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Each year through the student societies, students from Cultural Studies (CULS) and Professional Communication and English Studies (PENG) form a team to vet and edit student essays and creative work submitted to *This and That*. The Journal celebrates the College of International Education's writing talent. It is headed and produced by lecturers at CIE.

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**Film and
Culture**

Females Under Patriarchy: Discourse in *Little Women* (2019)

Wong Sze Wing

Living in different eras gives us different identities that are never stable. Take “female” as an example: despite many people advocating gender equality nowadays, the status of females was much lower in the past. Aiming at investigating the relationships between knowledge and power to produce the unstable female identity, I will use *Little Women* (2019) as an example and mainly focus on their attitude towards marriage and love relationships. In this essay, I will first discuss the constraint of female identity for Amy, then how Jo tries to break this norm, and lastly analyse if Jo really resists or submits. As a woman under patriarchy, some will be constrained by the power of the patriarch; and some will try to go against it. However, I think even if they realise such a discourse and its problems, there is still no way to resist completely because they are living in that mechanism.

Under patriarchy, most females in *Little Women* are affected by its power and constrain themselves to fit the stereotype of females in that era. During the era where the story takes place, men are powerful, and their social status is higher than women. They are the ones who create the discourse of “female.” The norms in the society objectify people and minimise individual freedom (Paternek, 1987). Patriarchy creates norms to constrain females’ actions and identities, which is the knowledge that females’ life goal is to marry a rich man. Otherwise, they have to suffer from poverty because they do not have the ability to make a living. Females

are thrown into passivity that requires them to submit to men, without any autonomy to live their own life. In *Little Women*, Amy aims to marry a rich man in her entire life because she believes that “as a woman, there’s no way for me to make my own money.” It shows that even Amy as a female accepts this norm and submits herself to it because this knowledge has already constituted her identity. Despite Amy leaving her first rich fiancé and choosing to marry Laurie who she truly loves in the end, it is more than just a coincidence that Laurie is rich too. It is not because she gives up her dream or breaks the norm to have a rich husband. Therefore, it turns out that Amy is still constrained by the discourse of females and is controlled by patriarchy.

Although the identity of “female” is standardised in *Little Women*, Jo can still see the problems of patriarchy and try to break free. People with power would usually propagate such a knowledge of women by saying that it is “natural” or “normal.” Knowledge is organised around such norms, in terms of what is normal or not, correct or not, in terms of what one must do or not (Faubion, 2002). When people believe that it is “natural,” they would not question it but blindly follow these norms. However, Jo is a special female in *Little Women*. She figures out that it is not a must to follow. She says, “I’m so sick of people saying that love is just all a woman is fit for” while her mother convinces her that she will still have to get married one day. Also, when Margaret gets married, Jo tries to stop her and persuade her to escape from it and says, “we can leave right now. I can make money. I’ll sell stories.” These scenes show that Jo strongly defies the norms that patriarchy imposes on females. She does not want to fill her life with any love relationships. She wants to focus on writing and earn her own living. Moreover, she is

confident that she can feed her sister at the same time, which means that women can rely on each other. The reason why she has this thought is that she discovers that these norms are not “natural” at all. They are fictitious. Through the writing process, she can find her own value which is derived from herself and not males. Understanding that it is only knowledge created by people with power, her female identity is not the same as others’. Hence, once Jo finds out it is a discourse, she can create more possibilities in her life, instead of limiting herself.

At the end of the story, Jo can sell her books and make money on her own, which seems like a resistance to power. However, it is still a kind of resistance that patriarchy permits. Although Jo notices that it is just a discourse affected by power and knowledge, it is still hard for her to resist. Michel Foucault (1979) takes prison as an example and illustrates that we are neither in the amphitheatre nor on the stage, but in the panoptic machine, invested by its effects of power, which we bring to ourselves since we are part of its mechanism. Since Jo lives under patriarchy and she is expected to behave accordingly. When Jo goes to the publisher and tries to sell her own book, the publisher requests her to make changes to the story’s ending. As the female character does not get married in the original ending, the publisher says, “no one will buy it” and “It won’t be worth printing.” He thinks that one of the main elements of a best-seller is that females get married in the end. Jo then changes the ending to meet the requirement and her book ends up selling well. However, it does not mean that she really managed to resist power to prove that females can earn money. She just fits herself in patriarchy since the plot of her story is about hers and her sisters’ marriages which are what the public expect in stories

about women. If Jo wants to break the norms, one of the most important steps is that she needs to join the game of power and knowledge so that someday she will be in a position of power to bring changes. Thus, Jo has not yet truly resisted power and knowledge. The enjoyment of earning her own living is just an illusion of freedom.

To sum up, the power of patriarchy really affects how females understand and retrain themselves. Most females are controlled by these norms without any awareness. However, even if they have the consciousness of being constrained by power, they would not truly succeed in resisting it if they do not wisely play the game of knowledge and power. In other words, *Little Women* tells a story of conformity only, instead of genuine liberation.

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Fight Club (1999): The Search for Identity

Wong Sze Wing

In a capitalist society, people get easily addicted to consumerism unconsciously. The only way for the ruling class to stabilize this system is to keep people working and make them believe that the more they earn, the more they consume, so that they gain satisfaction from working. In *Fight Club* (1999), the narrator debunks the evil system and organizes a fight club to antagonize it. However, is it really the desire that is based on his “true” self? In this essay, I will first describe how capitalism takes away the narrator’s original identity, then I will illustrate the way the narrator “resists” his prefabricated identity, and lastly explain why he can never find out the reality. Via Guy Debord’s theory, this essay seeks to show that the identity of the narrator is controlled by capitalism. The narrator can see through the falsehood of identity by giving up consumerism. However, according to Jean Baudrillard, once such falsehood is debunked, there is no more reality left for the narrator to discover.

At first, the narrator lived in falsehood, in which his identity was “unreal” because it was created by the capitalist system. Under capitalism, people believe that “the more they earn, the more they consume” so that they will keep working which helps to stabilize the capitalist system. In *Fight Club*, the narrator is addicted to IKEA-style home design. He thinks this kind of design can represent his personal preferences. However, it is just a style that he reads from advertisements in magazines and it is not based on his own thoughts. When

people consume IKEA commodities, they aim to consume the image presented in these commodities. They will adopt it as their identity and feel that it is an expression of their authentic selves. Another example of people consuming image is that they pay for fine dining. Tyler works in a fine dining restaurant. He always pees on soup, but no one ever notices or complains about the quality of the food. The purpose for them to have dinner in a high-class restaurant is not to enjoy or appreciate the food. They just want to consume the image of being the upper class in society. According to Guy Debord (1970), "The spectacle is the moment when the commodity has attained the total occupation of social life. The relation to the commodity is not only visible, but one no longer sees anything but it." The above two actions are common in capitalist society because the society is commodified, and each commodity carries an image. "In society, individuals consume a world fabricated by others rather than producing one of their own" (Best & Kellner, 1999). When people consume, they only care about the images they represent but not the "use value" of the product. The narrator takes IKEA's image as his own preference to represent his "taste." But the fact is that it is not his own authentic desire to show his identity. When people consume, capitalism makes them believe that the image from a commodity can represent them and express their "individuality." The image they consume replaces their authentic identity and their life becomes a fog screen that is not real.

The process of the narrator's resistance against capitalism and consumerism is to discover his "true self." Tyler is an imagined self of the narrator. In the middle of the movie, he thinks Tyler is an actual person. When the narrator lost all his

belongings because of the fire, he started to get close and accept the thoughts of Tyler, which is anti-consumerist. Tyler becomes the new identity that he chooses to adopt. It is the first time for the narrator to live far away from the materialistic lifestyle so that he can stop consuming the image to replace his true self. With this alter ego of Tyler, they organize a fight club and start to spend time on violence and “Project Mayhem” to destroy the capitalist system. One of their biggest missions is to blow up the credit card companies. According to a research on the spectacle theory, “In consumer capitalism, the working classes abandon the union hall for the shopping mall and celebrate the system that fuels the desires that it ultimately cannot satisfy” (Best & Kellner, 1999). Guy Debord states that if people get away from commodities, they can see through the spectacle and resist the falsehood created by capitalism. If the fight club wants to resist capitalism and consumerism, they need to destroy the system that keeps pushing people in society to consume unconsciously. They believe this kind of company makes the working class borrow money to consume more. The working class still need to pay their debt which makes them work more to earn and pay. Thus, they blow up the credit card companies to destroy the phenomenon of people consuming images from commodities. The narrator fully agrees with the missions designed by Tyler. He adopts Tyler’s version of personality. He uses this identity to present himself as “true self” because he thinks he sees through the fog screen of the spectacle and escapes from it. Hence, he believes he has already broken the falsehood and violence is the real desire that comes from his “true self.”

There is no “true” identity for the narrator as neither the “narrator” nor “Tyler” are real. In Baudrillard's perspective, in

the postmodern society, there is no more reality or any real existence. There is no way to get back to reality. In the finale of *Fight Club*, the narrator finally discovers that Tyler is himself but not another person. He tries to stop Tyler's Project Mayhem when it is in fact his own creation. According to Baudrillard (1988), "Simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential being, or a substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal." Although he agrees with Debord that our identity is commodified and inauthentic, he thinks there is no reality left for people to go back to. Society is a simulation that does not have an original. The identity of people is based on images and there is no such thing as their "true self." The identity of Tyler is just an image that appears when the narrator wants to break away from his first identity. However, the "narrator" identity is not real either. He only aims to resist the identity that is formed by consumerism but such an identity is never stable and it will keep changing. When the commodified image changes, the resistance of the narrator will also change. During this process, the new identity he formed is not based on his own desire but just a desire that is not the same as the one given by the media. The imagined "Tyler" identity is also not his "true self." The narrator is trapped in the illusion that he already finds out the "real" identity, but the fact is that he is still living in the hyperreality. There is no "real" reality to be found.

To sum up, we can see that although the narrator already finds out that consuming commodities will commodify his identity and he tries to resist this capitalist system via organizing the fight club, neither the narrator nor Tyler are his "true self." In the postmodern society, there is no "pure" reality left but only hyperreality. There is no "true identity" to be discovered.

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“Who Are You?” - Exploring Identity in *Perfect Blue* (1997)

Li Zhuoyan, Kino

In this postmodern era, people's identity is considered to be more and more unstable and floating. The convenience of social media enables one to shape his or her identity by posting things they prefer. Is there any authentic self or true identity? The anime *Perfect Blue* (1997), which is directed by Satoshi Kon, questions the problem of identity. This nonlinear film focuses on the struggle of Mima, who transforms into an actress from a pop idol. Shifting among the daily self, idol identity, actress identity and the identity she plays in the drama, Mima is confused by the conflicts of such identities. In the sense of producing and selling identities, *Perfect Blue* is a cinematic exposure to the entertainment industry that reflects the loss of reality in the postmodern world. This paper examines how identities are shaped, reformed, consumed in the postmodern world by analyzing identity representation in the film.

Firstly, Mima is being promoted like a product. This process of personal and social commodification can be explained by the idea of celebrities as simulacrum. According to David Marshall (2000), celebrities are trained to cater for our consumer culture and to empower themselves in this mediated society. Celebrities are not only selling products, but their identities as well. For Mima, her identity is constructed and commodified. During a concert, the three-member pop group named CHAM! sings and dances with pink costumes like mini-skirt, big bowknots and knee-high

socks. In this outfit, Mima is presented as a cute, sweet and innocent idol. With these images, the company is not only selling the song they sing, but selling the image of energetic young ladies that fit male's fantasy of ideal females. Additionally, making Mima an actress is the company's trick of commodifying the image of a mature and sexy lady. Although the identity changes from a pop idol to an actress, both jobs need Mima to show a "self" to the public and influence the audience. In a scene where she discusses with the company to take part in a TV drama, Mima does not express her thoughts. It is the company that decides Mima to be an actress but not Mima herself. Mima's giving up of her dream as an idol singer illustrates that "the celebrity's ultimate power is to sell the commodity that is themselves" (Turner et al., 2000, p. 12). How she persuades herself and convinces her mother that "the pop idol image is suffocating me" implies that Mima is commodifying herself. This self-commodification is about promoting herself in the role of actress which she is reluctant to be – Mima tries to fit in the common belief that an actress has a better future than an idol and hoping that she will be famous one day.

Secondly, in relation to commodification, the film illustrates how the produced and reproduced images of an individual are consumed in the entertainment industry. From Jean Baudrillard's point of view, people will never be satisfied when they only consume the image, the floating sign, which is the surface. In the light of this, the authenticity behind the image is not that important if the image satisfies the fantasy. In the film, people consume the multiple images produced by Mima and reproduced by the website called Mima's Room. How fans insist on the previous idol image and deny the present actress image shows the consumption of Mima's images. As a group of three male audiences points out when

going through the magazine featuring Mima's interview and her sexualized photos, Mima's fans will be crying and whining "that is not Mima-rin." For keen fans like Me-Mima and Rumi who only consume the surface image of idol Mima instead of Mima as a person, they have the understanding that the mature and sexy Mima is fake while the idol Mima is real. Fans get used to idol Mima's cute and innocent image which contradicts actress Mima's mature and sexy image. Furthermore, Mima's Room reveals the consumption of Mima's reproduced image. Mima's Room first appears as a website featuring Mima's life, like a diary marking down her simple daily life and private feelings. In a letter, a fan shares with Mima that he is following Mima on this website. Her fans take the Mima presented in Mima's Room as Mima herself. Fans enjoy the Mima in Mima's Room because the boundary between the private and the public self is eroded. In Mima's Room, fans feel like having an intimate relationship with Mima. However, Mima's Room is not written and constructed by Mima herself.

Lastly, by repeatedly asking "who are you" in different scenes, the film ultimately represents the identity crisis in postmodern society, and reflects the basic reality. Mima's confusion over the true self has something to do with Jean Baudrillard's theory about simulation and simulacrum. Baudrillard believes that the reality disappeared and we are living in a society of simulacrum. As various technologies of media have developed, the representation of reality has become difficult to read. This is because the postmodern world is the hyperreality that is all about simulacra – a copy of a copy of a copy that is so far removed from reality and even replaces reality. The real danger of blurring reality and illusion in this film is not only Mima's personal tragedy. What

happens in the entertainment industry is a social allegory for everyone living in the society of simulacrum. In the case of Mima, replicable copies refer to identities of daily self, idol, actress and character in the drama. The multiple identities she has and the multiple images she represents are corresponding to the replicable copies and simulacrum respectively. When Mima experiences an identity crisis in which she cannot distinguish between the real self and the performed self, her real self is the simulacrum of herself. The irony of the website Mima's Room is that it is not run by Mima. Realizing someone knows so clearly about her life, she feels uncanny in front of the computer screen. The situation then worsens when Mima can only depend on Mima's Room to recall what she has done.

Centering on the protagonist Mima, this paper firstly analyzes commodification as a social fact in forming identities in the perspective of company and individuals, then traces the consumption of represented images, finally explores the identity crisis caused by commodification and consumption, and how it is related to our postmodern society. It is not only about Mima, but also everyone living in this postmodern era. Although Mima, who has become a successful actress, says "I am real!" to herself in the last scene of the film, there is still an uncertainty about regaining the solid identity for the audience since Mima's facial expression seems very uncanny. This implies that the director refuses to give a concrete answer about what authenticity is. Identity remains questionable and fluid.

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On Society and Youth Culture: The Ingenuity of Ken Loach

Yang Lok Man, Flora

Kes, filmed in 1969, is based on a novel, *A Kestrel for a Knave*. It is a semi-autobiographical British drama film directed by Ken Loach, whose productions are controversial and critical. In his realism, the film criticizes the educational system, social status stereotypes and the unemployment problem. It is like a documentary as what the audience witnesses is very vivid. The focus of this paper is to analyze the details of casting, character setting and filming venue, and how it is a satire of the problems in the UK.

Barry Hines, the author of *A Kestrel for a Knave*, wrote the story with references to his own experiences living in a mining community. His works are gritty and realistic, highlighting the class differences in the UK (The Daily Telegraph, 2016). Hines (2020) said that the story with a lot of escapades was one of the reasons why *Kes* was popular. Simply put, what he is trying to say is that *Kes* resonates with the audience. It earned the attention of the public in the 1970s. The plot is about a young man who suddenly finds the meaning of life and then loses it. Especially in the school scenes, we can observe that the youth at that time were rebellious and the bullying culture was prevalent. The lack of care from parents and friends also makes the young man become confused about the meaning of life.

Casting: An Ordinary Boy in a Realistic Library Scene

“Cinema can be real life” (Loach, 2021). In order to create a realistic production for the audience, nearly all actors in *Kes* are nonprofessional. David Bradley, who plays Billy Casper, is no exception (Frrl Film Club, 2019). Although professional actors can deliver with skill, ordinary people can perform more realistically as they are not “acting”, they are the characters in the film. They do not need to pretend to be another person. They are just being themselves. In an interview with Bradley (2019), he mentions that he is not an academic student. He used to challenge his teachers when he did not understand what the teacher was teaching. There are a lot of similarities between Bradley and Billy Casper. When he was in an audition for the library scene, he thought about what Billy Casper would do if he walked into the library. It shows his deep understanding of the character because Bradley is Billy Casper. Casting nonprofessional actors makes it easier for Barry Hines to convey the message he wants to express in the movie.

The shot of Billy going to the library for a falconry book reflects that the poverty-stricken youth in the 1960s found it difficult to get an opportunity to study because the use of the library needed membership. It was a kind of a discrimination against the poor. The scene shows both his naivety and his desire of simply learning to tame an eagle. The curiosity of teenagers is stifled by society to a large extent. Billy then goes to a bookshop and steals the book. Juvenile delinquency is generated by society.

Character Setting: Billy Casper and Kes

At the beginning of the film, Billy is lost in society. He cannot find the meaning of his life. He is forced to work in a coal mine. When he meets the falcon, Kes, it is a twist of Billy’s

life as he becomes a significant other. In the film, we can feel the care and love between them. The life of Billy is recharged and coloured by Kes.

To Billy, Kes represents dignity, presence and freedom as it is strong and it can fly to anywhere it wants (Loach, 2021). By contrast, Billy is at the bottom of the society. He is neglected by his parents and teachers. He is also bullied at school, without a friend. Despite the fact that meeting Kes is a turning point for Billy, it is also ironic. The irony is that Kes has the freedom to fly anywhere but it always flies back to Billy; whereas Billy wants to break free from the shackles of society but he remains, grudgingly.

Filming Venue: Reality and Dream

The location of filming is important in presenting the story of a movie since it consists mainly of mise-en-scène. It was filmed in an English mining town, Barney. The entire film is shot in real locations that reveal the bleak life in mining city. On one hand, the hustle and bustle in the city demonstrates the bondage and tight restrictions of society. On the other hand, the woodland is peaceful and quiet. On a social level, the busy street illustrates the unstable, odorless and null society whereas the woods indicate freedom, a place where the falcon can find shelter. Such contrasts bring out the stress and limitations that the teenagers are facing. They are forced to give up their dreams and conform.

Conclusion

Kes is bold and controversial. It has won countless accolades and awards in the 1970s (Ebert, 1973). Although it was filmed

in 1969, it was not released in Hong Kong until 1980. The film reflects the political and social unfairness and injustice. The works of Ken Loach are always thought-provoking.

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**& Literature
Language**

Do Stereotypical Norms Affect Individuality? A Comparative Study Of *This is Our Youth* and *The Outsiders*

Zenna-Sultan

This is Our Youth (2000), a play by Kenneth Lonergan, is a coming-of-age story during Reagan's presidency in the United States. It explores the lives of three characters: Dennis Ziegler, Warren Straub, and Jessica Goldman. It focuses on how their coming of age has been affected by their dysfunctional backgrounds and the economy of the 1980s. On the other hand, *The Outsiders* is a novel written by S.E. Hinton in 1967 that explores the coming of age of an orphaned boy named Ponyboy, who lives with his brothers and their gang called the Greasers. The Greasers are the lower class living in the East Side, while their rivals from the West Side are called the Socs. It shows how both gangs respond to the economic and social elements which differentiate them. The play and the novel showcase how each individual is affected by the stereotypical norms and why they are incapable of embracing their individuality fully.

To begin with, the social atmosphere influences our desires not to accept our individual self. In *This is Our Youth*, it is Ronald Reagan's era with a heavy focus on materialism, instead of values such as family or identity. It hinders the individual development of Dennis, Warren and Jessica because they do not have proper parenting and it leads them to illegal activities such as doing or selling drugs. The environment has made their parents focus heavily on accumulating wealth rather than helping their children to develop their individuality and accept it. Dennis lacks self-control, resembling his mother. According to Renee

VanDellen (2008), people who lack self-regulation are likely to engage in impulsive spending and aggressiveness issues, and fail to regulate their emotions. Aggressiveness is present in Dennis since he constantly loses his temper, uses swear words and hits Warren. It is mentioned in the play that “Dennis slaps Warren in the face, playfully but hard” (Lonergan, 2000, act 1). This shows that even if Dennis is playing, he has the urges to hit people around him. Dennis has no individuality and his personality has been shaped by his mother. In addition, the setting of *The Outsiders* is the 1960s when parts of the town are divided by the social class and controlled by gangs. Ponyboy is influenced by his gang members and under the pressure of acting as an ideal gang member. Ponyboy’s interest lies in books, sunsets and studies. He states that “nobody in our gang digs movies and books the way I do” (Hinton, 1967, p.3). However, due to the danger of getting jumped by their rivals, Ponyboy has to put on a facade of looking tough, which influences him to not accept his individuality since it is a common stereotype that gang members have to be tough and enjoy fights. Ponyboy states that “Greasers are almost like hoods; we steal things and drive old souped-up cars and hold up gas stations and have a gang fight once in a while” (Hinton, 1967, p.4). However, Ponyboy is the opposite which puts him at a disadvantage against rivals. Therefore, it is observed that the social atmosphere influences people to not accept our individuality in both the play and the novel.

In addition, individuality is affected by the conflicts within ourselves and the people around us. In *This is Our Youth*, it is obvious that due to their coming of age, the characters struggle with who they are and what they are doing. Dennis mentions that “I’m like-I don’t even know what to do with myself” (Lonergan, 2000, act 2). This shows that Dennis has no

ambitions in life and has failed to develop his individuality. Moreover, this phenomenon is shared by Jessica and Warren. Jessica mentions "It just makes your whole self at any given point in your life seem so completely dismissible" (Lonergan, 2000, act 1). This shows that Jessica has no fixed beliefs or aspirations since she believes that people are ever evolving and it just invalidates whoever they are right now. Hence, she has no interest in developing her identity. As for Warren, he mentions "I don't know, man. I guess I'll just go home" (Lonergan, 2000, act 2). It is observed that Warren has no idea what to do with the money that was stolen from his father since he has no aspirations, which proves that Warren has yet to develop his individuality. Besides, In *The Outsiders*, Ponyboy has a conflict within himself and with his older brother, Darry. After the loss of their parents, he struggles to fit in with the gang and does not know what to do with himself. Moreover, he feels like his older brother dislikes him and thinks Ponyboy is a burden. He mentions "Me and Darry just didn't dig each other, I never could please him" (Hinton, 1967, p.12). Ponyboy wants a simple life by moving to the country and away from the excitement. He mentions that "I only want to lie on my back under a tree ... and not worry about being jumped or carrying a blade" (Hinton, 1967, p.42). It means that his personality contradicts with the personality he is expected to have. Besides, his older brother wants him to succeed in life and scolds him when he fails to listen. He expresses that "If I brought home B's, he wanted A's, and if I got A's, he wanted to make sure they stayed A's" (Hinton, 1967, p.12). Ponyboy struggles to appease his demands and the constant pressure attacks him. Therefore, it is observed that individuality is affected due to conflicts within ourselves and the people around us.

Lastly, the lack of individuality is due to the desire to be someone else and it easily leads to a sense of low self-worth. This is particularly manifest in *The Outsiders* with Ponyboy. He tries his best to please his older brother, which is being active and fitting in the stereotypical role of a Greaser. He loses the path to who he is. He claims that “I couldn't tell Two-Bit or Steve or even Darry about the sunrise and clouds and stuff. I couldn't even remember that poem around them. I mean, they just don't dig” (Hinton, 1967, p.67). It means that there are contradictions between his gang members and his personality. Besides, Ponyboy constantly compares himself to his “good-looking” brother, Sodapop. When he is told he looks like Sodapop, he mentions “He's good-looking.” He implies that his brother is good looking but he is not. In *This is Our Youth*, Dennis acts as a tough bully who is not affected by anything. However, we notice a change in the way he expresses himself over time, only to realise that deep beneath the “hard shell” is a broken person with low self-worth. When Warren calls him “his hero”, Dennis starts crying and says “It's because you said I was your hero” (Lonergan, 2000, act 2). This shows that Dennis has never heard kind words before and thinks low of himself which leads to the breakdown in front of Warren.

In conclusion, it is observed that *This is Our Youth* and *The Outsiders* both touch upon the coming of age of adolescents and showcase how their individuality is affected due to stereotypical norms. Adolescents fall prey to these problems and are incapable of embracing their individual selves.

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Does Language Influence Culture or Vice Versa? The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis

Zenna-Sultan

Whether language is influenced by culture or vice versa has always been a controversial topic. It is conspicuous that language and culture play an essential role in human interactions and ways of living. The purpose of this essay is to examine the question from a weak sense of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. It is often referred to as linguistic relativity, which states that how we speak influences our thoughts. It will be used to determine how language influences culture, supported by empirical research and examples from different languages.

Since culture is a wide concept, culture in this essay is defined as “characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people including language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts” (Cultural Awareness, n.d.). Culture is ever-evolving considering the new trends, ideas and social norms that arise over time. Firstly, as mentioned by Lucy (1997), the existing empirical researches for this theory often take three approaches: structure-centred approach, domain-centred approach and behaviour-centred approach. Domain-centred approach examines how different languages delineate the same domain of reality to address the comparison problem such as colours, space or prepositions, which are the examples used to explain and prove that language influences culture. According to Lucy (1997), Stephen Levinson at Max Planck Institute suggests “spatial orientation” to test the domain structure in terms of English language used in different parts of the world. For example, the use of body

coordinates and cardinal directions to assert trajectory of certain objects. For Europeans, it is observed that they use body coordinates such as “the person I am talking about is sitting on your *right*.” As for Australians or some indigenous people, they use cardinal directions such as “the school is to the *west*.” As claimed by Levinson (1996), spatial orientation is to identify the meaning patterns that are consistently exhibited in domain-directed interactivity. This shows that language influences culture over time since language is what gives people the ability to make these “rules” in the first place. Furthermore, the English language can be compared with German in terms of the preposition “on”. In English, the preposition is used as “the pen is *on* the table.” In German, there are two conditions for “on”: if an object is placed on a vertical surface, “*an*” is used. On the contrary, “*auf*” is used for an object on a horizontal surface. For example, “the pen is *auf* the table” and “The photo is *at the* wall.” It is observed that for German speakers, extra emphasis is placed on certain aspects of reality such as “*an*” and “*auf*”, while the English language uses “on” no matter the surface. Therefore, linguistic relativity exists in human language, proving that language influences culture.

Secondly, it is certain that language affects our perception in life, which in turn leads to the formation of culture. An example worth noting from Mykhailiuk and Pohlod (2015) is that speakers of different languages perceive colours differently. A research was conducted by Mykhailyuk and Pohlod (2015) for English-speaking people and Berinmo of Papua New Guinea. They were asked to name 160 colours. English-speaking people pointed out eight different colour categories while Bermino pointed out only five, with a difference in the perception of green and blue. It is observed

that people with different languages have their own characteristics in naming colours. It is illustrated that people have a different mindset when it comes to perception of various colours in their own particular language, which in turn creates their own unique culture. Another example is with the Russians. They categorize the colours in terms of light (*goluboy*) or dark (*siniy*) colours. The English-language classifies all blue into the big category of blue, which includes light blue, dark blue, navy blue and more. In contrast, the Russians consider light blue and dark blue to be separate shades within the light or dark spectrum. Although Russians have eleven basic colours on their colour spectrum, light blue and dark blue are being separated rather than being put in one single category. This shows a great difference in languages spoken by different people. This phenomenon is related to linguistics relativity as mentioned by Sapir himself: “The fact of the matter is that the 'real world' is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group” (Sapir, 1929; Mandelbaum, 1958, p. 162).

Elmes (2013) claims that there are some people who suggest that culture affects language due to their cultural values, which is opposing the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. However, this claim is not entirely accurate. As mentioned by Elmes (2013), throughout the history of people, their culture has been mirrored in the language they use. Since certain things and actions are valued and done in a particular way, the language is used in a way that is reflective of their choices. This proves that language enables us to interact with each other in the first place and pass on knowledge through word of mouth in order to form a culture over an extended period of time. An example would be the classification of objects which proves language influences culture. According to Mykhailyuk and

Pohlod (2015), it is common for people who are aware of different languages or cultures that certain countries have a “grammatical gender” which means that certain words such as nouns, are assigned genders based on what the letter ends with. Such as words ending in “a” in Spanish are considered feminine, while words ending in “e”, “o” or consonants are masculine. For example, in Spain, people consider a dog (*perro*) as masculine but a shirt (*camisa*) as feminine due to the ending letters. Conversely, English or Japanese speakers do not have the concept of “grammatical gender”. A study regarding this issue was conducted by Mykhailyuk and Pohlod (2015) where words were shown to Spanish people, English people and Japanese people to categorize them as male or female. It was observed that Spanish people had an assigned gender to words, such as “apple” as a female since apple is feminine in Spanish, while English and Japanese people assigned roles at random. It is evident that language influences our thought processes, which in turn creates a culture since Spanish people assigned genders to nouns based on how they would in their own language, while English speakers and Japanese had no concept of how to assign gender to words and ended up randomly associating words with a particular gender. Therefore, language influences culture since people use language as a tool to reflect their views and beliefs.

From the aforementioned examples and the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, it is proven that language indeed influences culture. Without language as a tool to communicate, culture would not be able to evolve. Linguistic relativity is present since the language we speak determines our thoughts, and as a result, we have the ability to communicate with our specific

groups of people and create our own culture, such as the difference in the choice of prepositions or assigning genders to nouns. Language, culture and cognition are closely related to the way people think and communicate. Humans are known to make cognitive decisions while speaking. Numerous empirical researches have also confirmed that language influences culture.

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Hong Kong Social Problem Films

Chan Cheuk Hei, Eric

Introduction

The debate on “the death of the Hong Kong Cinema” was heated up again in 2021 following the implementation of the National Security Law. The future for the Hong Kong cinema, especially social problem films that speak out on humanistic or political issues, appears to be in jeopardy. Still, more filmmakers are finding new pathways to circumvent the censorship limitation. The goal of this essay is to present the rise and fall of social problem films from the 1990s to 2000s, as well as the reappearance of the genre since social events occurred in 2014. It is crucial to examine the genre of social problem films in particular when freedom of speech seems to be challenged. As for the potential future for this genre, a fresh wave of young filmmakers is rising. The number of socially conscious films focusing on humanistic concerns of Hong Kong citizens is rising despite the struggling state of the film industry in recent years. During times of political and social uncertainty, the number of social problem films often tends to rise, in combination with citizens' social awareness. People crave creative freedom in films that express social, cultural, or political concerns.

A Brief History of the Rise of Social Problem Films

During the 1990s, there was a rise of social conscious films concerning the eventual handover of Hong Kong and its

uncertain future. The uncertain future was the major concern of the general public and filmmakers reflected that fear in their own works. It became a trend for films to comment on realistic humanistic concerns that audiences could resonate with. Social and political commentary regarding the 1997's handover was one of the major foci in social problem films. They also show the identity crisis of Hong Kong citizens in a British colony and the diaspora of Hong Kong's emigration wave.

The Hong Kong New Waves directors were the pioneers of humanistic films from the 1980s to the 1990s, most notably Ann Hui, Allen Fong, and Fruit Chan. A majority of their work tackles social issues, family relationships, grassroots and working class struggles. In Fruit Chan's 97 Trilogy (*Made in Hong Kong* [1997], *The Longest Summer* [1998], *Little Cheung* [1999]), the grassroots livelihood and youth problems in Hong Kong are explored. In *The Longest Summer*, the story of the abandoned British-Chinese army veterans directly comments on the handover of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong identity crisis.

Social problem films earned a cult following among Chinese-emigrants and film fans in Southeast Asia, during the global success of the Hong Kong cinema in the 90s. The reason for the genre of social problem films succeeding locally and overseas is that being a British colony with background of Chinese traditional culture, the unique style intrigues both local and international audiences. It pinpoints real life struggles faced by grassroots citizens and offers insights into different cultural problems.

Decline of Social Problem Films since 2003's CEPA

Since 2003, there has been an apparent split of high-budget co-production films and independent social problem films (Chen, 2021). The number of Chinese-Hong Kong co-production commercial films skyrocketed after the implementation of Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA). A noticeable migration of filmmakers from Hong Kong to China has emerged. Everyone wants to tap into the huge Chinese market.

The number of social problem films in Hong Kong has been dropping since then. Local film producers sacrifice the variety of topics and themes in humanistic subjects, in favour of the Chinese market and censorship. This hugely limits the freedom and creativity for local filmmakers, especially for the social problem film genre. The Hong Kong Film Critics Society argued that 2003's CEPA was when local films started losing their boldness, which is the cause for "the death of Hong Kong Cinema's subjectivity" (Chan, 2014).

Though the social problem film genre declines in number, the subjects of humanistic concerns still exist in other genres. Filmmakers found new ways to sneak past censorship, like in Johnnie To's gangster film, *Election* (2005). It was a crime film with an undertone of political satire, exploring the "precarious power balance between the triads and the police" (Stegar, 2019).

The social problem film genre switched its focus away from political commentary to subjects that are about the struggles of grassroots citizens and minority groups. For example, Ann Hui's *The Way We Are* (2008) and *A Simple Life* (2011) reflect authentic Hong Kong lives from the local and grassroots perspective.

A New Fresh Wave and Reappearance of Social Concerns Films

A large reappearance of independent social problem films has occurred since the rise of political and social awareness since 2014. The transformation of political situations was the major factor in contributing to that particular reappearance. Hong Kong citizens started to register the socially oppressed minority groups. Aided by the setup of the Film Development Fund, local social problem films have become the focus for Hong Kong cinema once again.

First Feature Film Initiative (FFFI), which was funded by CreateHK since 2013, was the major production fund provider for locally produced social problem films. Also in the same year, Golden Scene started investing in local independent films that became box office hits and received critical successes.

Humanistic films, including *Mad World* (2016), *Still Human* (2019), and *Beyond the Dream* (2020), had critical and box office successes of at least HK\$15,000,000 each. They became the most talked-about films that remove stigmatization of minority groups. *I'm Livin' It* (2020) and *Drifting* (2021) drew citizens to real-life social issues, like housing and homelessness problems.

On the other hand, political films, like *Ten Years* (2015), *Memories to Choke On* (2019), *Drinks to Wash Them Down* (2019), explored the lives of Hongkongers during times of social unrest. These films received awards locally and internationally, while drawing international attention to Hong Kong's social issues.

The “Fresh Wave” since 2005, led by local director Johnnie To and being funded by Hong Kong Arts Development Council, is a short film festival that primarily features young indie filmmakers. These programmes provide platforms and opportunities to young filmmakers who are more keen on reflecting the real-life situation in the grassroots community, and call attention to problems faced by minority groups in Hong Kong.

Conclusion - Surviving the Uncertain Future for Social Problem Films

A few years ago, audiences seemed to be losing interest in locally produced films, and were more likely to go to the cinema to see the latest installments from big budget Hollywood productions. But now locally filmed and produced social problem films once again become popular among Hong Kong audiences, particularly those that accurately reflect the current state of our society.

From 2019 to 2021, social problem films played a relatively major role in the Hong Kong cinema. Golden Scene’s “Gold-Scene-Treasures” in 2020, *Suk Suk* (2019), *My Prince Edward* (2019), *Beyond the Dream* (2019) have gained local audience’s attention in social and humanistic films. Locally produced films that echo real-life events appeal to those who are more in touch with Hong Kong social events. They seek the sense of authenticity that social problem films exemplify. Audiences identify with the genre’s real-life issues and resonate with the characters since they may also be in a similar situation.

However, the major struggle for social problem films is that government fundings for film production is very limited.

Only three to four scripts are selected for the First Feature Film Initiative. Furthermore, films that touch upon controversial, sensitive, or political subjects are unlikely to receive funding, either from government institutions or production companies. After the implementation of the National Security Law, the future for Hong Kong social problem films seems to be at risk once again. Political films, like *Inside the Red Brick Wall* (2020), were banned from screening in all local cinemas.

Yet, filmmakers are always finding new pathways to produce films with sensitive subjects. Director Kiwi Chow sold the distribution rights of the political documentary, *Revolution of Our Times* (2021) to international film festivals, while political film, *May You Stay Forever Young* (2021) did the same. Both films received international awards and drew more attention to Hong Kong's political situation. Social problem films may find exposure in other countries while the future for the Hong Kong cinema still remains uncertain.

Be that as it may, it should be noted that the topic of social problems and humanism always play a major role in the Hong Kong cinema. Social problem films and other genres will always find new ways to live on.

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Drifting (濁水漂流, 2021): The Only Way for Homeless People to Survive in Society

Ng Yin Fung, Jacky

Drifting (2021) is a film that is based on a real case about homeless people in Sham Shui Po in 2012. Sham Shui Po is the poorest district in Hong Kong where street sleepers and homeless people gather. They are the underprivileged, marginal individuals who are being abandoned in society. The group comprises junkies, poor people, refugees like Vietnamese boat people, and the disabled. They build wooden huts as their homes. Some of them just sleep under the bridge. Nonetheless, they are still members of the city. This essay examines the fast pace of economic development and gentrification in Sham Shui Po that cause some people to be alienated and forced to drift in the community. Despite being city walkers in Sham Shui Po, they are abandoned, not being respected and disconnected from societal growth. Gentrification becomes a form of oppression that pushes them against the ropes.

The dignity of the homeless needs to be respected no matter how dispirited they are. Despite being marginalized, they have their own social group. They develop their subjectivity. In the film, Fai said that they love to offer the first dope to the one who just got out of prison so that they can drag them back down again. We can see that it is difficult for them to “resurrect” because peer pressure and identity in the group will drag them down again. Besides, the queueing time for

public housing is long. Unless they are disabled, like Lan who can shorten the queueing time for public housing. Because of these circumstances, they sleep and build their shelters on the streets. However, the government treats them with no respect by dispossessing and clearing their personal belongings without prior notice. “瞓街無罪 滋擾無理” is their protest slogan against the government. They are homeless but not worthless. Despite the fact that they are not wealthy people, they still have their fundamental rights and the freedom to live. It is unconscionable to clear their home and kick them out. The government only gives them HKD2000 as compensation. Most of them think it is better than nothing. If they sue again for a public apology, they may even lose the HKD2000. For Fai, he is stubborn to press for an apology because the government ought to apologize for its fault, whether they are junkies, homeless or not. However, the irony is that the government thinks that money is already the best definition of dignity for them.

They are city walkers but they cannot connect to society due to the fast paced economic development. The homeless people can be likened to *flaneurs*. As they live on the streets, their daily life and routine are just “wandering.” They live with their own group of people, who also build their sense of belonging on the streets in Sham Shui Po because it is their home. While living and walking in Sham Shui Po every day, they create their unique understanding and imagination of Sham Shui Po. Fai said that “深水埗係窮人住嘅地方”, which shows their understanding of Sham Shui Po as a ghetto through their experience. However, they cannot connect to society, which leads to a kind of Ackbar Abbas’s “reverse hallucination” (1997). They cannot see the obvious changes and development outside of their neighbourhood. In the film,

Chan Mui feels confused about the expensive cost of the cross-harbour tunnel bus. She does not realize why taking a bus becomes so expensive. While taking the ferry, Fai discovers that there are so many tall and packed new buildings. They feel strange about Hong Kong because they are not included in the development. Even in Sham Shui Po, they are still unfamiliar with it because more and more expensive private estates are under construction. The development is different from their original understanding of Sham Shui Po as a ghetto, a district where the poor live. Therefore, they lose their identity and cannot build their sense of belongings and connection in Sham Shui Po despite being *flaneurs*.

Gentrification in Sham Shui Po changes the neighborhood and cultural identity among the poor and the homeless. Vojnovic & Chen (2015) examined a number of studies which found that gentrification involves capital reinvestment and social change in the neighborhood to upgrade in the physical built environment and social neighborhood. The low income groups are often displaced by the gentrifiers, the middle-class. In the film, we see that the homeless people have to drift and find a new place to live again and again because they are being kicked around by the developers. Their daily activities are seen as “pollution” to the scenery of middle-class’s flats and new neighborhoods. In one scene, Fai and Muk stand at the top of an apartment under construction, watch the new scenery of high buildings and urinate down to the street. It shows how polarized Sham Shui Po has become between the poor and the new middle-class. The homeless regard it as a place for the poor but its rapid redevelopment compresses their daily life instead. The local poor are sacrificed and exploited for Hong Kong’s presumed global glamour (Huang,

2001). Even Sham Shui Po is beginning to become “global.” Kwan (2020) claims that *Times Out* names Sham Shui Po as one of the coolest neighborhoods around the world. Since there are more and more cafes and art spaces, more capitalized places may cause hybridization of local culture and capitalized modern culture in the neighborhood. Abbas’s *deja disparu* reappears overnight when the original neighborhood is displaced. The homeless have their backs against the ropes.

To conclude, the group of homeless people are exploited and oppressed in capitalism. Their living situation has not improved over time and even worsened. “Drifting” is a metaphor to them because it is the only way they can survive. The Chinese title of the film, 濁水漂流, literally means the flow of (or flowing along) dirty water. No one cares about the perceived “dirtiness” of such water. The city will just build conduits to channel it away.

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Is Growing GM Crops Really a Solution?

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Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) are created by inserting DNA from one species into a different species (ProCon.org, 2020). Nowadays, many countries are investigating this technology to control the effects produced. However, this kind of genetic engineering method is not well developed yet. Its prospect is full of uncertainty. This essay discusses both the major benefits and drawbacks of growing GM crops as a solution to global food shortages and evaluates the effectiveness of GM crops to the environment. Ultimately, growing GM crops should not be a solution to global food shortages.

Growing GM crops improves the nutrition content of the food which can help people facing hunger to gain more nutrition and also increase the production of crops which can help feed more people. In recent decades, the world is still facing the problem of food shortage. The World Food Programme, a humanitarian organization, estimates that “there are 821 million of people who are facing malnutrition, and one in nine people face famine” (ProCon.org, 2020). This problem can be alleviated by growing GM crops because by using genetic engineering, the DNA sequence of the crop is altered and different kinds of nutrition can be added. For example, the most famous GM crop, golden rice, is genetically engineered to enhance the beta-carotene and vitamins

(Nodoushani et al., 2015). When the food is provided with rich nutrients, the quantity of eating can be reduced. Then there will be enough time for the crops to grow. As a result, the global food shortages can be solved. Moreover, with the technology of genetic engineering, GM crops can be grown in extreme climates where they could not grow originally, such as the drought region or topsoil erosion region. When crops can be grown in different lands, it improves crop yields, thereby feeding more people, the problem of food shortage is settled.

On the other hand, although growing GM crops can solve the problem of food shortage, the impact of it towards the environment is irreversible, and it brings harm to our environment. Nowadays, most of the developed countries are growing GM crops to solve the problem of global food shortage. However, when GM crops are grown, there is a concurrent genetic modification of the flower pollen, the modified gene might then transfer from GM crops to wild species when insects like bees pollinate. Because of an increasing number of GM crops, most of the crops would develop resistance to the herbicides and pesticides. It might then result in useless implementation of costly harmful chemicals. For instance, in the research by Bazuin et al. (2011), herbicide-resistant GM crops were grown in 1996, super weeds have then developed resistance to the herbicides which GM crops were designed to tolerate. Those weeds are choking crops on over 60 million acres of US croplands, and the solution being presented to farmers is to use more herbicides (ProCon.org, 2020). In addition, farmers have increased the use of herbicides and pesticides to eliminate the “super weeds”, more and more glyphosate will be leaked into the rivers nearby and causing water pollution. As a result, the local wildlife will be affected.

Upon evaluation of the main benefits and drawbacks of growing GM crops, one can see that the impact of the benefits simply does not justify the continuation of such technology. The evaluation may be approached from two angles. Firstly, growing GM crops provides a relatively small benefit to the global food shortage. There is no denying that GM crops improve the nutrition of food and increase the production of crops, which can solve the current situation of global food shortage, but the undernourished population is not a large majority. However, it provides a large drawback to humanity. Great amount of toxic chemicals is used while growing GM crops. All of these harmful elements are attached to the surface of the crops and most of them are not soluble in water. Meanwhile, these GM crops with harmful elements are eaten by the animals such as pigs and cattle, and finally these animals are eaten by human beings, a bioaccumulation occurs. People are eating the food with harmful chemicals, and it is affecting every human being on earth. Secondly, while growing GM crops may solve the global food shortage in the short term, the negative effects towards the environment are irreversible, and it will only damage the ecosystem over the course of many years, or even decades, and finally another problem will just be hitting hard over humans again. The long term damage caused by GM crops should be our primary concern. Based on this evaluation, growing GM crops should be avoided as the drawbacks obviously outweigh the benefits.

In conclusion, it is obvious that growing GM crops is not a solution to global food shortage. When people are suggesting growing GM crops as a solution to solve global food shortage, they are focusing on the benefits while omitting the drawbacks of GM crops. However, one can see that the drawbacks of growing GM crops are much more serious than

its benefits. Growing GM crops should not be the solution to global food shortage.

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The Death Penalty: An Ineffective Solution to Violent Crime

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We only live once, so everyone deserves a second chance at life. However, death row inmates are robbed of this chance due to the Death Penalty. The Death Penalty is a form of capital punishment which involves the execution of criminals who have been placed on death row through methods including the electric chair, lethal injection or even hanging. Although the Death Penalty is beginning to be abolished in many nations around the world in recent years, it is currently still being practiced by quite a lot of countries such as China, India, and multiple states in the United States. Nonetheless, it is evident that an increasing number of people are opposing the Death Penalty, as there has been a rightful increase in criticism over the Death Penalty, mainly in terms of ethical standpoints. Although it is argued that the Death Penalty is a suitable form of punishment for criminals who have committed horrendous crimes, I believe that the Death Penalty should be abolished globally as there is a lack of evidence that it deters criminals from committing dangerous crimes and it is an irreversible form of punishment.

Despite the fact that the Death Penalty has been frequently practiced in some countries in last century, there is a lack of evidence that the Death Penalty can deter crime. It is a common belief that among of some individuals that by threatening criminals with the Death Penalty, they may be

discouraged from committing excessively violent crimes. However, there is a lack of clear evidence pointing towards this claim, with some sources even proving the opposite. In a nationwide poll conducted by the Death Penalty Information Center which involved the police force of the United States, when asked what primary force should be the focus in reducing violent crimes, only 1% of the respondents voted for the Death Penalty as the main focus. And when asked to dispel myths regarding the usefulness of the Death Penalty, 67% of the respondents voted 'inaccurate' when asked if the Death Penalty significantly reduces the number of homicide cases and 82% voted 'inaccurate' when asked if murderers ponder the possible consequences of their actions, including the Death Penalty (Death Penalty Information Center, 1995). Since a majority of law enforcers agree that the Death Penalty should not be the main focus in reducing the crime rates in the United States, and the fact that more than two-thirds of them also agree with the fact that criminals normally do not consider the consequences of their crimes especially the Death Penalty, this indicates that the Death Penalty is an ineffective form of crime deterrence, meaning it should not be practiced as there is no clear evidence that it acts as a crime deterrent.

A heartbreaking truth of the Death Penalty is that it is an irreversible form of punishment for criminals and complications may arise in cases of wrongful executions. The death penalty cannot be reversed, as the criminals are executed and almost die immediately during the process. However, there have been some cases in the past few decades in which innocent people get convicted of crimes they did not commit due to factors such as the lack of evidence, or various misconducts on law enforcers' part. If they are then executed,

and new evidence is found afterwards, there is no way to undo the process and revive them and thus an innocent man's life has been wasted. One of the earliest real life cases of an individual who was wrongfully convicted and later executed is an individual by the name of Carlos DeLuna, as numerous mishaps such as police misconduct, prosecution misconduct, and the fact that no DNA evidence was given in court had occurred, and evidence supporting his innocence was only revealed two decades after his execution (Liebman et al., 2014). Furthermore, according to a study conducted in the United States, the process of exonerating possibly innocent individuals on death row is not perfect and was found to have a 4% error in trial, indicating that more innocent individuals than recorded were executed since 1977 (Gross et al., 2014). This proves that an innocent person can still be convicted and executed for the wrong reasons and as such the Death Penalty should not be performed in case of such occurrences.

Some may argue that the Death Penalty can act as a form of acceptable retribution as taking a criminal's life is the justified response to them killing someone, but this argument is completely invalid. In theory, although the Death Penalty can bring justice to the victim's families, it is an emotional impulse for revenge ultimately and may not bring relief to the victim's family in the long-run. In fact, there is evidence to show that even the victim's families are not supportive towards the execution of the criminals involved. For instance, in a case study, the eight-year-old son of a victim that was murdered had strongly denounced the Death Penalty as he believed that nothing can be accomplished by taking one life for another and that anguish would eventually spread to the criminal's family, meaning the cycle of anguish and grief would only be prolonged and continued (Gray et al., 1989). Although having

the criminal who committed the crime executed may bring short-term emotional relief and possibly even offer the feeling of justice to the victim's loved ones, it still cannot change the fact that the crime has already happened and can no longer be undone which may eventually lead to emotional issues in the long run.

To sum up, the Death Penalty should be completely abolished globally as there is a lack of evidence that it deters crime, and it is an irrevocable form of punishment that can have consequences such as the execution of an innocent defendant. Today, where there is an emphasis on fighting for the basic human rights of individuals, it is especially crucial for individuals around the world, particularly law enforcers to understand and spread awareness regarding the cruelty and unethical nature of the Death Penalty. The Death Penalty should be abolished.

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