January 17). 'Lennon Walls' herald a sticky-note revolution in Hong Kong. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/lennon-walls-herald-a-sticky-note-revolution-in-hong-kong-129740

McNamara, C. (2019, May 2). How LGBTQ people are resisting Bolsonaro's Brazil through art. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/how-lgbtq-people-are-resisting-bolsonaros-brazil-through-art-115072

The Art Assignment. (2016, December 15). *Cases for Political Art | The Art Assignment | PBS Digital Studios* [Video]. CBS Mornings/YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RfXad3HVox4 (12:54)

The Museum of Modern Art. (2017, January 13). *How artists respond to political crises | Modern Art & Ideas* [Video]. The Museum of Modern Art/YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=whyXxfmCbTA (4:49)

UC Berkeley. (2017, June 30). *Fighting human rights violations through social media* [Video]. UC Berkeley/YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5fQTJ_86IEs (2:32)

6.PREDICTIONS-INTO THE FUTURE

Overview: 6. Predictions-Into the Future

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=747#audio-747-1

Learning Objectives:

- Discover thoughts on the future of human rights, social media, and their evolving role in the fight against global oppression
- Create either an Artistic Project or a Social Media Advocacy Campaign as a final project

This module will help learners predict future trends in human rights and social media as well as how they could relate to human rights mobilization. By the end, learners will demonstrate an understanding of the basic trends that will shape future social media and human rights.

Assignment 6: Artistic Project/Social Media Advocacy Campaign (Final Project)

- Based on your Assignment 4 (either your Artistic Project or Social Media Advocacy Campaign *Draft Midterm Project*) create either an Artistic Project or Social Media Campaign

Final Project that advocates for your issue, campaign, or activist.

Introduction to the article “Planned social media regulations set a dangerous precedent”

Free expression is an incredibly complex issue to regulate.

Limiting speech invites self-censorship by speakers and could set the stage for the erosion of other fundamental rights.

In contrast, completely free expression can leave vulnerable populations victimized through hate speech.

The balance between the two impulses is incredibly difficult.

In his article, “Planned social media regulations set a dangerous precedent,” the author Vivek Krishnamurthy discusses the perils of regulating social media in Canada as well as the bad precedent it set for more authoritarian countries with poor track records of protecting human rights.

If democratic countries like Canada limit free speech, how much more narrow will it be in countries governed by authoritarian regimes?

Planned social media regulations set a dangerous precedent

Vivek Krishnamurthy, *The Conversation*, March 15, 2021 2:45pm EDT

As the federal government prepares to introduce legislation to regulate content on social media, Canadians have reason to be concerned about the effectiveness of its approach and the

poor example we are about to set for countries that don't share our commitment to human rights.

Heritage Minister Steven Guilbeault has hinted in recent weeks that Canada's forthcoming legislation will be modelled after Germany's NetzDG law. The law allows for social media companies to be fined up to 50 million euros for failing to remove what the legislation calls "obviously illegal" content from their sites within 24 hours of being notified.

The details of the government's approach remain unknown since no meaningful public consultations were held about the development or drafting of this legislation. What we do know about the upcoming bill should concern all Canadians for at least two reasons.

'Lawful but awful'

The first is that it won't be effective in dealing with the bulk of the harmful content we find on the internet today.

Social media companies are not perfect at removing content that violates Canadian law, such as child sexual exploitation material or terrorist propaganda, but they've improved considerably in recent years. Where they struggle, however, is in dealing with "lawful but awful" content that is legal under the laws of most democracies, including Canada's, but is known to create real-world harm.

Consider the vast amounts of pandemic-related misinformation on YouTube and Facebook, or the casually racist or misogynistic memes that populate many Instagram feeds.

The broad protections that Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms provide for the right to free expression makes it difficult for governments to ban such content outright, or to even restrict the expression of such harmful and distasteful ideas in public spaces. Correspondingly, a new law that seeks to

penalize technology companies for failing to promptly remove illegal material will only scratch the surface of the problems with harmful content online.

More troubling, however, is the example that the forthcoming legislation will set for countries that don't share our respect for human rights.

Authoritarian governments around the world are adopting social media laws that are similar to the one set to be unveiled here in Canada. Those laws impose draconian penalties on social media companies that fail to take down content that is illegal under national laws.

The problem, however, is that the laws in many authoritarian countries criminalize forms of expression that are protected under international human rights law, from voices dissenting against the regime in power to the cultural and religious expression of minority communities.

Pakistan provides a stark example of this trend. Last year, the country enacted a law strikingly similar to what Ottawa is considering, but in the context of a legal system where blasphemy can be punished by death and where it's a crime to violate "religious, cultural or ethnic sensibilities."

In Poland, the increasingly authoritarian government of Andrzej Duda also introduced similar legislation in parliament last month, while Victor Orban's administration in Hungary is also reported to be considering legislating a similar measure.

Internet at risk

Canadians should be concerned about the enactment of such laws in faraway places not only because we value human rights, but because this type of legislation puts the future of a global internet at risk.

As governments seek to regulate the online sphere according to their own peculiar national laws — regardless of

whether those laws comply with international human rights standards — there is a risk that the internet will splinter into a series of national networks. That has profound implications for all of us.

Against this bleak international backdrop, Canada needs to think carefully about our approach to regulating online harm. Rather than going it alone by seeking to enforce laws aimed at social media companies, Canada should work with other rights-respecting democracies to develop a multilateral approach to addressing harmful online content.

This is precisely what was done to deal with terrorist and violent extremist content online following the 2019 Christchurch massacre, when a coalition of governments led by New Zealand and France worked with industry and civil society stakeholders to devise the Christchurch Call to Action.

A multilateral approach grounded in the shared language of human rights can help keep the internet free and open while moderating its worst excesses. It will also deny authoritarians around the world of the argument that what's good for Canada is good for them too.

Quiz on "Planned social media regulations set a dangerous precedent"

https://theconversation.com/planned-social-media-regulations-set-a-dangerous-precedent-155844

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1168#h5p-104

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1168#h5p-105

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1168#h5p-106

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1168#h5p-107

Topics/Keywords/Tags:

- Facebook
- Social media
- Pakistan
- Twitter
- Hungary
- Poland
- WhatsApp
- Social media regulation
- TikTok

Citation: Krishnamurthy, V. (2021, March 15). Planned social media regulations set a dangerous precedent. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/planned-social-media-regulations-set-a-dangerous-precedent-155844

Introduction to the article “Doomsaying about new technology helps make it better”

Ever since the discovery of basic tools like axes and chisels, our lives have been deeply impacted by technology.

Depending on its use, technology can either help or harm our lives.

In his article, “Doomsaying about new technology helps make it better,” author Brendan Markey-Towler discusses how sharp criticism of technologies can ultimately make them better and more useful.

Doomsaying about new technology helps make it better

Brendan Markey-Towler, *The Conversation*, June 21, 2018 2:48pm EDT

That new technologies could actually be bad for us, by sapping our attention or ruining our memories, is an argument that goes back to Socrates. It’s tempting to summarily dismiss these concerns, but such tech-doomsaying is actually an important part of economic discovery.

Our societies are organised by rules, embedded in our collective knowledge, about the proper way to behave and interact with each other. These rules are worked out over a long, often bitter process of debate and competition between rival ideas about society.

Some of the most important rules we need to discover are about how to use technology and, just as importantly, how *not* to use it

One recent example of tech-doomsaying is a viral video featuring Denzel Washington, Simon Sinek, Joe Rogan and others discussing social media and smartphones. We spend no time with real people any more, the video goes, as we desperately seek the next "like" and "comment".

This video joins a long and proud history stretching back through Neil Postman (who wrote the brilliant Amusing Ourselves to Death), Alvin and Heidi Toffler (of Future Shock fame) to John Kenneth Galbraith in The Affluent Society.

It also joins a veritable cacophony warning about the perils of everything from artificial intelligence to blockchains and cryptocurrencies.

Institutional economics helps us understand, counter-intuitively, why this doomsaying actually helps make new technologies better.

Working out the rules

The great institutional economist Clarence Ayres wrote about how technology becomes incorporated into our lives in a way that is roughly equivalent to the way tribal societies use totems to interact with each other.

In tribal societies, a whole system of rules is developed and kept by the "shamans" about what totems mean and how they are to be used in everyday life.

Similarly, a whole system of rules needs to be developed by tech gurus experimenting with new technologies and teaching people about how, when and why to use them in everyday life.

New technologies don't simply get incorporated immediately into everyday life, as traditional economic models assume. They don't come with an instruction manual outlining

what they can be used for, nor a set of regulations about how they are to be used.

We have to learn and develop rules ourselves about how, when and why to use new technologies. This requires that we talk to each other and share our experiences and thoughts.

As we talk to each other and share ideas about new technology, a competition between ideas develops. From this we discover, as a society, new knowledge about how, when and why we should use new technologies in our everyday lives.

Hype *and* doomsaying help us discover

My colleague Jason Potts has written about one side of this process, whereby "hype" about a new technology helps us to discover what it can and should be used for.

But there is another, easily forgotten side of this process whereby doomsaying about a new technology moderates our enthusiasm and promotes caution. We need to discover what a new technology *cannot* do and what it *should not* be used for.

Every inventor is both a Prometheus stealing fire from the gods, and a Pandora unwittingly releasing a swarm of potential evils on the world. The competition of ideas between hype and doomsaying allows us to discover helpful rules which deal with both.

Nuclear technology provides an excellent example of this. Many arguments have been made about its astonishing potential as an efficient energy source, as a mining technology and as a source of propulsion, among other things. But we all know about its dangers too – Chernobyl, Fukushima, Three Mile Island, and the areas of the Earth that will be radioactive for tens of thousands of years as a result of nuclear fallout.

Over time, despite often bitter disputes, we have discovered

a substantial body of knowledge about how, when and why we should nuclear technology.

The debate about social media and smartphones is much the same. There are a range of arguments about the spectacular potential for this technology to give ordinary people a technology to communicate on a scale previously reserved for only the very powerful and very rich.

But there are also counterarguments about its addictiveness, its effect on our attention span, and its enabling of the very powerful and very rich to manipulate us.

Over time, despite what will often be a fierce dispute between these competing ideas, we can expect to discover a substantial body of knowledge about how best to use social media.

So, institutional economics shows us that tech-doomsayers help make technology better. Technology doesn't come with a ready-made rulebook for how to use it. We have to discover this in a process of trial, error and argument. And for this the doomsayer is just as vital as the visionary.

Quiz on "Doomsaying about new technology helps make it better":

https://theconversation.com/doomsaying-about-new-technology-helps-make-it-better-98623

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=633#h5p-53

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=633#h5p-54

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=633#h5p-55

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=633#h5p-56

Topics/Keywords/Tags:

- Economics
- Norms

Citation: Markey-Towler, B. (2018, June 21). Doomsaying about new technology helps make it better. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/doomsaying-about-new-technology-helps-make-it-better-98623

Introduction to the article “To boldly go toward new frontiers, we first need to learn from our colonial past”

The pace of modern life seems to push ever forward, whether we want to or not.

Our technology inhabits a kind of paradox. At the same time, it allows us to both go ever further outward into space, but ever deeper within our bodies and our psyches. Frontiers of all types abound.

In her article, “To boldly go toward new frontiers, we first need to learn from our colonial past,” author Alice Gorman implores us to look to the other side of the frontiers we conquer as we constantly seek an always elusive utopia.

To boldly go toward new frontiers, we first need to learn from our colonial past

Alice Gorman, *The Conversation*, October 7, 2016 2:56am EDT

How should we understand the idea of the frontier in the contemporary world, with spacecraft sailing beyond the solar system and quantum computing taking us deeper into the heart of matter?

Many view human evolution as a continual expansion into new territories, from out-of-Africa to the “high frontier” of space. Frontiers, then, are associated with exploration, conquest, and struggles against hostile nature.

They can be seen as a challenge to solve with technology,

going hand-in-hand with human progress. But the concept also comes with a lot of baggage.

From stone age to space age?

Once upon a time, the story goes, the world was full of space for humans to expand into. The genus *Homo* radiated out from temperate Africa, colonising the tundras of Ice Age Europe, and the continents and islands of Asia and Australasia.

As the climate warmed from 12,000 years ago, populations increased and people with domesticated animals and crops expanded further, turning forests into fields along the way.

On one side of the frontier was tame “culture”; on the other wild “nature”. Humans proved tremendously successful at adapting to these new environments using technologies such as fire, stone tools and metallurgy.

By the 20th century, technology had enabled humans to move beyond the narrow band of pressure and temperature where our bodies had evolved, to explore the deep sea, the Earth’s poles, and outer space. Special suits and vehicles enabled travel to these remote places where life at the extremes promised revelations about our place in the universe.

This story is captured well in a famous scene from the 1968 film *2001: A Space Odyssey* in which a bone tool, flung into the sky by an ancestral being, is transformed into an Earth-orbiting spacecraft.

The other side of the frontier

What’s often left out of this popular narrative is the perspective of those on the other side of the frontier. Consider colonial expansion from the 15th century onwards, when European

nations sent ships to the southern hemisphere in search of new resources.

European invaders painted Indigenous people as Stone Age "savages" and cast themselves as the pinnacle of human evolution, entitled to lay claim to terra incognita and terra nullius.

The conquest of frontiers in the American West, the Australian outback, South America and numerous other places, was often brutal and bloody. The expanding front didn't bring "civilisation" to supposedly benighted people; the result was rather genocide, disease, environmental degradation, alienation and poverty.

Utopia did not lie waiting in the New World.

Yet, despite the weight of historical evidence, people continue to assume that new frontiers beyond the Earth can provide refuge from old injustices perpetuated on this planet.

Panspermia and the moral imperative

Panspermia is the theory that the universe is filled with life. Micro-organisms and pre-biotic molecules travel on comets and asteroids between the worlds, flourishing when and where conditions are right.

The expansion of life into every available niche is thought to be a natural process that's taken place countless times in this, and other, galaxies. The corollary of this idea is that enabling the spread of human life throughout the universe is justified.

To date, evidence that micro-organisms can survive journeys in space, even if encased in meteoroids, is scant. Critics also point out that the theory merely delays the real question, which is how life started.

While the panspermia theory is controversial, the idea that

there's a moral imperative for humans to expand beyond Earth is echoed by influential proponents of space exploration.

Consider these thoughts) from American science fiction writer Ray Bradbury, from his 1971 conversation with Carl Sagan, and Arthur C. Clarke, on the eve of NASA's Mariner 9 spacecraft entering orbit around Mars:

> What's the use of looking at Mars through a telescope, sitting on panels, writing books, if it isn't to guarantee, not just the survival of mankind, but mankind surviving forever!

And here's space-travel advocate, Marshall Savage in his 1992 book The Millennial Project: Colonising the Galaxy in Eight Easy Steps:

> We need to rupture the barriers that confine us to the land mass of a single planet. By breaking out, we can assure our survival and the continuation of Life.

Such views are increasingly attracting trenchant criticism, as scholars "decolonise" knowledge and expose how the simple narrative of frontier expansion obscures the cause of terrestrial inequalities.

Islands of the interior

Perhaps the frontiers to be conquered in the 21st century are not spatial, but virtual.

Rapid advances in computing technology and data storage have renewed speculation about the idea, so often described in science fiction, of uploading personalities into a digital environment. Here worlds can be tailored to suit individual or collective taste without environmental impact.

In the 1890s, Russian space pioneer Konstantin Tsiolkovsky hypothesised that living in microgravity (when people and objects appear to be weightless) would eliminate social disparities. Basking in the full energy of the sun, with no need for houses or furniture, everyone would be equal.

While this vision has not been realised, digital habitats seem to offer similar potential. The trappings of status in the "real" world, with all their attendant costs, need only be imagined to come into being; a new body or an elaborate castle are just a matter of coding.

But our experience with cyberspace to date suggests that class, race and gender still structure access to resources. The impacts of colonialism have contributed to a "digital divide" that mirrors the old geopolitical frontiers.

Virtual communities can also be places where the worst of human behaviour is nurtured. Some argue that this is because people don't yet perceive the online environment as "real". Hence they think the social consequences of their aggression cannot be real.

How, then, do we define reality when human interactions and material culture become numbers stored in machines?

It may be that the ultimate frontiers of the future will be boundaries between different levels of engagement with the material world. The "haves" may withdraw into quantum computers, rather than colonising other planets, and leave the

"have-nots" to tackle the global unpredictability of the Anthropocene era.

A thirst for the new

If crossing frontiers consistently fails to deliver utopia and instead replicates terrestrial inequalities, is there any cause for optimism?

People on Earth avidly follow the discovery of expolanets (a planet that orbits a star outside our solar system). Witness the frenzy that accompanied the announcement of the potentially-habitable Proxima b in August.

The live exploration of inaccessible ocean landscapes through remote cameras, like those of the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's research vessel Okeanos Explorer, is equally compelling.

Humans, it seems, have a thirst for escape. We hope that elsewhere – wherever that is – things may be better.

But this particular version of elsewhere has proved to be elusive. In the end, frontiers are not crisp lines on maps, but complex historical processes. As legendary explorer Freya Stark (1893-1993) said, "every frontier is doomed to produce an opposition beyond it".

This, then, is our mission: to reconcile the opposites on the near side, before boldly going further into the beyond.

Quiz on “To boldly go toward new frontiers, we first need to learn from our colonial past”

https://theconversation.com/to-boldly-go-toward-new-frontiers-we-first-need-to-learn-from-our-colonial-past-65568

*An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1124#h5p-80*

*An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1124#h5p-81*

*An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1124#h5p-82*

An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:
https://pressbooks.library.ryerson.ca/extraocadsmhr/?p=1124#h5p-83

Topics/Keywords/Tags:

- Exoplanets
- Oceans
- Anthropocene
- Millennium Project
- Digital divide
- Panspermia
- Spacecraft
- Space exploration
- Colonisation
- Decolonisation
- 2001: A Space Odyssey
- Carl Sagan
- Arthur C. Clarke
- Virtual communities
- Proxima b
- Peace and Security
- Global perspectives

Citation: Gorman, A. (2016, October 7). To boldly go toward new frontiers, we first need to learn from our colonial past. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/to-boldly-go-

toward-new-frontiers-we-first-need-to-learn-from-our-colonial-past-65568

Assignment 6: Artistic Advocacy/Social Media Advocacy Campaign (Final Project)

Based on the ***Midterm Project*** you created in Assignment #4, create an Artistic Project or a Social Media Advocacy Campaign for Assignment #6 – your ***Final Project***.

Create an Artistic Project that advocates on behalf of a human rights issue, campaign, or activist. Alternatively, create a Social Media Advocacy Campaign that advocates for a human rights issue, campaign, or activist.

(1) Artistic Project:

Your Artistic Project will be a piece of visual art that advocates for a specific human rights issue, campaign, or activist (e.g., a protest poster, a sign for a protest, a campaign ad, etc.). Take the content that you created in your Assignment #4 *Midterm Project* rough draft and further refine it for your *Final Project*.

If you are creating a visual project as your Artistic Project, draw an image, shoot it with your phone, and upload a .jpeg photo as your Assignment 6. Alternatively, sign up for a free account at https://www.canva.com/ to create a digital version of your Artistic Project and upload a .jpeg that you create with Canva.

(2) Social Media Advocacy Campaign:

Your Social Media Advocacy Campaign will be a description of how you will use ***two*** major social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, TikTok, Twitter, YouTube, etc.) to advocate for a specific human rights issue, campaign, or activist. Take the preliminary ideas that you brainstormed/outlined in your Assignment #4 *Midterm Project* rough draft and further refine them for your *Final Project*.

Describe your final ideas for your Final Project Social Media

Advocacy Campaign in 1,000-1,250 words. Issues you might want to address include:

- Which specific human rights issue, campaign, or activist would you like to campaign for?
- Which ***two*** social media platforms will you use (e.g., Facebook, TikTok, Twitter, YouTube, etc.)
- Why are these two platforms appropriate for your campaign?
- Which messages are your Social Media Advocacy Campaign communicating?

For your Social Media Advocacy Campaign, feel free to include examples of social media posts that would assist with your campaign (e.g., tweets, descriptions of Facebook groups, descriptions of TikTok or YouTube videos, etc.).

Extra Media: Module #6-Presentations & Predictions

DW News. (2021, June 4). *The future of modern warfare: How technology is transforming conflict | DW Analysis* [Video]. DW News/YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TmlBkW6ANsQ (46:38)

Gentelet, K., & Mizrahi, S. K. (2021, September 26) We need concrete protections from artificial intelligence threatening human rights. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/we-need-concrete-protections-from-artificial-intelligence-threatening-human-rights-168174

Gorman, A. (2016, October 7). To boldly go toward new frontiers, we first need to learn from our colonial past. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/to-boldly-go-toward-new-frontiers-we-first-need-to-learn-from-our-colonial-past-65568

Jamie Clay. (2016, June 26). *Future Shock Documentary (1972)* [Video]. Jamie Clay/YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fkUwXenBokU (42:48)

Krishnamurthy, V. (2021, March 15). Planned social media regulations set a dangerous precedent. *The Conversation*. https://theconversation.com/planned-social-media-regulations-set-a-dangerous-precedent-155844

MSNBC. (2021, July 13). *Carl Sagan Predicted The Mess 2021 Would Be 25 years Ago* [Video]. MSNBC/YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nGanLUnjoPI (4:13)

mywebcowtube. (2016, June 2). *Marshall McLuhan 1965 – The Future of Man in the Electric Age* [Video]. mywebcowtube/YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0pcoC2l7ToI (16:11)

Tech Insider. (2017, March 5). *7 amazing technologies we'll*

see by 2030 [Video]. Tech Insider/ YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AuVHftBiDVw (2:52)