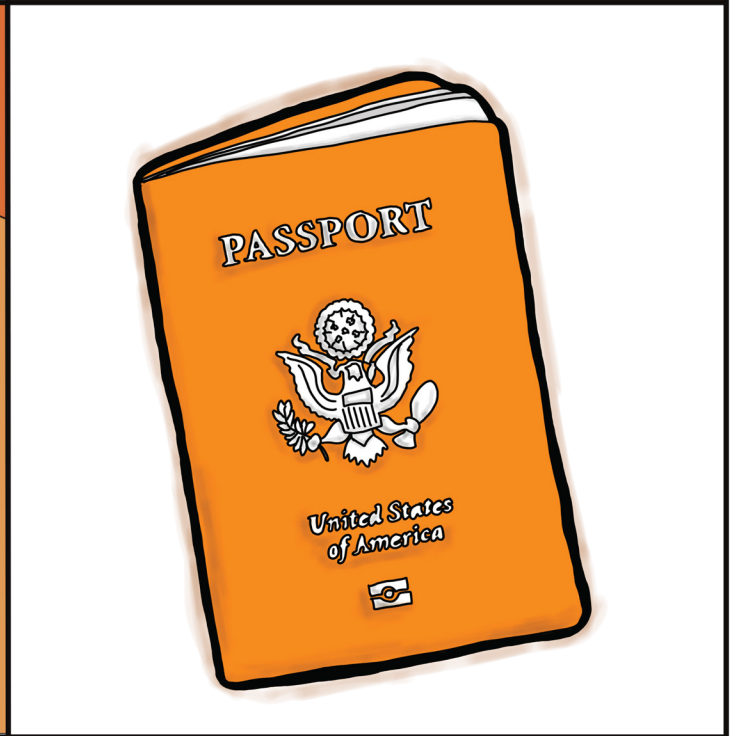
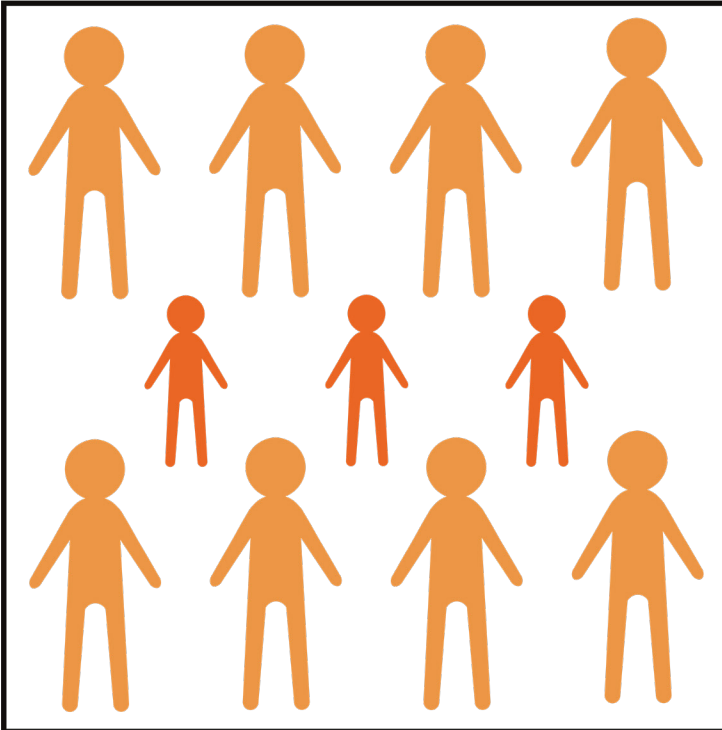


the PROCG



A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Reader,

We hope this issue finds you well, and that you are finding time to care for yourself, and those around you, as this semester comes to an end.

The issue in your hands marks a few recent changes within the Prog. First, in the masthead: over the past two years and the past four issues, Nora Schultz served as this publication's Editor-in-Chief. She encouraged the Prog to move in new, fruitful directions, and we are incredibly thankful for her passion and dedication. Also, we recently welcomed a group of new staff members. Going forward with new faces, ideas, and purpose, we hope to grow and aspire to more as a proudly leftist publication on Princeton's campus.

This issue's theme is *citizenship*, a topic of incredible salience in the current political moment. This past year witnessed the continuation and intensification of the onslaught against immigrants, both undocumented and documented, within the United States. One need not even look to national politics; ICE regularly conducts targeted raids in Princeton. Additionally, there now appears a heightened degree of political awareness and action in response to current immigration policy and other injustices, both for and against—often with the vague subtext that “good” citizenship is defined by sustained activity and engagement.

For this issue, we encouraged our writers to grapple with various understandings of what citizenship is and could be, beyond a legal status—citizenship within the campus community; in relation to borders and to cities; as active participation; as identity; as a fundamentally historical product.

Our most recent issue, exploring the myriad socio-political meanings of food production and consumption, signaled an institutional shift in the Prog's focus to-

ward content more centered on grounded experience. To the same end, pieces in this issue address personal and material experiences of citizenship, in addition to theoretical questions of governance that a discussion of citizenship demands. Our writers ask: How can we define citizenship beyond a legal categorization? Can citizenship exist as a self-defined identity, rather than as a categorization imposed top-down? Can the concept of citizenship operate to elicit radical change and lead to imagining better futures? What role does citizenship have on campus, or in local communities?

It is also worthwhile to note the questions that this issue does not engage with; in no way does this issue constitute a complete appraisal of citizenship. Given that the inception of citizenship is necessarily entangled with violent histories of colonialism, slavery, and mass displacement, is it even possible to envision its positive use? Is it worth attempting to do so? Finally, as the concept of citizenship cannot be located too far away from us, what are the negative uses of citizenship within Princeton (the town and the university) itself?

With these limits in mind, you will find a variety of pieces within this issue, ranging from personal reflections on citizenship, culture, and immigration to rumination on France's Yellow Vests and colonialism in French Guiana to historical consideration of birthright citizenship and suffrage in the United States. In this issue, we strive to deeply interrogate the idea of citizenship and offer up new, more radical conceptions of it. We encourage our readers to do the same.

In love and solidarity,

The Editors

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SRI LANKAN OR SRI LANKAN-AMERICAN?

BY: TAMICA PERERA

Legally, I am an American citizen. My family and I gave up our Sri Lankan citizenship and haven't completed our applications for dual citizenship yet. But my legal citizenship does not capture my experience as a Sri Lankan-American, as someone who must constantly negotiate my citizenship and my sense of self. "Citizenship" is a concept that is often discussed in academic and political circles, but for me and so many others around the globe, there is a more personal meaning to it. Every day, I feel that there is a dissonance between my legal citizenship and my sense of self-identity and belonging. Although I was born in Sri Lanka and am an American citizen, I feel neither fully American nor fully Sri Lankan. I believe citizenship, in the cultural sense, is tied to a feeling of belonging, something I don't feel in Sri Lanka or America.

There is a disconnect within my identity. For me, being an American and an immigrant means bringing my culture to the states. However, I don't feel Sri Lankan all the time because of how different I am from other Sri Lankans. Mainly, I don't feel Sri Lankan because other Sri Lankans perceive me as an "other." The way I am looked at, the fact that I involuntarily speak with an American accent, and the way I try to understand my culture means that oftentimes people don't always label me as a full or real Sri Lankan.

I was born in Sri Lanka and raised in Las Vegas. My first language is Sinhala, but my English is much better; I always speak Sinhala with a heavy American accent. When I go to Sri Lanka, everyone asks me where I'm from. Funnily enough, they ask me that in America, too. In Sri Lanka, my relatives question whether I eat traditional food every day. In America, my friends and

peers question whether I eat anything *but* traditional food.

Comparing myself to Sri Lankans at home makes me question my identity. My sister and I got sarees well before my cousins who live in Sri Lanka did, even though we're all in the same age group. The Sri Lankan Vegas community goes to parties for Sri Lankan New Years and Sri Lankan Independence Day, while my family in Sri Lanka just sleeps in on their day off. We eat rice and curry everyday, but my cousins prefer pasta and bread. I know more about Sri Lankan news than some of my family members. My sister and I have a Spotify playlist of Sinhala songs, while my cousins have playlists of American pop music. And, if you look at the groupchat my cousins and I share, you can see that it was once named "Sri Lankans vs Americans." Being away from the physical land of Sri Lanka creates an intensification of culture. I am hyperaware that many of my traits are a product of Sri Lankan culture, but being in America makes me feel like I need to prove that I have a reason to also celebrate the culture.

Recently, while visiting Sigiri, a Sri Lankan restaurant in New York, my identity crisis struck me. It was 4pm and I was ready to quickly grab something before coming back to Princeton. While walking down 1st Avenue, I saw a Sri Lankan flag and an American flag outside of a building. I walked into a small restaurant with art and maps on the walls, and I immediately knew that the art came from Sri Lanka. I heard the sound of the restaurant staff speaking Sinhala, although not directed at me. Instead, I was greeted in English. I was a little hurt. I wanted to tell them that I am Sri Lankan too, that I am from where they are from. But I didn't know how to do so

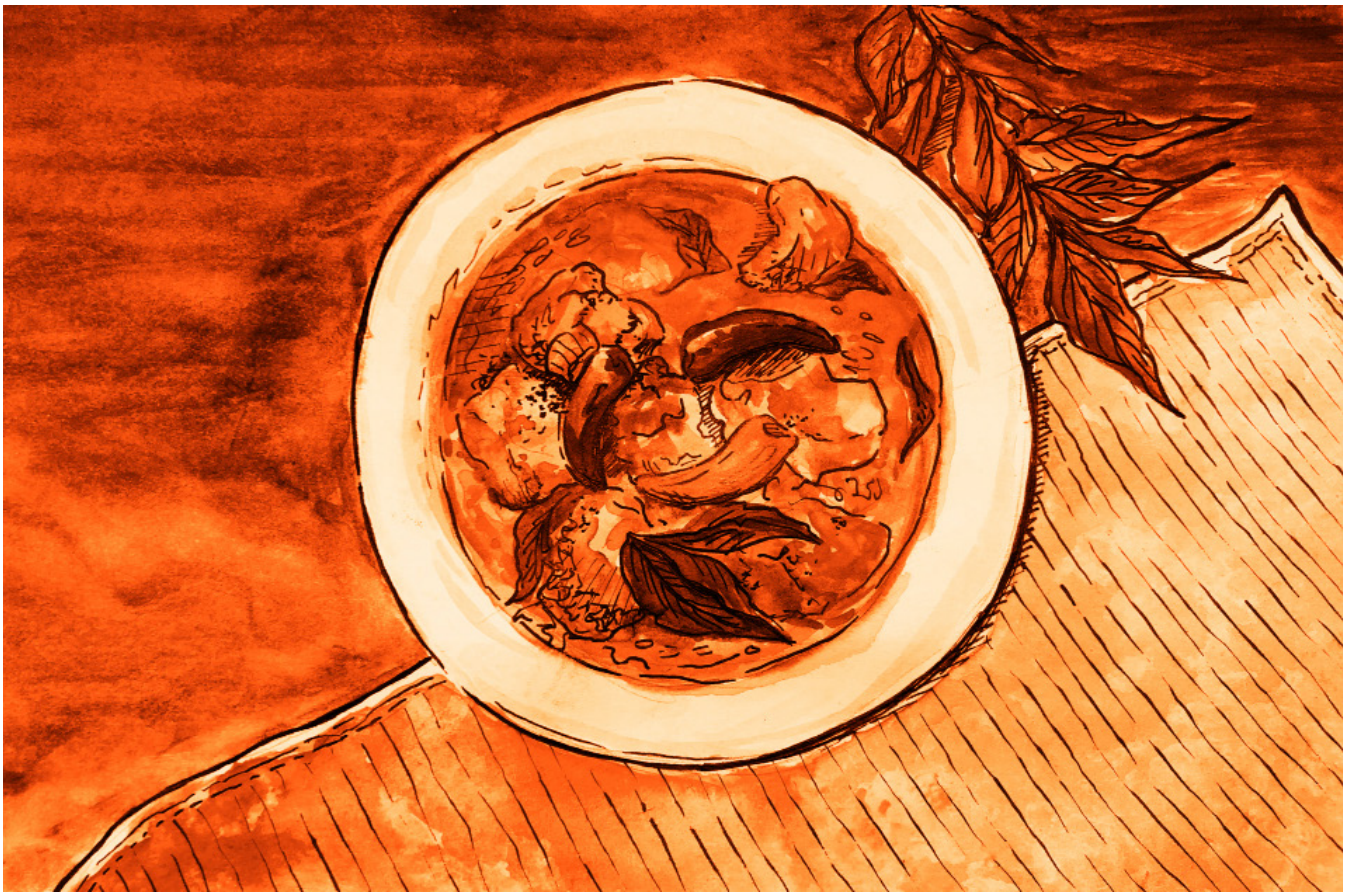
without making it obvious that I wanted to be accepted. So I called my dad.

My dad was actually very embarrassing. I had my headphones in, ready to talk to him, and I even made sure to speak to him in Sinhala. I thought that would be enough to show that I am Sri Lankan, but my dad had a different idea in mind. He practically started to beg me to hand my phone to a worker, so that he could talk to them. He wanted to make sure they knew that I was Sinhalese, so that the food would be spicy (if a Sri Lankan doesn't know you're Sri Lankan they will make the food less spicy—we know that our spice tolerance is basically unmatched).

I knew my dad's plan was going to end badly, but because I love him, I took my headphones out, turned to a waiter, and said, "I'm really sorry but my dad hasn't been to New York before and wants to say hello." The worker looked so confused and just muttered a "hi" back. Then my dad started talking quickly and completely in Sinhala. The waiter realized what my dad was doing and came closer, looking both annoyed and unamused. My dad told him that we live in Las Vegas, but are from Sri Lanka, that I love Sri Lankan food (so make it spicy), that I go to school in New Jersey and was visiting New York for the day, and that they should make me falooda—a drink made of rose syrup, sabja seeds, vermicelli, and milk—because he wanted me to try what he grew up drinking in Sri Lanka.

I was so embarrassed.

My dad basically told my life story to a waiter who was not much older than I am, and who was obviously confused about why my dad was talking so much. Now, if he was old enough to be an uncle it would make sense. Sri Lankan adults are protective of children and usually make



sure to act like second parents if they know your real parents aren't with you. But the waiter was basically just an older brother who didn't care about my story and probably didn't think anything of my being Sri Lankan, considering he still talked to me in English afterwards. I wanted to leave the restaurant, and in all honesty, I don't want to go back to the restaurant again because of how embarrassed I felt.

The restaurant did, however, make the food with spices fit for a Sri Lankan and I got the falooda. (I definitely do recommend the restaurant if you are in the city. The food was great and I doubt anyone else will have an identity crisis while eating there.)

The owner heard that I was Sri Lankan and talked to me about where I live and about other Sri Lankans that I know on the East Coast. He talked to me in English, but he at least acknowledged that I am Sri Lankan. I partly blame myself; I didn't want him to hear my American accent butchering Sinhala, so I continued speaking in English.

I think my dad wanted to prove to those complete strangers that his daughter is Sri Lankan, not American. His daughter has an American accent and grew up in the states,

but she is Sri Lankan. My identity, in his eyes, is not the same as my citizenship. But, the situation made me feel like even less of a Sri Lankan. Yes, the food was made for a Sri Lankan, but the conversation only highlighted how American I was. I wasn't Sri Lankan enough to be at the restaurant alone, and I wasn't American enough to just be a tourist.

I feel out of place. I do identify as Sri Lankan, but I don't usually feel accepted in the culture. I also don't ever identify as just American. I am either Sri Lankan or Sri Lankan-American. And it is only around others who identify like me that I feel accepted. I feel accepted around those who are told they are not enough of an identity—with those who don't feel like they belong because others act like we don't.

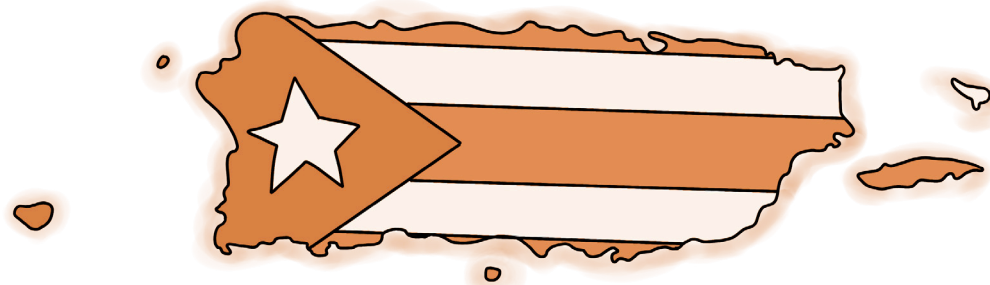
For me, being an American is not a cultural identity but a legal one—in contrast, being Sri Lankan is part of my cultural identity. And being Sri Lankan-American means navigating the tricky relationship between being hyperaware of my culture and understanding that the country I grew up in shaped how in touch with my roots I am today. ■

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A Note from the Author:

My heart hurts for what recently happened to my country. This article was written prior to the bombings in Sri Lanka, and my only hope is that my country unites and overcomes this tragedy.

We need support. I know that Princeton's environment makes us feel secluded from the world, but these events cracked my perception of the 'orange bubble.' If anyone would like to help, donations can be given to Sri Lanka Red Cross or the Asia Pacific office of the Red Cross and Red Crescent. If you are still figuring out summer plans, I recommend you look at the organization Volunteer Sri Lanka. We are a small island but filled with character, life, and culture. Prayers, donations, and aid will be greatly appreciated.

'FOREIGN IN A DOMESTIC SENSE'



THE LEGAL PARADOX OF PUERTO RICAN CITIZENSHIP BY: DIEGO AYALA-MCCORMICK

My father often likes to tell a story about his job orientation after accepting a new post in Los Angeles, to which my family moved in 2002 from New York. While being hustled from one meeting to another, a department administrator ran after him with a question about mixed-up paperwork. “César, are you a US citizen?” she asked. “Yeah—but it’s not my fault,” was my father’s brief response. What my father was referring to was the fact that as someone who was born and grew up in Puerto Rico, his US citizenship was the result of US imperialist expansion, and what he saw as a colonial status for his homeland. When retelling this story my father always recalls, with some regret, the administrator’s bemused face upon hearing this response. After all, all she needed was information to fill in a box in a form, not an anti-imperialist statement about the nature of his belonging in the US political community.

Yet what my father expressed in that brief and somewhat amusing interaction speaks to something deeper about the political status of the island he comes from and the people who live there. Indeed, the

American citizenship that all Puerto Ricans enjoy (and I use the word “enjoy” in full knowledge of all the struggles millions of other Latin Americans have gone through trying to attain that coveted status of US citizen) was not only imposed upon them without their consent, but is also a profoundly unequal citizenship.

To understand its inequity, it is useful to begin by considering the history of the incorporation of Puerto Ricans into the American political community. From 1898—when the United States acquired Puerto Rico from Spain along with Cuba, the Philippines, and Guam—until 1917, Puerto Ricans were not considered US citizens. They were instead confined to a vague status as “Puerto Rican nationals,” while still being subject to US jurisdiction. This created problems in international relations and commerce for Puerto Ricans, not least because they could not obtain US passports and Puerto Rico was not an independent country. The Jones Act of 1917 attempted to solve these problems by granting United States citizenship to the residents of Puerto Rico.

But the US Citizenship granted to

Puerto Ricans in the Jones Act carries two caveats. First of all, it is not constitutional citizenship. That is, it is not based on the Fourteenth Amendment, which dictates that any person born in the United States is a United States citizen, but rather only from the specific federal law that extended US citizenship to Puerto Ricans. Thus, while revoking my US citizenship (I was born in New York) would require going through the arduous process of amending the Constitution, taking away my father’s citizenship would only require getting a bill through Congress. The second caveat is that the constitutional conception of Puerto Rican citizenship, inextricably linked to the absurd concept of “unincorporated territory,” denies Puerto Ricans their right to sovereignty. These caveats, which may after all seem rather minor, reflect a long history of political discrimination that goes back to an infamous set of federal court cases from the early 1900s—the so-called “Insular Cases.”

Before the Spanish-American War, the status of newly acquired US territories generally followed a common pattern. The US would annex the territory. Then, over time,

Anglo settlers would settle there and develop a government and a constitution (the territory thus becoming “organized”), the US Constitution would be extended (the territory would become “incorporated”), and eventually Congress would accept the territory into the union as a state. What the Insular Cases dictated, in essence, was that Puerto Rico was not bound to follow this familiar path. Instead, the Supreme Court ruled that Puerto Rico, as well as the other territories acquired from Spain in 1898 were different from previous territories in that they belonged to, but were not a part of, the United States. They were, in other words, colonies. Therefore, the US Constitution did not automatically apply in these areas. Instead, Congress could choose to apply only the clauses of the Constitution it saw fit.



**WHEN PUERTO RICANS
BECAME US CITIZENS,
HOWEVER, NON-INCORPORATION PRESENTED A
LEGAL PARADOX: HOW
COULD US CITIZENS BE EXCLUDED FROM THE RIGHTS
AND PROTECTIONS OF THE
CONSTITUTION?**



Examining the cases in more detail, it comes as no surprise that the Insular Cases were decided by a court composed of almost exactly the same judges that decided the infamous *Plessy v. Ferguson* case in favor of legal segregation. The language used to articulate the political status of Puerto Rico and the other territories acquired in the Spanish-American War is linked to the explicitly racist treatment of the territories’ inhabitants. In *Downes v. Bidwell* (1901), for example, the court declared of the newly acquired territories that “if those possessions are inhabited by *alien races*, differing from us in religion, customs, laws, methods of taxation and modes of thought, the administration of government and justice,

according to Anglo-Saxon principles, may for a time be impossible” (emphasis added). It thus made no secret of the fact that relegating Puerto Rico to an inferior and colonial status—in which it was subject to the political control of the United States without having any power in the federal government—was a result of Puerto Ricans’ perceived racial unfitness to participate in the US political community.

The status of “non-incorporated territory” made a bit more sense before 1917, when Puerto Ricans still did not enjoy US citizenship. Before 1917, Puerto Rico was undoubtedly a colony, and its citizens were considered unambiguously foreign to the US polity as non-US nationals. When Puerto Ricans became US citizens, however, non-incorporation presented a legal paradox: how could US citizens be excluded from the rights and protections of the Constitution? It was this exact question that Jesús de María Balzac y Balzac, a Puerto Rican newspaper editor, asked in 1922, when he sued the federal government. He insisted that his conviction in a trial without a jury in Puerto Rico violated his constitutional rights. In effect, Balzac used his new status as a US citizen to challenge the deprivation of constitutional rights in Puerto Rico that had been allowed for by the Insular Cases.

Ruling against Balzac, the court, headed by former President William Howard Taft, reiterated that Puerto Rico was a “non-incorporated” territory of the United States and thus not protected by the Constitution. The court added—and this point is key—that this did not constitute an unconstitutional deprivation of rights, since it was based on place of residence and not on any status inherent to the citizens themselves. In other words, according to the court, seeing that a Puerto Rican acquired all the rights of any other citizen when they moved to a US state, it was not unconstitutional to deprive Puerto Ricans of their constitutional rights as long as they lived in Puerto Rico. By reinforcing the legitimacy of the selective application of the Constitution even in the context of US citizenship for Puerto Ricans, this ruling also left Puerto Ricans without constitutionally guaranteed citizenship. American citizenship for Puerto Ricans was thus enshrined only in a law, a much more easily revocable legal mechanism than the Constitution. This is the impact of the first abovementioned ca-

veat to American citizenship among Puerto Ricans—it is more precarious than all other American “citizenships.”

The second caveat comes to light when we take Taft’s legal reasoning to its logical conclusion. According to Taft, if every Puerto Rican wanted to exercise their rights as a US citizen (by, for example, voting in elections for the President and the Congress that ultimately control Puerto Rico’s destiny) they would all have to move. The island would quickly be emptied of people. In the case of Puerto Rico, in contrast to any US state or independent country, political rights are dissociated from place. The individual right of each Puerto Rican to exercise their rights and powers as a US citizen does not coexist with a social right of all Puerto Ricans to exist as a sovereign political community.



**IN GRANTING PUERTO RICANS
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REFUSING TO ROOT THAT
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Even with the granting of US citizenship, then, Puerto Ricans were left in a precarious legal limbo. They were brought into the US political orbit, but only half-way and without full constitutional protection. As the Supreme Court itself stated in *Downes vs. Bidwell*, Puerto Ricans were “foreign to the United States in a domestic sense.” Their citizenship could be revoked more easily. In granting Puerto Ricans US citizenship, but refusing to root that citizenship in constitutional rights, the US

government chained Puerto Ricans to US hegemony, but made sure it could more easily get rid of that chain—and any responsibility it implied—when it wished. Puerto Rico’s non-voting congressional representative, Félix Córdova Dávila, put bluntly his despair with the absurdity of Puerto Rico’s status in a 1928 hearing before Congress:

“Are we foreigners? No; because we are American citizens, and no citizen of the United States can be a foreigner within the boundaries of the Nation. Are we a part of the Union? No; because we are an unincorporated Territory under the rulings of the Supreme Court. Can you find a proper definition for this organized and yet unincorporated Territory, for this piece of ground belonging to but not forming part of the United States? Under the rulings of the courts of justice we are neither flesh, fish, nor fowl. We are neither a part nor a whole. We are nothing; and it seems to me if we are not allowed to be part of the Union we should be allowed to be a whole entity with full and complete control of our internal affairs.”

Córdova Dávila’s poignant words hit the heart of the issue: second-class citizenship among Puerto Ricans is inseparable from the broader question of Puerto Rico’s political status and its relationship with the United States. The current political status of Puerto Rico—that of a non-incorporated territory—is intrinsically colonial and thus unsustainable. It is based on a precarious concept of citizenship, it deprives Puerto Ricans of their constitutional and democratic rights, and it denies their right to sovereignty. Puerto Rico is ultimately under the control of a government in whose workings it has no say. To recognize Puerto Rican sovereignty would mean to either empower Puerto Ricans with such a say or to get rid of that control altogether. Thus, either incorporation into the US political community as a state or (as I would favor) some form of independence would recognize the sovereignty of Puerto Rico and would accord its citizens with the dignity they deserve. ■

YOUR MAJESTY, THE MOST HONORABLE VENERABLE CHANCELLOR CIHUACOATL GENERALISSIMO

CONTRIBUTED BY: ALEJANDRO ROIG '21

Not my president just my presider
the pride of this patch of hairy biped primates.
Sure I’ll be president, seems like fun
push the tides already begun
just the biggest pawn
pulling all the strings
loose of any tension
Soldiers to attention!
Attention: we interrupt this broadcast to give you
Man in a seat
responsible for keeping dough sweet,
air warm, ear worms out yo’ hearing swirls.

The President is here to sit on top
of a few hundred million
that Harlem shake under his sheets
plucking wheat to sell to Greek farmers
so that they can meat harvest
and Jeep mollusks
across to the island of Crete.
Nice to meet you sir, I shook his hand!
The proudest day of my life,
golly gee he sure was swell
saying he wished us well
as we jumped from airplanes high
to watch people fry
mothers cry, milk run from cows dry.

Why, thank you MR. President.
My dude’s dick is bigger than yours!
Racing to have sovereigns seven feet tall
refusing to acknowledge they’re just as small.

OF POLLING & POLIS:

SUFFRAGE & THE BOUNDARIES OF AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP

BY: PETER TAYLOR

Late last year, Donald Trump called for the end of birthright citizenship, the granting of citizenship rights by virtue of being born on United States soil. Though his threat ultimately went unrealized, it brought to the forefront of our national consciousness the concept of American birthright citizenship. This notion of citizenship, in terms of legal relationship to the state, is generally understood in a positive sense. That is to say, citizenship is discussed as a function of the rights it gives an individual within our democratic society. Less attention in the common consciousness is afforded to considering citizenship in a *negative* sense: whom exactly citizenship excludes, and in what manner. As it stands, citizenship excludes non-citizens by the very virtue of the rights and privileges it affords citizens, or perhaps more pointedly, the rights and privileges the notion of citizenship restricts from non-citizens. If we begin to regard the concept of citizenship as in-and-of-itself exclusionary, Trump's challenging of birthright citizenship becomes more understandable. And, understanding the basis for this kind of exclusion can help us in our efforts to demand a more inclusive citizenship.

The Greek city-state, or *polis*, as discussed by Aristotle, can be a useful theoretical frame to understand the historical and contemporary realities of exclusionary citizenship. In his *Politics*, Aristotle envisions a system

accommodating two spheres of life: the public and the private. In Aristotle's view, free men, citizens in the view of the *polis*, occupied both spheres, whereas women and slaves occupied only the latter. Furthermore, Aristotle's conception of citizenship is not inherently democratic. For Aristotle, the *polis* does not necessarily exist for the propagation of wealth or freedom, the respective ends, as he explains, of oligarchy and democracy. Rather, Aristotle asserts that the end of a city-state is instead "the good life" and an equal distribution of justice. In this system, the only people deemed capable of enacting justice for the end of "the good life" are the *aristoi*, or aristocrats: the city-state's "best" people. Aristotle's conception of citizenship was thus inherently exclusive, and predicated on its bestowal only upon select persons.

In sum, Aristotle's ideal *polis* is dependent on public engagement and indeed in a sense controlled by the people—but only by certain people deemed worthy of having control. The rest were excluded. Though the *polis* prized involvement of its citizens within civic life as an ideal of the state, Aristotle's conception of citizenship was ultimately still a basis to perpetuate exclusion, power, and servitude. For this reason, the *polis* is a particularly useful tool to analyze the similarly exclusionary trends of citizenship in the history of the United States.

We can see a manifestation of this

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same kind of exclusionary approach to citizenship and democracy in the property qualifications for suffrage in early American democracy, even in its ostensible predication on the notion of liberty for all. Though there were many in early America who were granted the title of citizen, only white men with property were granted suffrage, a clear example of a kind of restrictive citizenship where some were more equal than others, to use Orwell's phrase. After the Revolutionary War, the Federalist Par-

ty viewed the new country's fight for independence primarily as an effort to reject British rule without necessarily envisioning their new state as radically different in structure from their former one. Thomas Jefferson's Republican Party, on the other hand, pushed for suffrage as "fundamental right rather than a privilege of property," to quote historian Rosemarie Zagarri, in her book *Revolutionary Backlash*. Zagarri argues that both parties began to see the implications of the Republicans' struggles to expand suffrage beyond property qualifications. The elimination of the property barrier invited the question as to what other barriers along racial or gendered lines could be struck down. Instead of further expansion of suffrage and with it the nature of citizenship, the status quo remained intact, with such barriers maintained.

Although the Preamble of the Constitution prioritized control of the government by "the people," the initial conceptions of American democracy maintained a decidedly restrictive definition of said people. This restriction is well-demonstrated in the Constitution's infamous "Three-Fifths Compromise." The "Numbers" relevant for deciding the representation for and taxation of each state were determined by combining the "whole Number of free Persons" with three-fifths the number of "those bound to Service," that is, enslaved black people. The right to vote, however, was for the most part extended only to white males. Just like in Aristotle's *polis*, women and enslaved people, despite in combination making up a literal majority of a many states' populations, were acknowledged as inhabitants of the country yet not given the right to actively participate in its democracy. From the beginning, the Constitution deliberately excluded many Americans, instead favoring a small segment of the population. This conception of citizenship cemented itself through the rule by those whom such a conception benefitted. Though this conception has been challenged throughout American

history, such challenging was not a linear purification of citizenship back to some unrestricted, ideal essence. Instead, such an unrestricted essence was created through evolving, material demands by marginalized groups for the expansion of the boundaries of citizenship beyond the landed white male elite.

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The early push for black citizenship represents one aspect of the drive to expand the inherently exclusionary conceptions of American democracy. Before the Civil War and emancipation, the very presence of slavery within the Union stood in stark contrast to the principles of freedom upon which the country was ostensibly founded. Frederick Douglass in his 1852 speech, "What to the Slave is Fourth of July?" directly and forcefully exposed the inherent paradox present in a country

that both ostensibly promoted freedom yet tolerated enslavement. In Douglass' view, the celebration of American Independence Day revealed to black Americans:

"...more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim. To him, your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty, an unholy license; your national greatness, swelling vanity; your sounds of rejoicing are empty and heartless; your denunciations of tyrants, brass fronted impudence; your shouts of liberty and equality, hollow mockery..."

For Douglass, celebrating liberty was futile and hypocritical if such liberty was not extended to all.

Douglass did not decry all aspects of the American conception of citizenship in relation to democracy. Indeed, he found the Declaration of Independence to espouse "great principles of political freedom and of natural justice" and similarly called the Constitution a "glorious liberty document." The great abolitionist instead challenged these documents' incomplete interpretations as being what allowed the promotion of slavery and further injustice. In Douglass' sentiments, he clamored for an expansion of the concept of citizenship to coincide with the freedom that the United States claimed to celebrate. Douglass can therefore be seen as challenging the disjunction between the rhetoric and material realities of American freedom. Such material realities harken back to the exclusive definition of citizenship in the *polis*. In Douglass' view, the idea of citizenship was only valuable if it included all people.

After the Civil War and into Reconstruction, the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments, therefore, were turning points. Respectively, they

abolished slavery, instituted the notion of “birthright citizenship,” and redefined the terms of citizenship by prohibiting the denial of the right to vote based on “race, color, or previous condition of servitude.” In one sense, the amendments were a step of significant progress in the expansion of the American democracy; on the other hand, the mere necessity of such expansion plainly highlighted the existing flaws in the governmental system of a country run by a white male minority. The passage of the 14th Amendment was accompanied by an extension of suffrage still limited by gender. The partial quality of this expansion perpetuated a kind of ingrained exclusivity, even if the boundaries of such exclusion were broadened. In a speech in August 1880, Frederick Douglass spoke of the preceding and incipient struggles of the new citizens:

“They were hated because they had been slaves, hated because they were now free, and hated because of those who had freed them. Nothing was to have been expected other than what has happened, and he is a poor student of the human heart who does not see that the older master class would naturally employ every power and means in their reach to make the great measure of emancipation unsuccessful and utterly odious.”

Douglass astutely observed that expansion of the limits of American citizenship was not a natural one, implied by some pre-existing definitions of the term that was restricted by certain power groups. Instead, citizenship had to be forcefully and radically redefined to make it more true to a more inclusive iteration of the concept. Even then, however, the redefinition was merely a partial one: it extended citizenship to a large group, but only to a few the rights we associate with such citizenship.

Though it is easy to view historical efforts to expand the boundaries of citizenship as a part of citizenship’s natural evolution, such efforts were much more radical than they may appear to the contemporary view in their demands to broaden an originally intrinsically narrow definition. Though the struggle for black suffrage can be taken as an important manifestation of the broadening of citizenship’s boundaries, such boundaries were not completely eliminated in this or other similar demands from history for their expansion. Though the boundaries have become broader and less distinguishable, they still indeed exist, thereby keeping citizenship an inherently exclusive concept like in Aristotle’s *polis*.

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The modern rhetoric centered around the idea of an “incipient minority” of white Americans, to use Robert L. Tsai’s term from his article “Specter of a White Minority” in the *LA Review*

of Books, shares clear parallels with the preceding basis of exclusion through United States history. When politicians like Donald Trump speak of the danger immigrants pose to the order of our modern society, they inherently appeal to an ingrained sense of exclusion engendered by the historical precedent of white-male rule. In effect, they appeal to an expectation of a society predicated on exclusivity. Trump’s conception of citizenship is then consonant with Aristotle’s: only a certain group should be allowed to rule, and those outside of it must be directly excluded. Striking down the notion of birthright citizenship, therefore, would merely be a tool to enable the rule of such a conception.

When the notion of citizenship is this fraught, the question emerges as to whether citizenship should be redefined in a manner more inclusive, or whether the concept should be eliminated entirely in hopes of a more just society. We can look to the original constitution of the USSR for an alternative, and potentially promising, form of citizenship. The USSR Constitution granted “all political rights of Russian citizens to foreigners who live in the territory of the Russian Republic and are engaged in work and who belong to the working class.” Furthermore, the state recognized “the equal rights of all citizens, irrespective of their racial or national connections” and proclaimed “all privileges on this ground, as well as oppression of national minorities, to be contrary to the fundamental laws of the Republic.” For the state, inclusion was not demanded through generous interpretations of a set of rules to find nuances to allow for greater expansion. Instead, it was a given. In lieu of an easily manipulated conception of citizenship predicated on arbitrary or unequitable qualifiers such as place of birth, race, or gender, we must demand something more. We need a definition of citizenship not built upon oppressive exclusion, as in the *polis*, but one built upon mutual respect and communal participation. ■

SORRY TO BURST YOUR BUBBLE

THE INSTITUTIONAL LIMITS OF ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP AT PRINCETON

BY: K STIEFEL

For two years, I have led a Community Action (CA) orientation trip in Newark, where first years navigate their entry to Princeton through a five-day social justice-oriented experience. Both years, my group visited Newark's African American Office of Gay Concerns, an organization founded in 2001 to address the spread of HIV/AIDS in the local LGBTQ+ community.

The people working there are dedicated to doing the most they can for the entire community. First-years on the CA trip help out by designing posters for their annual PrEP rally (short for pre-exposure prophylaxis, medicine which reduces the chance of HIV infection), an event held to raise awareness about safer sex practices, in an effort to prevent the spread of HIV.

It's a fun activity for students to do while the staff members teach them basic gender, sexuality, and HIV-prevention terminology, hoping to get new people invested in the organization. The net impact of making a couple of nice posters is small but, as the Pace Center reminds us every year at our CA training, the trip is more about building relationships with "community partners" to enable future service, than the service done in one week.

If a chief goal of this week of service—besides helping new students tran-

sition into the Princeton community—is to lead pre-frosh into expansive, meaningful service, why does this goal go unfulfilled when students return to campus?

The Pace Center for Civic Engagement, according to its website, exists to make "service and civic engagement part of the Princeton student experience" through "engaged discovery," "community focus," "impactful programs," and "student leadership." The Pace Center often uses the metaphor of the "orange bubble"—a manifestation of the disconnect between life on Princeton's campus and life seemingly anywhere else—in its marketing. We've all seen their vinyl stickers on laptops and water bottles dramatically stamped with "Burst the Bubble." So much time and money and energy is spent advertising this and reminding us that good citizenship entails good engagement—communicating with and listening to communities to address their needs, not just coming in from afar to offer our time or money or energy for a few hours each week.

The thing about bubbles is that they're meant to be burst. They're transparent; we all know what's happening outside of them. They're also easily broken, allowing exchange with minimal effort. Hypothetically, all of us could go past Nassau Street and join community members organizing

against the theft of immigrant workers' wages, or get involved with local LGBTQ+ organizations. That kind of active citizenship does not, however, flourish on this campus. In spite of the Pace Center's stated goals, and its co-opting and nebulous use of terms like "advocacy" and "activism," it is not designed to actually enable expansive civic engagement. It does a wonderful job teaching students about fundraising, entrepreneurship, and volunteering, but the heart of active citizenship is the labor to create a better society, labor which requires challenging existing power structures. They tell us that we can bring about social and political changes, but they don't teach us how to do the work ethically, let alone what to do when we encounter the resistance that accompanies activist work.



If you interact with the Pace Center enough, you're bound to fill out a worksheet designed to examine what service means to you. It consists of an inventory of different ways to perform service, and includes more traditional outlets, like tutoring and participating in after-school programs, as well as military service and the nebulous phrase: "talking to friends about. . . issues." Coming from high school, where many students

see community service as something to be ticked off for a college application, my CA first-years often don't rank informal advocacy highly. The Pace Center claims that it is committed to broadening the definition of service and moving students away from more traditional conceptions. After all, I did lead a trip titled "Social Justice North Jersey."

However, what the Pace Center provides does not do enough to help students realize this expansive vision of engagement. First, the Center's training efforts almost exclusively focus on volunteering, rather than other forms of civic engagement. Pace offers only a handful of trainings, almost all of which center around "service" or "volunteering," and quite a few of which center on preparing for CA. If the Center was truly committed to broadening understandings of civic engagement, they would train students on how to carry out activist work or undertake a direct action. Few students come to Princeton (or any university) understanding what activism is, what it aims to do, or what it requires of them. The Pace Center is theoretically in a position to rectify this, but they merely pay lip service to these ideas. In addition, the Pace Center's mantra about listening to what a community needs, a focus during CA, rarely comes up any other time. How many of Pace's student groups are actively consulting with the communities they want to partner with, before offering an idea of what they personally want to do? Whether it comes from a paternalistic sense of knowing what's best or from a genuine desire to use one's skills simply missing its mark, we can be doing better. Leaders and members of new Pace student groups could have mandatory trainings on ethical community engagement, at the very least.

The Pace Center, in addition to providing trainings and operating programs like CA, also houses various civic engagement groups on campus. Looking at their website, the Pace Center hosts around 20 campus groups, most of which fo-

cus on education and health. Additionally, many of the groups listed under the banner of "Advocacy" are more focused on raising money or engaging in "social entrepreneurship," than actively challenging existing power dynamics (which is to say, activism). The Pace Center and the university teach us that the most effective change comes from working within, and thus upholding, the systems that we ought to be resisting. They teach us that the best way to channel the power and privilege we've been given by attending the wealthiest school in the country, is to wield it for ourselves, as long as we remember the less fortunate.

Ultimately, the Center is not shaping the next generation of grassroots organizers; they're shaping students for the "non-profit industrial complex." The idea behind this term is that most large non-profit organizations become ineffective in their work and instead merely turn a profit for the higher-up employees of the organization. Sprout Distro's "What's the Non-Profit Industrial Complex and why should I care?" zine posits that a characteristic of the nonprofit-industrial complex is pushing activists towards career-based organizing, instead of grassroots tactics which are more likely to foster change. The Pace Center's role in propping up this phenomenon is embodied by the fact that there are multiple groups whose sole pur-

pose is to fundraise for national U.S. charities that are doing "work" in far-flung places around the globe. This further compounds the non-profit industrial complex by encouraging problematic ideals of charity as something performed for those outside of our own communities. Not only does it destabilize the economies of "third world" countries and prevent them from implementing their own solutions, but this model of charity also erases the existence of those in need in our own spaces. It encourages us to "other" the receiver of our aid, to view ourselves as their betters as we stoop down to save them. After all, Princeton is where Ivy League professors live in mansions, elderly couples patronize McCarter theater, and three over-priced ice cream shops operate less than five minutes away from each other—it couldn't need our attention, right?

Thus, few Pace Center-associated groups who have been approved and have access to the Center's staff and resources embody the center's stated vision of expansive engagement. The form to create a new group is easy to fill out—you just need to meet some vague core values and explain where you plan to get money. But that's something you might not have expected that shapes the type of groups the Pace Center houses. Regardless of whether

Pace might eventually provide capital to a fledgling

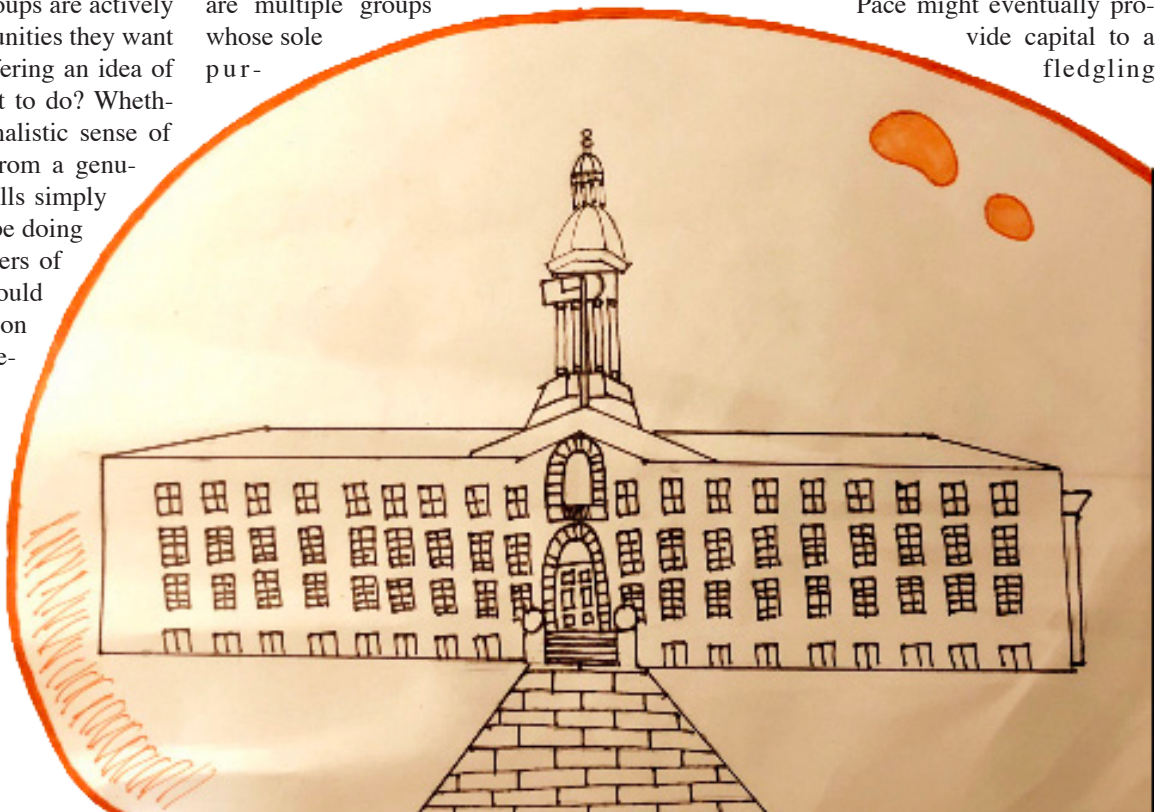


ILLUSTRATION
JT TAO '22

group, their form suggests that the group should have the goal of economic viability, when many grassroots organizations never strive for that themselves.

Of course, the Pace Center can never truly carry out an expansive vision of active citizenship. Because the Pace Center is a university institution, it cannot be more radical than Princeton itself; if it were, other administrators would readily bring it to heel. The institution that the Pace Center represents is not interested in teaching us how to reduce police impact on a protest, because that police force might be PSAFE. It's in no one's interest at this university to tell you how to pressure administrators when advocacy falls short, because you could challenge someone like Eisgruber. Put simply, why in the world would Princeton teach us how to go about challenging institutions exactly like itself? Yet, even though one cannot expect Pace to teach students how to stage the next sit-in, it is entirely reasonable to expect that each student who passes through their door leaves with not only an understanding of ethical community engagement, but, more importantly, the tools to enact it. It is neither easy nor standard, but the benefits far outweigh the costs.

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With this, we've come full circle to explain why there are so many groups disproportionately fundraising, rather than engaging: it looks amazing for an Ivy League school, but does nothing to push the institution into the "service of all humanity." The Pace Center speaks about "activism" as a form of civic engagement but does not actually foster it, ultimately channeling students into apathy and feel-good service. But this piece is not meant as a blanket review of all student groups within the Pace Center, or even to denounce the center itself. I support the guiding principle behind their work: that one cannot be an active citizen without active citizenship, that one cannot expect the advantages of a community without the duties of supporting it. The way that the Center provides and institutionalizes their services, however, imbues apathy into even the act of feeling like a good, engaged citizen. The very organization that is supposed to connect students to service, to make it easier to access, to allow it to flourish, does very little to make service meaningful. They've taken the radical concept of activism and co-opted it, in order to say they're living up to their own expansive vision of service looks like. They've taken activist terms just to appear to be with the times.

It is important to teach students that activism is part of good citizenship, but if you can't truly support it, don't say you can. Don't trick students into believing that it will not be as difficult as the institution of Princeton University is going to make it for them to enact radical change. If the Pace Center can't support activism directly, it should leave it to students to seek out other options, and try to give them what guides it can. If it can't help students form Center-approved groups, it should keep an informal list of activists on campus and their goals so it can direct students if they approach with interest in an issue.

It took me two years before I had a sense of who was doing what so that I could get involved in causes that matter to me, and that I have the energy for. Two years is a long time: imagine all the potential wasted in those years throughout which I could have been meaningfully engaged. In two years, you can get a driver's license. You can find someone and marry them. You can probably change careers. But on

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Princeton's campus, I couldn't find groups of students doing activist work centered around causes that I care deeply about.

I know that we can do more to both improve Princeton University for future students and engage with the communities around us. It's simply a matter of realizing that this institution does not support all forms of participative citizenship and, in the meantime, putting our noses to the grindstone, while keeping an eye out for students doing similar work.■

GILETS JAUNES

HIGH VISIBILITY, SHALLOW ROOTS

BY: COLE DIEHL

French settlement in what is now French Guiana dates back to 1503; its capital, Cayenne, was established by French colonists in 1643. The land was home to a number of groups of indigenous people such as the Kalina, Arawak, Emerillon, Galibi, Palikur, Wayampi, and Wayana, who faced displacement or enslavement throughout waves of French colonization. The colonists also brought enslaved Africans with them, forcing them to labor on plantations producing sugar and other crops. The colony was first declared a French overseas department (an administrative division under French government) in 1797. But over the following 150 years, French Guiana was developed as a penal colony, perhaps most infamously known for the Devil’s Island system, where the Second French Empire exiled incarcerated convicts and political prisoners (such as Alfred Dreyfus, the Jewish army officer targeted during the infamous antisemitic Dreyfus Affair) for intense and inhuman punishment. This system continued until the mid-20th century. In 1946, French Guiana’s department status was restored by the French government, along with that of Algeria, Guadeloupe, and Martinique. The colonized regions, now considered “departments,” were granted political status equivalent to Metropolitan departments in mainland France, while still not quite equal; for example, they were still excluded from certain statistical measurements such as unemployment. Algeria fought for and gained its independence in 1962, while French Guiana, Guadeloupe, and Martinique remain French overseas departments

today. General Charles de Gaulle and “Free France” (a government-in-exile agenda led by French military forces during WWII), established the Guiana Space Center in 1965, in an effort to secure and control colonial projects guised as overseas departments. The Center is still operated by the French National Centre for Space Studies and the European Space Agency. The plantations of French Guiana—the roots of French coloniality—merely changed face, transforming to a Space Center when colonialism was formally denounced in the latter half of the 20th century. Colonialism lives on as an extractive virus in French Guiana, as France only extends its borders to South America insofar as it uses the land for projects such as space research or gold mining: projects which have little to no regard for the people living there. Colonial roots are at the heart of this issue of borders and citizenship.

EXCURSUS 1

Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, the pair of French philosophers famous for their *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* project in the 1970s and 80s, begin the essay “Segmentarity and Micropolitics” (featured in their *A Thousand Plateaus*) with the simple yet ominous proclamation: “We are segmented all around and in every direction.” Deleuze and Guattari are notable for breaching theoretical horizons in political, social, and psychoanalytic theory with bizarre and jargoned nomenclature as a way of provoking an insurrection in epistemology. The essay in question goes on,

at great length and equal—if obscure—detail, to propose the theoretical framework of “State Geometry”:

“State geometry, or rather the bond between State and geometry, manifests itself in the primacy of the theorem element, which substitutes fixed or ideal essences for supple morphological formations, properties for affects, predetermined segmentations-in-progress ... Private property implies a space that has been overcoded and gridded by surveying. Not only does each line have its segments, but the segments of one line correspond to those of another.”

State Geometry is anything but an imaginary political fabric—it is radical because it is rooted in empiricism, in the segmented reality of political life. How, then, are we to understand the bordered space of French Guiana? In a sense, it is a segmentary, a geographically broken yet primarily determined extension of the French border—a geometrical imposition of the State—and this segmentarity is simultaneously the creation of private property: French Guiana is a “department” of France, extracted of its resources and surveyed for its materials, mediated by the border and manifested in citizenship.

SEGMENT 1

According to the Columbus Gold Corporation, the mining company overseeing

mining operations at Montagne d'Or in French Guiana, as of Q4 of 2018 the Environmental and Social Impact Assessments had been completed and the Mine Permit Applications were submitted to the French government for approval. In 2017 and 2018, after three phases of drill testing and during the Columbus' Bankable Feasibility Study, there was public outcry over the decision of Emmanuel Macron's government to develop the 800-hectare open-pit gold mine at Montagne d'Or, which sits only 100 meters from the boundary of one of the two natural reserves which enclose the site. In April of 2018, when covering the protests, *The Guardian* reported indigenous rights activist Alexis Tiouka of the Kalina people of French Guiana stating, "Paris is completely disconnected from us". I would reiterate *The Guardian's* report: Tiouka wasn't exaggerating when he made that claim. French Guiana, officially an "overseas department and region of France," is bordered by Brazil and Suriname on the Atlantic coast of South America. Cayenne, French Guiana's capital, is over 4,000 miles from Paris, and yet Macron's administration still governs the country through the French Guiana Territorial Collectivity and French Guiana Assembly, which is why, even with French Guiana's own prefect, it remains Macron's decision to approve of the mine at Montagne d'Or. French Guiana exists territorially and segmentarily, but as such it is a highly politicized entity. France's regimentary State interpellates French Guiana geometrically; but this geometric relationship paradigmatically occupies multiple forms of coloniality, citizenship, territoriality, and property: the political nexus of which appears as a segmentary constellation of roots.

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EXCURSUS 2

Segmentarity, according to Deleuze and Guattari, appears in political forms: one "rigid" and one "supple," binary and circular, primitive and State. Segmentarity occupies a multiplicity or aggregate of political relations. And, as Deleuze and Guattari detail:

"It is not enough, therefore, to oppose the centralized to the segmentary. Nor is it enough to oppose two kinds of segmentarity ... There is indeed a distinction between the two, but they are inseparable, they overlap, they are entangled. Primitive societies have a nuclei of rigidity or arborification that as much anticipate the State as ward it off. Conversely, [State] societies are still suffused by a supple fabric which their rigid segments would not hold."

Emergent from such an entangled multiplicity of relations are the overlapping spheres of the micropolitical and macropolitical. "What makes fascism dangerous is its molecular or micropolitical power, for it is a mass movement," Deleuze and Guattari write. The macropolitical is no antidote to the poison of microfascism, for "May 1968 in France [when large-scale protests and strikes erupted across the country] was molecular, making what led up to it all the more imperceptible from the viewpoint of macropolitics ... The politicians, the parties, the unions, many leftists, were utterly vexed; they kept repeating over and over again that 'conditions' were not ripe." It may seem, in French Guiana, that the macropolitical sphere is not in revolt against the French government. The French State geometry territorializes and borders French Guiana and, as such, the "conditions are not ripe," regardless of the actual injustices which constitute the territory. But, given the entanglement of French Guiana within the rhizomatic constellation of French territoriality, what may we say of the micropolitical?

SEGMENT 2

The *Gilets Jaunes* (Yellow Vests) movement is thriving in Paris. The Yellow Vests movement initially responded to a spike

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in diesel and petrol prices in November 2018, but quickly gained momentum and articulated more general causes of discontentment with Macron's presidency and the French government. Some *Gilet Jaune* demands include tax reforms aiming to aid low-income people, and the establishment of a citizen's initiative referendum—a direct-democratic constitutional amendment which would allow for French citizens to directly petition the government for referenda, without permissive steps taken by the parliament or presidency. Every seven days, from November 17th to March 16th, the Yellow Vests occupied the streets of Paris, while parallel movements emerged all across France. March 16th, 2019, marked the "ultimatum," as some taking part in the grassroots movement term the 19th wave of protests. That weekend 200 protesters were taken into custody and Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo deployed nearly 6,000 police officers, two drones, and an entourage of teargas and police weaponry. President Macron threatened to involve anti-terrorist military forces come another wave of protests. News outlets have reported that the Yellow Vest movement is beginning to falter; Macron is appealing to some of its demands while heightening the threat of anti-protest military force. Were the "conditions not ripe"? If leftist organizations take the yellow vests as an example of grassroots insurgency, what do they see? Bright yellow vests, 40,000 people in the

streets, blocked roads, and nervous politicians: ultimately a failed movement.

EXCURSUS 3

Deleuze and Guattari write:

“For in the end, the difference is not at all between the social and the individual (or interindividual), but between the molar realm of representations, individual or collective, and the molecular realm of beliefs and desires in which distinction between the social and the individual loses all meaning since flows are neither attributable to individuals nor overcodable by collective signifiers.”

Political relations, mediated by the border, must not be understood in dichotomous, arborized, opposing ways. Indeed, the multiplicitous politicality of French Guiana must be reckoned with in order to potentialize the antifascist flow of its activism.

SEGMENT 3

Tiouka voiced concerns over the environmental damage the Columbus gold mine would cause in his country: “The forest is endangered because of legal and illegal mining. Our environment is completely polluted. We find traces of mercury in the rivers we fish in. People are ill because the whole food chain is contaminated. This shouldn’t just be about economic development.” But in the history of French Guiana, activism has never been just about environmental concerns. A recent article in *The Washington Post* recounts for the protests that surged in French Guiana during the 2017 French presidential campaign accordingly: “French Guianans feel legitimately neglected by Paris: Poverty, inequality and lack of adequate public services such as schools, police and hospitals are compounded by a wave of immigration from nearby Brazil and Haiti.” The author, Manu Saadia, describes how grassroots activists organized against the sale of a nonprofit hospital in Kourou to a private administrator. Saadia notes that activists in French Guiana, critically preceding the Yellow Vests, set up highway roadblocks

denying access to the Guiana Space Center. The protest aggrandized and transformed into a sustained, month-long movement with demands including better public education and infrastructure. Saadia declares French Guianan victory. The pressure on the French government to acknowledge the activism of French Guiana as they did in Paris, which involved major economic disruptions and a few violent protests, forced the French government to concede three billion euros to French Guiana’s infrastructural development. Still, French Guiana is marked by the traces of a segmented territorialization. Had the French Guianans worn yellow vests? How does this political relation—that of the territory, the border, the citizen—problematize the leftist analysis of something like the “grassroots” ideals of the Yellow Vest movement? What if roots are thought of in terms of their extractive and colonial means? Does the yellow vest movement only embolden—and border—its appearance by excluding and extracting from its territorial roots?

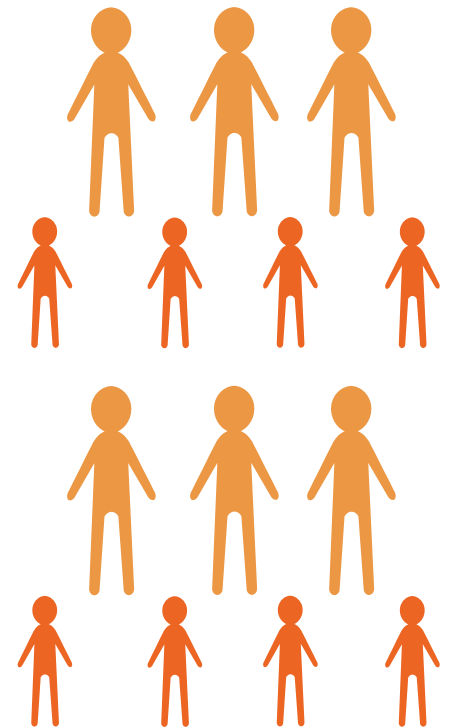
LINES OF FLIGHT: DESTRATIFICATION

Who can wear a *gilet jaune*? Can the French Guianans? A French Guianan may be a citizen of France, but does this citizenship grant them a stake in grassroots activism? Or does French activism, while claiming “roots,” remain segmentary and territorialized, insisting endlessly that “the conditions are not ripe” when in fact the intensities of its flows are cut short by its colonial and extractive roots, which close and rigidify the movements which give it all of its potential? The highly visible line segments plastered on the bodies of protesters in France only serve to border its participants in an inscrutably microfascist macropolitics. These visible borders enclose French Guianan leftism within its colonial sphere, but it is not within the certain vision of the Yellow Vests to extend the roots of fuller, “grassroots,” French citizenship to French Guiana. Until the logic and remnants of coloniality and the violence of its territoriality are addressed in full by the left, a leftist workers’ movement will not transcend its fatal segmentarity. ■

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CITY & CITIZEN

AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. NASSER ABOURAHME

BY: CHRIS RUSSO

Dr. Nasser Abourahme is a Princeton-Mellon/Humanities Council Fellow and a scholar on the intersection of urban studies and postcolonial thought. He has written for a variety of publications including the *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, *Public Culture*, and *CITY*, where he is the special features editor. Chris Russo sat down with Dr. Abourahme to discuss citizenship, liberal cities, and how we might understand the crises of Western democracies in the era of Trump, through the lens of colonial history.

CR: In your essay “Of Monsters and Boomerangs,” you talk about how we can understand the crises of Western democracies as a return of the modes of repression and control of colonialism to the metropole and especially the liberal city. How do you understand New York City today, an exemplary liberal, cosmopolitan city?

NA: New York is exemplary but also quite unique in a lot of ways. I think New York displays a lot of the characteristics I had in mind when I talked about the demise of what we can think of as the liberal city. I try to identify in a slightly gestural sense, how what we took for granted as the liberal city—that is, a city of free circulation, a city of free movement, a city in which freedom of individual subjects is not just the aim of forms of rule but the very basis of rule—is no longer the same.

After 9/11, after the War on Terror, New York City has become a hyper-securitized city. It is a city subject

to forms of mass surveillance and all other new forms of repressive control. The expansion and intensification of police power is quite clear in New York City. New York was one of the leading adopters in this country of stop-and-frisk policies, which have since been rolled back. The city came under heavy criticism for the way informants were used in Muslim communities as part of counterterrorism.

People have talked before about modes of accumulation, modes of wealth extraction in urban spaces, but what I’ve tried to do is explore the relationship of our present and what used to be understood as its colonial past. This era is not really finished, but is alive in all of these processes that are extending and intensifying.

City life in New York has changed, obviously since the 1970s where I begin to chart the story beginning with neoliberalism. What’s billed as the difficult decade of the 70s in this city—the city goes bankrupt and is imagined and articulated by various political forces as unruly and ungovernable. There’s a big law and order agenda that comes out of New York and for which New York becomes a sort of centerpiece as it goes nationwide. That culminates in the Giuliani era with what was seen as the cleaning up of New York. These are trends that have been there for while. I try to pick up how after the crisis of 2008, after austerity, they’re intensified and take a more clear role.

This forces us to think about what we take for granted in liberal urban life such that we see it as the opposite of the thing that we call the authoritarian out

there in the bad places in Middle East or in Latin America or in Asia—the distinction becomes less clear cut. I’m not saying that there is no difference. There are different systems of politics at play, different instruments. Liberalism’s self-image has been constructed on the idea that there is a typological distinction. If you go back and read early liberal thought—Mill, Montesquieu, anyone—they’re building it in opposition to a certain image, often of the east: Oriental despotism, Middle Eastern sexuality, licentiousness.

Having said all that, I would add that New York City, like all cosmopolitan, diverse cities in the West and elsewhere, can’t just be reduced to instruments of repressive control or to these large scale apparatuses of urban accumulation. There’s a lot more going on in this city. It’s a recalcitrant place, and it can’t really be domesticated. When you actualize the abstract way in which I wrote about it in a city like this it stops being so clear cut.

CR: Can you explain what you mean by the “subject,” as opposed to the “citizen”?

NA: One way is to think about the subject and the citizen as distinct categories. A citizen is someone who is not subject to the rule of others, but is a free individual who enters into voluntary contractual relationships with the state and with others vis-à-vis civil society. In colonial thought there is a split between citizens in the metropole and subjects in the colony.

Another way is to think about citi-

zens and subjects as antinomious couplings—citizens are always subjects, in a certain sense. The emergence of the institution of citizenship itself always entails a form of subjection. There is a paradox at the heart of the concept, which is really a paradox at the heart of our political order. The very concept that marks your freedom, your subjectivity, your ability to do something, also marks your subjugation to a form of power.

"THE LIBERAL CITY- THAT IS, A CITY OF FREE CIRCULATION, A CITY OF FREE MOVEMENT, A CITY IN WHICH FREEDOM OF INDIVIDUAL SUBJECTS IS NOT JUST THE AIM OF FORMS OF RULE BUT THE VERY BASIS OF RULE -IS NO LONGER THE SAME."

To concretize this, this way we think about the citizen-subject in liberal democracy as fundamentally a subject of freedom. In a certain sense, you are controlled through your freedom. Today, we witness a space in which this relationship is no longer so clear cut. I think part of the ways in which obedience around the notion of citizenship in a country like this works is beginning to fray. These things have to be qualified by race and class, but let's take an ideal type, a white male—the way we've understood it in theoretical terms is that obedience in a society like this comes out of conviction. You don't obey the law because you're afraid, but you obey the law because it is right and

it is just and it is the contract you have entered into with the state and your fellow citizens. You know that there is an imperative somewhere, but you obey not out of compulsion.

Part of what we see in the post-austerity moment is the collapse of the givenness of this conviction. You can see this in the language of the far-right—an insurrectionary language, in which the rules of the game are up for grabs again. In a sense, Trump's election was a protest vote, but a protest of what? In a way, they're rejecting politics as a whole. The idea that the political order and its norms are as just as can be, even for those for whom citizenship was meant to be a guarantee of a stake in the game, not its racialized minorities, is fraying. There is a crisis at the heart of the institution if white propertied men are almost in a state of revolt; the contractual deal citizenship held in place is not as stable as it once was. The hinge that moves one from subject to citizenship, that makes you internalize the ethic of power—"I ought to obey"—isn't as clear anymore.

CR: Hudson Yards [a \$25 billion ultra-high end real estate development in Midtown Manhattan] has taken a lot of heat recently from architecture critics who see it as an epitome of the worst of NYC real estate development in recent years. What do you make of New York's evolving architectural landscape? How does the lived urban environment relate to these crises of liberal cities?

NA: I would have to agree with most of those critics. Hudson Yards is a giant mess; that's not the hill I'm gonna die on. The triumph of the law and order agenda, of what's called the Giuliani era "broken windows theory," really is the bedrock of the movement of financial instruments into NYC real estate. The mass gentrification that happens in Manhattan and in large parts of Brooklyn really needs as a prerequisite the forms of increasing repressive con-

"THE FORMS OF INCREASING REPRESSIVE CONTROL - EXPANSION OF POLICE POWER, STREET SURVEILLANCE, PATROLLING, STOP-AND-FRISK - ALL MAKE THE MATERIAL POLITICAL FOUNDATION OF PROJECTS LIKE HUDSON YARDS."

trol—expansion of police power, street surveillance, patrolling, stop-and-frisk all make the material political foundation of projects like Hudson Yards. Because real estate value is tied to a wider geography, what they call the "cleaning up" of a neighborhood provides the basis for valorization, for capitalization. They need the long arm of the state. Capital always needs it.

New York really in that sense is not too unique; it resembles a lot of what has been happening in so called global cities and big metropolises—real estate becomes not just a financial instrument, but a type of currency. One of the striking things if you look at a city like London or even parts of the Upper East Side are occupancy rates and how empty some of these apartments are for large parts of the year. This is something that intensifies quite starkly after 2008 and after interest rates collapse. Surplus capital needs new forms to take. Real estate really just as a way of parking money becomes central in that, and NYC is at the forefront. If you look at the number of foreign investors, investment arms buying up property you'd see a huge increase in the past 10 years.

Architecturally, Manhattan is increasingly an imprint of that phenomenon, though arguably it always has been. I think it is more uniformly so than it has been in the past, and Hudson Yards is an example of that. There are others, and really in terms of an architectural aesthetic there is really not much going on outside large scale corporate architecture. How many Renzo Piano buildings can New York sustain?

"THE HINGE THAT MOVES ONE FROM SUBJECT TO CITIZENSHIP, THAT MAKES YOU INTERNALIZE THE ETHIC OF POWER - I OUGHT TO OBEY - ISN'T AS CLEAR ANYMORE."

CR: You've discussed before about how denaturalization is a particularly worrying encroachment on the rights of the citizen. What do you make of the Trump administration's denaturalization pushes?

NA: The institution of citizenship will not necessarily protect bodies from state violence or from being effectively stateless, even though you are technically and legally a citizen. Disenfranchisement through criminalization can be thought of as a form a statelessness. But, there are ways that even that formal status of citizenship is being rolled back. You see it in what are called terror cases, in post-Bataclan France where there is now the spectre of denaturalization and denationalization. Of course Trump has raised this spectre here, of denaturalization en masse. Formal, legal protections wilt in the face of executive power. Why is this wor-

rying?

We know the history of it. We know that denaturalization and denationalization are usually the first steps in either the removal or, sometimes worse, the elimination of groups of a population. The history of WWII in Europe demonstrates that for most states denationalization is a first step in the encampment, and then the elimination of populations. The spectre that all of this talk and its actualization raises is the tangibility of the removal of peoples, either territorially, physically, or their removal from political participation en masse, or their encampment in various sites of concentration. It's not beyond imagination. Citizenship is not enough to protect you, but at the same time, forms of state power are reaching even deeper or threatening to remove that formal and legal guarantee.

CR: We tend to see Trump and far-right nationalism as a movement that comes from outside of big, liberal cities, and feels foreign to their residents. The anti-immigrant, Islamophobic rhetoric seems to particularly go against what, say, New Yorkers or San Franciscans see as their values. You seem to think otherwise—can you explain how this political moment is deeply tied to liberal cities?

NA: There is something tempting and something to a degree true about the fact that there are these bicoastal liberal cities that are removed from the interior of the country—what is seen as the bedrock of the right, the bedrock of white nationalism, Trump's base if you will. Certainly those of us who consider ourselves New Yorkers say we have nothing to do with that mess. There's an ease and there's a comfort in that, but I think it's illusory.

Trump is a product of New York's financial and real estate world, and his worldviews were formed in New York as much as anywhere else. If you consider his role in the Central Park Five-

the vilification, the demonization, the witch hunt of those five kids of color—that's not something that was formed in the Rust Belt or the interior, that's a New York City phenomenon. In more political terms, one has to question at a certain level this liberal civility and centrism and its entanglement and complicity with the resurgence of white nationalism and the Right in this country. These are not necessarily oppositional phenomena, even if now they want to raise their eyebrows and look away in contempt and join the so-called resistance.

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CR: The #Resistance.

NA: It's the policies of a liberal centrism that produced the world from which Trump appears. Mass inequality, which liberal centrists never wanted to do anything about; racism, imperial war. These are the constituent elements that liberal centrism was perfectly fine with. There's this notion that had we just voted in HRC or another liberal centrist or had another term of Obama and it would have all been fine—no, you would have just delayed this phenomenon another four years and it would have come back just the same, if not stronger.■

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