

A DISORIENTATION GUIDE TO IHEID

UN GUIDE DE DISORIENTATION POUR L'IHEID



A Graduate Press Collection
Fall 2020 Edition

DEAR INCOMING STUDENTS.

Cher ·e ·x ·s
étudiant-e-x-s ,

WELCOME TO GENEVA.

**Bienvenue a
Genevè !**

As the only graduate student-run publication at IHEID, we often find ourselves caught between the diverse opinions, identities, and groups that call the Institute their home.

As we have tried to act as a bridge between them, as a space both for dissent and debate, both for critique and celebration, we have often found that certain voices have resonated. This (Dis)orientation Zine is a collection of pieces that we feel offers a sample of these important and critical perspectives, the credit for which lies entirely with the writers themselves. Between our Unofficial GradPress Guide and this (Dis)orientation Zine, we hope that there is a space for everyone, and that they provide a starting point for your own time here. Best of luck with your studies and beyond.

En tant que la seule publication dirigée par des étudiants à l'IHEID, nous sommes souvent pris entre la diversité des opinions, des identités et des groupes qui se trouvent à l'Institut. Alors que nous avons essayé d'agir comme un pont entre eux, comme un espace à la fois pour la dissidence et le débat, en même temps que pour la critique et la célébration, nous nous sommes rendu compte que certaines voix ont souvent résonné. Cette revue de (Dés) orientation est une collection de pièces qui, selon nous, offrent un échantillon de ces perspectives importantes et critiques, dont le mérite appartient entièrement aux les écrivains eux-mêmes. Entre notre guide GradPress non officiel et cette revue de (Dés) orientation, nous espérons qu'il y aura un espace pour tout le monde, et que ces ressources fourniront un point de départ pour votre propre temps à l'IHEID. Bonne chance dans vos études et plein succès au-delà.

BY TANUSHREE KAUSHAL
AND
LUCAS KOPPEN

THE PERILS OF PUBLISHING AT IHEID

AS SOON AS WE CONCEIVED THE IDEA TO PUBLISH A CRITICAL PIECE ON THE INSTITUTE, WE FELT ILL AT EASE, AS THOUGH WE

HAD BROKEN A RULE.

Our intention was to articulate some of the frustrations that exist among the student body. The complaints are well-known by now, often expressed in rant sessions in between classes and in corridors – especially since the recent student protests against the cafeteria's 'pic-nic' ban. The 'right to space' issue is just the latest expression of a discomfort that lies much deeper, marking a quiet conflict between the students and the Institute. For us, the authors, this took on the feeling of being somehow at risk in publishing an article that overtly

criticizes the Institute. What could be the cause of this feeling – and what does it signify?

Most of us would probably agree that the lack of space is only part of a larger disregard of the Institute towards its students. It is hard not to notice the irony of studying at an institution that teaches politics but whose architecture is

completely depolitized – with rarely a poster about anything other than an advert for an event and hardly a space where one can discuss and collectivise. This is at an institute that espouses independence and solidarity as core values in its charter.

What is really at issue here? The independence to practice this

independence only in front of the Broken Chair?

How can one not be in a moral bind when the theories taught within classrooms do not match with one's everyday existence, when politics is something to be kept at arm's length lest one's image and that of the Institute itself suffer in the eyes of prospective employers? Here, the logic of instrumentality reigns supreme – actions are performed in order to achieve something else, never just for their own sake. And this comes to define our relationship with the Institute – it is a stepping stone to get to another place.

Isn't it strange and worrisome that we, the authors of these lines, think that we might receive a negative response from the Directorate? Both of us have been closely involved with student newspapers during our undergrad where each edition would contain a piece criticising the university for a host of reasons. The point is not simply that we had no fear of censorship or of being told off. It is also that this critique was compassionate, showing a concern for a place that we ultimately loved and wanted to improve.

With the institute, we are hesitant to accuse. Our critique might expose our underlying dissatisfaction and alienation – emotions that are ultimately ugly and hostile and while they might express something tacitly present in most students, do not particularly help in changing anything.

Undoubtedly, there are things we too like about the Institute – academic rigour, access to academic and professional networks, but love? One can appreciate the aesthetic qualities of a fake flower, even lay it on display in the living room, match it to the colours of the furniture in the room, but can one ever love a fake flower? To fall in love requires there to be a unique smell, unique character, the possibility of change where some days the flower is more withered than others so a relationship can form

–

when we water it, it grows and spreads its aroma which then reaches us. Absent the presence of any character, of expression, of youthful unrest and jest, what can possibly be left behind to love?

And if there is no love, no passion, then there is no room for politics, only for management.

This is the first edition of 'The Graduate Press'. It has been tried in previous years but every attempt at regular publication sooner or later fizzled out. Whatever the reasons might be, we remain hopeful that a journal like this has the power to create a sense of community, with or without the approval of the Directorate. This is crucial not only to ensuring a wide readership but also to combating the apolitical atmosphere that haunts our Institute.

IHEID AND ITS DIS



BY ANONYMOUS

This article is not so different from the ones that have already been published here. But at the end of my education at IHEID, some thoughts are simply too frustrating to keep to myself but also too controversial to put my name on. Initially, this article had my name in its by-line, as I am not a fan of anonymity. But given the current polarisation, one simply wants to stay out of any possible debates. My aim in this piece is that perhaps, someone will read it as discontents faced by students and find ways to make the Institute a better place. So here you have it: four things that IHEID must reconsider to truly have an inclusive educational space.

1. Democracy is a virtue, not a demonstration.

IHEID is a closed space. Its modern architecture and the symbolism of it being within the 'House of Peace' does not do justice to the

emotions within the institution. What IHEID has lacked, for many many years, has been a feeling of oneness and collective identity, apart from being the school that always sends well-groomed minds to the UN and the international policy sphere (a rather debatable identity, but definitely a marketing spiel). Democratic ideals are ingrained in each and every document from the management's interactions with the students to GISA documents themselves. But where is this realised? In the scattered student movements? Or in the 9am-to-6pm cafe space, which is open to the public?

This being said, there is one space exclusively meant for IHEID students, and it must be competed for: the library bubbles. The transparent "sound-proof" capsules scattered across the library for students to sit professionally and have discussions in. A testament to how IHEID wants its students to perform democracy – a claustrophobic space to deliberate and discuss, all contained within a cylinder that looks productive and pretty from the outside but god help you if you spill the tea anywhere.

2. Few classes teach us to question the developed-developing dichotomy.

Years and years of international relations language developed by European and American scholars have divided the entire world into the most simplistic categories: underdeveloped, developing and developed nations. The WTO and other organisations have tried to counter this by suggesting we rank countries by economic growth, or by wealth and poverty, divided into 4 levels. What we refuse to do is understand that development, and the world, are much larger than these categories created by adamant designers of the "First World" (yet another label). In an institute which prides itself on its critical thinking, I would like to ask, are we really encouraged to move beyond these labels, or do we still consider the "West" as the ideal? A tricky one to answer.

3. Research is generally meant to be conducted on 'developing nations' by people from

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'developed nations'.

Diversity is what makes IHEID possibly the most unique educational institution – which, of course, is ignored in its student housing's pricing – but really goes beyond the brochures. The irony and underlying assumption of most classes, however, is studying everything in context of an international system dominated by the masculine West within which everything occurs, and a rather unquestioning attitude to it. Something that is never said out loud is the fact that scholars from the "occidental" countries more often than not study the "oriental" (more labels!). Seeing people from say, the USA or Germany, writing about poverty and gender inequality in say, Somalia, is interesting, yes. But it has always created some wonderment: why do "Western" researchers gain more legitimacy in such cases? Why are scholars from "developing" nations pigeon-holed into only talking about issues in "the Third World"? Are there projects in research centres studying things happening in the perfect "First World"? Maybe not. If yes, very limited.

4. All

diplomacy
and
management
talk create
in IHEID an
emotional block.

Sorry, that is a weird sentence. It makes no sense, and is honestly a little annoying. Kind of like the business-school-like chatter within the IHEID building? Look, I understand the need to have sessions explaining networking, and all the career fairs; it's how the world functions and we cannot change that overnight. But here we take a full circle back to the initial point: why is there a lack of practicing democracy? What makes expressing emotion so difficult? Why is there no space for students to just chill (and no, Picciotto does not count)? Because corporate environments do not wish for this. Crony-capitalism cannot allow the general public to collectivise; that's blasphemous! The diplomatic language and management jargon fill in the available space, and while many student initiatives attempt

very hard to create discussions, it is rather hard to break this environment.

In conclusion, I do not dislike IHEID, and maybe some would say I care about it enough to pen this down. In fact, IHEID has given me many things that I will cherish forever, some extremely wonderful teachers, some very fruitful discussions in classrooms, and friends with whom I have countless memories. It is a place where people from different parts of the world truly try to understand one another – Exhibit A: the dinner of the three cultural initiatives in Fall 2019. But what is an educational institution without the spaces of deliberation and discussions for students to create innovative ideas? It is a building, not a community, as we are often referred to.

THE AMBIVALENT POLITICS OF

AT THE GRADUATE INSTITUTE

BY SURYA GHILDIYAL
AND
FABIENNE ENGLER

From the White Rose Society to Tiananmen Square to Anti-Vietnam demonstrations to the present day Hong-Kong Umbrella movement, students across the world and throughout history have been at the forefront of educating and organising against repressive regimes and policies. Consequently, universities have acquired a significant role beyond a place of work: they are places of conscience.

The Institute, however, is different, a difference proudly demonstrated in its modern architecture, extremely expensive student housing that pushes poorer students to the periphery, and an overall emphasis on

CVs and professional development. Given how the Institute markets itself as an institution of "academic excellence... located in the heart of International Geneva" and its establishment in the aftermath of the appalling violence and devastation of the First World War, it is strange how this academic institution can foster political ambivalence on global issues (world affairs in Institute speak), especially issues concerning lives in the Global South, with such ease.

The Institute has taught us the following lesson: the most employable of us are the ones flattest in their political positioning.

This ambivalence is palpable in the very (infra)structure of the Institute. The classrooms have been designed less as

classrooms and more as conference rooms ready for consumption by international organisations. There is a lack of 'hanging out' spaces within the Institute. In case of full occupation of the kitchens on the disciplinary floors, the space at Salon Davis and outside the library cannot be used to have conversations over food. Students are expected to walk all the way to Picciotto Common Room – a place spatially separated from the Institute – to heat their food and eat! How does one exchange ideas and share thoughts beyond the classroom when there are no common spaces available? The very thoughtfully designed infrastructure of the Institute has reduced an academic institution to a place of use, instead of a place of learning and unlearning.

Additionally, the task of nurturing a political conscience is apparently outsourced to our respective initiatives, while the Institute aligns itself primarily to its role of shaping our employability. Various events organised by the initiatives such as LANI, MENA Initiative, CTRG and The Feminist Collective in the previous semester came as a breath of fresh (political) air. Many

important conversations on various political struggles were started and solidarities were forged. We will especially remember the passionate event on indigenous land rights – led by indigenous leaders themselves and facilitated by LANI – or CTRG's conference Race and Black Male Studies with Dr. Tommy Curry.

Furthermore, as the elected representatives of student body interest, one would expect the GISA student union to be at the forefront of various struggles at the Institute and beyond, especially considering that all the aforementioned initiatives are its formal offsprings. However, instead of voicing solidarity with international struggles like it

used to, we came to realize that GISA has instead reproduced the politics of reputation espoused by the larger institution itself.

In a particular instance of brutal (and lethal) police violence against peacefully protesting students in Jamia Millia University in New Delhi last month, a solidarity statement was drafted by some Institute students. GISA misled the students into believing that 240 student signatures were required for the statement to be endorsed by it. This clearly went against GISA's statute and, on being apprised of the rules, it retracted the earlier given number. It however, maintained its position to give voice to all student opinions and admitted that 11 people were opposed to the statement; whereas more than a 100 students publicly endorsed it.

Consequently, it changed the statement from "the student body of IHEID" to "the concerned students".

It clearly let a few individuals, who expressed in personal messages their opposition to a statement against police brutality and state repression, circumvent the democratic and participatory processes foreseen by its own statutes. In the previous three semesters, we have not come across a single global issue where the students of IHEID have been mobilised by GISA. So instead of "having an opinion" about tear-gassing libraries and beating students black and blue, we encourage the student body of the Institute to make use of GISA's Article VI on GISA support for civil society movements and campaigns to reappropriate politics at the Institute. An urgent need for doing away with the politics of backroom negotiations and creating a more vibrant space and politically aware and active student body representation is called for.

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COLLECTED
BY MURCHANA
ROYCHOUDHURY ET
CHAE YEON KIM

Decolonisation / Décolonisation:

political,
economic,
linguistic,
structural,
relational
doing of
colonialism and
legacy.

Le processus
politique,
social, économique,
culturel, linguistique,
épistémologique,
structurel, et relationnel
du démantèlement du
colonialisme et de son
héritage.

This is a
crowdsourced
list of courses
which are known to have
touched upon topics
of decolonization and
postcolonialism.

While we do not vouch
for the quality of the
courses and the extent
to which they engage
with these topics, we
are merely attempting
to create a resource
for new and old students
that would like to
expose themselves to
decolonisation and
postcolonialism within
the Institute. As students
of international and
development studies at
a school with a global
student body, we feel
that there is a need for

CATALOGUE DES COURS

Postcolonialism / Postcolonialisme:

Une théorie
critique qui part
du principe que le
monde d'aujourd'hui
ne peut être compris
sans prendre en compte
l'impact immense du
colonialisme.

**A critical theory
operating from the
assumption that the
present world cannot
be understood without
relating to histories
of colonialism and its
vast impact.**

deeper
engagement
with these topics.

Some of us who have already
spent a few semesters
at the Institute may be
painfully aware of the
lack of courses designed
to decolonise academia

more
widely.
But in the short term,
this is a small attempt
to help you filter through
the original course
catalogue, so that you
are well-equipped for
the upcoming course
registrations.

We invite you to
critically examine,
question, and challenge
what is taught within
the courses you will
take over the next
year. We invite you to

question not only what is taught, but who is teaching it and why, who has written your readings, and your own role and privileges.

Decolonisation is more than a period in history – it is a struggle that continues, even within the spaces we currently occupy in the ivory tower of academia. We present this course catalogue as a starting point, recognising that this humble list of courses is simply the tip of the iceberg. We encourage you to take our preliminary work and continue it as activists inside and outside the classroom.

e Contemporary Sub-Saharan Africa

FALL 2020

- Identity and Conflictuality in the Contemporary Sub-Saharan Africa – Eric Degila
- An International History of Racism – Mohamed Mahmoud Mohamedou and David Rodogno
- Gender, Sexuality and Decolonization in the Global South – Nicole Bourbonnais
- History, Theory and Practice of Development – Gopalan Balachandran & Shaila Seshia Galvin
- Corruption Histories – Rui Esteves
- State-Building and War-Making in the Developing World – Mohamed Mahmoud Mohamedou
- Histories Beyond Nation – Gopalan Balachandran
- Global South And International Law – Anthony Anghie
- Social Movements and The Environment – Marc Hufty
- Globalisation and the Political Economy of Labor – Sungmin Rho
- The Political Anthropology of Media: From Africa to the World – Alessandro Jedlowski
- The State: Post-Colonial Perspectives – Shalini Randeria
- Economics of Natural Resources, Conflict and Development – Nicolas

Berman

- Humanitarian Adventures: Actors, Institutions and Contemporary Issues – Davide Rodogno
- Sociologie Historique et Comparée du Politique – Jean-François Bayart
- Authoritarianism and Democracy in Latin America: From Independence to the 2010s – Edoardo Altamura
- Humanitarians and Human Trafficking: The Global History Of Slavery and Abolition, 1800–Present – Amalia Ribi Forclaz

SPRING 2021

- Empire: Past, Present and Future – Cyrus Schayegh
- Evolution of the International System, c. 1815 to the Present – Gopalan Balachandran
- Violence, History and Memory in Twentieth Century Africa – Aidan Russell
- India: Culture, Politics and Society – Aditya Bharadwaj
- Histories of Truth, Facts and Uncertainty – Aidan Russell
- Race and Mobility: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives – Gopalan Balachandran
- International Investment Law – Joost Pauwelyn
- Urban Visualities – Patricia Spyer
- Internationalisation of Education and Development – Alexandre Dormeier Freire
- Religion et politique en Afrique – Jean-François Bayart
- History and Theory of International Law – Janne Nijman

CONSTRUCT

MENTAL AND

BY TANYA KINI

This is an excerpt from a 2019 speech by Kini, who was the GISA Welfare Committee's former President. She spoke at an event on "Mental Health and Well Being", organized by the Graduate Institute's Student Wellbeing and Services Support (SWSS) team.

The main message today can be summed up in one line: your own welfare is very important. Whether you book an appointment with the psychologists, attend one of the dance classes offered by GISA Welfare, or even send an email to Student Support to briefly outline your concerns, the way in which you seek comfort and reassurance – looking after both your physical and mental welfare – is necessary to maintain a balanced lifestyle.

The information session aims to create a culture of discussion around certain topics that need grave attention: mental well-being and

harassment. While Dr Pernin from HUG has touched upon aspects of the latter, I continue along the vein of comfort and recognition. I wish to assert that, sometimes, we don't realize when we might be making another person uncomfortable. However, once we realize that there is a degree of discomfort being experienced by the other person, it is our utmost responsibility to correct that situation, in whatever way that person requires.

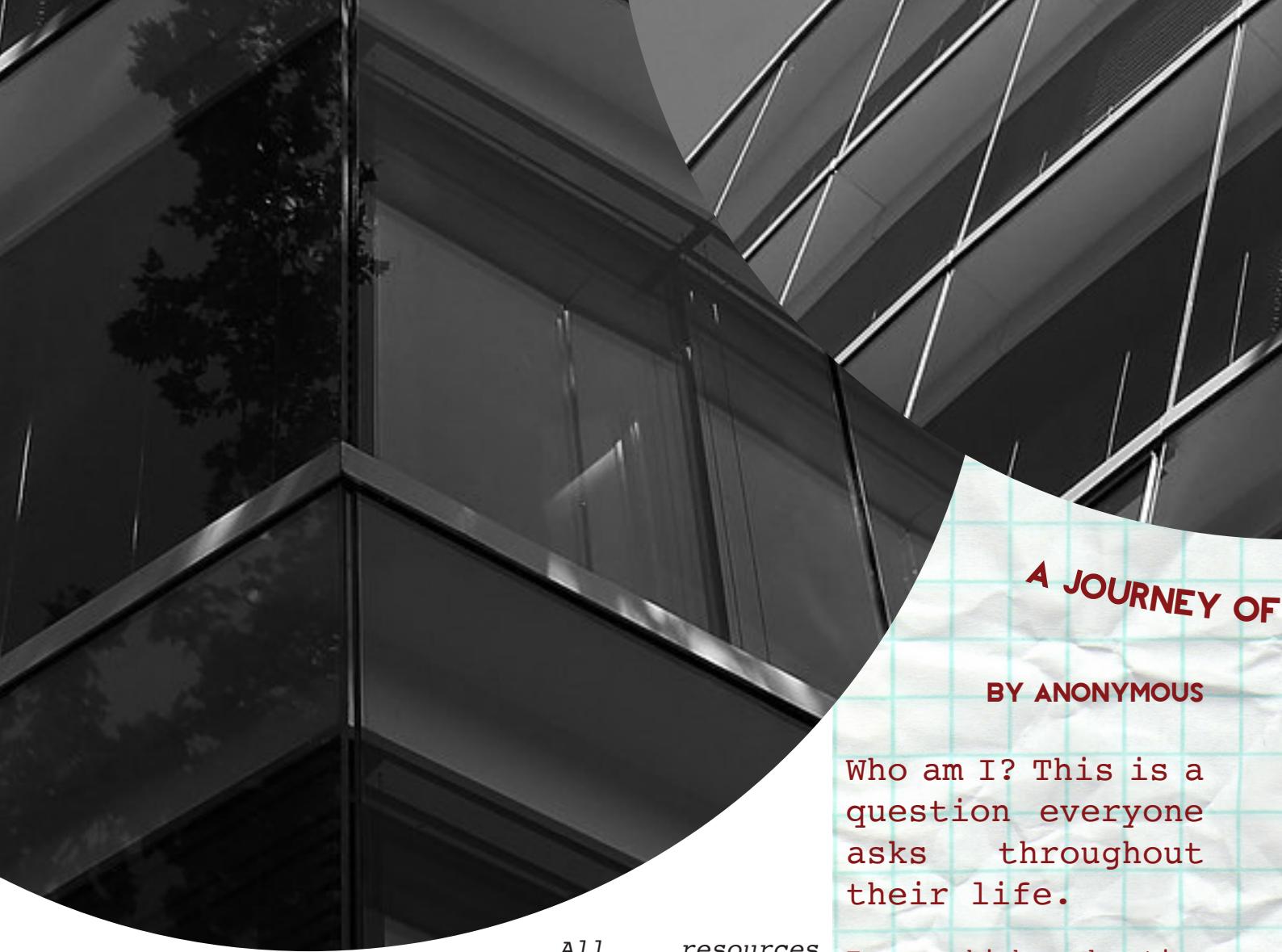
Does this mean that we need to rethink our actions and words constantly? Knowing when another person is uncomfortable also comes with a degree of comfort. You would definitely know if a statement or action is making your best friend uncomfortable. However, with strangers or those whom you are less familiar with, it needs to be stated clearly – whether you have been made uncomfortable or whether you are making someone uncomfortable.

We are all adults here, and we have come to IHEID with a sense of purpose and intelligence. I do not say this lightly or condescendingly: it is imperative that you do not contribute to the discomfort of another person in any situation. From verbalizing

micro-aggressions to ignoring consent to even unknowingly exacerbating someone's anxiety, we need to hold ourselves responsible for the mistakes we've made. Flipping this around, we also need to express ourselves if we have ever experienced them. If you cannot do this alone, find someone who you trust and ask them for support.

The Graduate Institute prides itself on being a highly diverse institution with different nationalities, world views, backgrounds, sexualities and preferences. One way through which this is being shaped is through the introduction of the Gender and Diversity month, happening all through November. Taking this into account, we must recognise that all people have different outlooks on how to approach certain situations. It would do us well to not disparage them but to help them understand and recognise if they have done something wrong. However, a warning: if resolution cannot be brought about through internal means, there are institutional support systems for the same.

Did this sound extremely preachy? Perhaps. Are you someone who already knows all these things?



Maybe.

But in trying to create an atmosphere of inclusivity and safety here at IHEID, it never hurts to repeat oneself. Perhaps that is my true aim – forget the degree, we should just try and make the world a better place.

Preachy or not: find your person or people. Don't hesitate to call others out on their nonsense. And, if all else fails, you can always find me for a coffee and rant.

All resources discussed during the session are available at the following link: <https://graduateinstitute.ch/wellbeing>. The Institute also runs Antenne H, an anti-harassment initiative: <https://graduateinstitute.ch/antenneh>

A JOURNEY OF

BY ANONYMOUS

Who am I? This is a question everyone asks throughout their life.

To many, higher education is a ticket to a career. To some, a diploma is what we are expected to attain, representing intellect and wisdom. To me, studying is finding myself. Telling a story of the self involves an immense amount of self-acceptance and trust for interlocutors. Storytelling is the revision of the self. It does not require writing or public speaking, but an open mind to willingly listen. Everyone needs an open mind for the self and for others.

Success has yet to be defined

Aiming to climb the



SELF-EXPLORATION IN A TIME OF CHALLENGES

social ladder, studying is told to be a path to success. In grad school, doubts and self-questioning made the detours of my life roller-coaster. This is normal to all of us. Rushing in herds towards social expectations seems to be the norm, but we deserve time to reflect on who we are and what success means to us individually. To me, success is being the perfect version of the self and persistent in one's goals, while accepting failures.

Where is the destination?

In the journey of finding ourselves, we are easily distracted by comparing ourselves with others, stepping over one another and burying our uniqueness. Competition reflects enmity, insecurity and the denial of failures. Outscoring and

outshining others reduces trust, empathy and support in human relationships. No matter how far and hazy the destination is, we need to ask what impact we can make, given our privilege of receiving an education. Perhaps we can give each other encouragement, until an aspiring but unnoticed candidate overcomes the job-hunting hurdle. Every individual has his or her innate capacities that are meant to shine. We need to help each other find them.

Valuing vulnerability

Not showing vulnerability is often perceived as the norm, showing emotional control to others is what we expect. I have gone through depression. Through perfectionism and not seeking help from others, I tore myself apart. In two years of grad school, I learnt to acknowledge and appreciate my mistakes. Each coin has two sides. Giving too much importance to fame keeps us from facing

failures of ourselves and others, but mistakes do not mean right or wrong. They make us resilient and help turn ourselves into a crystal ball of self-understanding. Material items and money do not fill the soul.

From self to others

Coming from a reserved culture, assertiveness, emotional expression and help-seeking were not in my dictionary. Facing diversity and adversity, I often felt powerless to rebut political differences, insensitive assumptions and overt criticisms. By understanding how I feel, I started to put myself into others' shoes and stand up for myself.

A small gesture of respect and acceptance can show civility. Depression is a black hole absorbing light and energy, even more so for me as an introvert who frequently over-analyses and judges myself. Sugar-coating things with fake smiles on my own or others' stiff faces was not a remedy to others' false interpretations and prejudice. Camouflaged consolation cannot win against an outpouring of empathy. Kindness, compassion and empathy override premature judgments that subtly affect others.

Alternative narratives

Some start out being well-off. Some do not. No one in my family is educated enough to guide me through life. The future is obscure for many who do not even see a path to education. My parents barely remember the twenty-six English characters. Others, on the other hand, are entitled to leisure, knowledge, networks and personal care

for

children whose future a positive emotional will not begin in space. deficit.

It took me a while to overcome the disadvantage of being left behind socially. I reframed my story. I accepted who I am and learned to move on with my own strengths. At least I was born safe and protected. I opened my first 'Gratitude Journal'. Every day, I write down five things I feel thankful for. By focusing on positivity,

I make better choices in

To our future selves

No matter where we are led to, it is worth spending time to reflect on who we want to be. My upbringing taught me to reshape my personal story and express empathy and appreciation, to my family, others and myself.

Life is never easy, but challenges nurture success. I learned to accept myself from the wistful reminiscence of the past, from family upbringing to grad school.

Allowing lament and anguish that are hidden under carpets to come to light takes courage. History makes the future better. Late-blooming flowers emerge gloriously in times of difficulty.

A LESSER



KNOWN LEGACY OF STUDENT ACTIVISM AT THE GRADUATE INSTITUTE

BY ALEXA-RAE M. BURK

This piece was originally published.

Ask around to your peers who have children, and you will learn that there are little institutional structures that seek to support them at the Institute. As it stands, most support is given at an ad-hoc or case-by-case basis under the prevailing assumption that there "just aren't many student parents." Further, there are assumptions that students have started organizing only recently for student parent interests. When

one digs a bit into our alumni network and the archives of the student association since at least 2011, student parents at the Graduate Institute have been organizing for solutions to the same 5 key issues:

- lack of information provided prior and upon arrival to Geneva
- lack of family-friendly spaces and atmosphere on campus
- lack of child-care solutions
- lack of structural support (i.e., ad hoc basis of financial support, leave, among others)
- lack of inclusivity for class times,

rescheduled classes, registration dates and similar events for students with children.

As early as 2012, students under the initiative "IHEID Families" advocated to collect statistics on information on student parents to provide a stronger case for the admin to prioritize the institutionalization of support for parents. This largely came from a feeling that students with children felt that they were being treated as a "minority" and individual problem, often hearing things such as, "There's only a couple students with children for your issues to be an institutional problem." This resulted in a word-of-mouth survey in which they found that there were 19 student parents, with 8 pregnancies and 22 children, 15 of whom were under five years old. A similar survey was conducted in 2015 showing very similar numbers. In the most recent survey in autumn of 2019, the data showed that there were 29 self-identified student parents, where out of their 38 children, 30 were under the age of five.

If there was any question about the feasibility of an IHEID crèche, we can conclude

that it cannot be due to the oft-cited reason that there is a “lack of children of the correct age.” As the numbers show, IHEID students from 2012 until today consistently have among them between 15 and 30 children; that is 8

faculty with children under the age of 4. Thus, the cantonal requirement for IHEID to have enrollment of a minimum 20 children would have already been met by students alone.

studies due to the lack of affordable childcare solutions. Many reported only getting a couple hours a sleep at night, their research being subpar compared to their abilities, extreme financial stress, and a general feeling that they would fail if they do not sacrifice their well-being. In conversations with eight student parents this last semester, in addition to the results of the recent survey, the IHEID Parent Initiative found that these stories are all too familiar still.

According to the Quality Assurance Standards, students are entitled to equal access to carry out their education. Policies that purposefully exclude student parent needs are no longer acceptable, and it is clear that the legacy of such policies has negatively impacted student parents and disproportionately disadvantaged them.

Through the Parent Initiative, I hope to create networks for the community among students, staff, and faculty parents, which will first and foremost dispel the lonely myth that student parents are alone in this. Next, I hope to create a play area on campus, which

years of consistent and increasing numbers of children at the prime age for child-care. These numbers don't even include staff and

conducted. The students reported that they felt they were made to feel like “the only student parent” at the Institute and reported exceptional amounts of stress attempting to carry out their

could be used in a variety of ways such as child-care swaps, play dates, and even serve as a meeting spot. In an

institutional way, it is a first step in forging a family-friendly environment on campus. In order to address the problem of lack of information provided prior to moving to Geneva, I created the IHEID parent initiative student guide, which I will ensure to be included in the Welcome Week and Admitted Student guides. In terms of childcare and financial support for student parents, I believe it realistic to create a special child care fund to help student parents who need it to cover the expenses of childcare. This stipend should at the minimum, cover the cost of babysitting for the hours the student needs to be in class. Based on a record dating back to 2015, it is clear that creating a crèche is a firm "no" from admin. Thus, I want to exhaust my already limited time towards other solutions. Turning the "no" into a "yes" will remain to be a consistent priority

in the background of other issues.

No one can deny that IHEID students have organized and come up with solutions on behalf of student parent needs for close to a decade now. For 8 years, students with children have identified their shared challenges and proposed solutions. For example, the IHEID Parent Initiative, along with its predecessor IHEID Families, is an unpaid entity providing solutions such as the Student Parent Guide, which should arguably already be provided by the administration to student parents. Students with children are already disadvantaged in a variety of ways,

and it should not be their burden alone to create and fund solutions to the challenges unique to students with children. It is now time for the administration to put resources towards supporting these.

Students are already doing the mostly uncompensated work to help themselves. Now is the time for administration to institutionalize the solutions put forth by the IHEID Parent Initiative and Gender and Diversity Commission. Let's not look back again in 8 years to see minimal change, but rather imagine a shift towards something powerfully inclusive and redeeming.

This piece is an adaptation for The Graduate Press of a shorter text written by Matheus Ferreira Gois Fontes (1st-year Master's student in International Law) and Massimiliano Masini (1st-year Master's student in Development Studies) and published for QISA on the Graduate Institute website and in the internal newsletter. Kevin Lehne contributed to its adaptation for Feminist Voices, the column of the Feminist Collective.

These are without a doubt the most extraordinary circumstances for Pride since parades spread across the globe in the 1970s. For a community that built its political platform through the struggle on the streets and that claimed the streets as a space for celebration, their emptiness forces us into a moment of introspection and reflection.

Community has a special meaning for queer people. Since not all families (friends/colleagues/employers/governments) support our identities, reaching out for an inclusive group "out there" is essential in the process of (re-) claiming identity and

existence in the public space.

Having this taken away, as we are locked inside our homes, many of us have realised the importance of surrounding ourselves with queer people and allies alike. The distance from our chosen families forces us to pause and reflect on the persistence and renewal of discrimination, even in times where LGBTIQ+ politics and culture appear to be thriving – at least in the institutional discourses in many countries and organisations in some parts of the world. Furthermore, the shared repertoire of action of early queer militants with Black Lives Matter in the United States, an unprecedented moment of popular mobilisation in our lifetime, prompts us to question the meaning of our pride in a moment in which so many members of our and other more marginalised communities are under attack.

Pride marches began one year after the Stonewall

riot on June 28, 1969, when queer clients at the Stonewall Inn bar flooded the streets of New York against the police raid that intended to close the bar, one of the few that allowed openly queer people. This sheds light on the importance of political activism for the present recognition of basic rights for LGBTIQ+ people. The engagement of the early activists, mostly black and transgender, should inspire queer activists and allies all around the globe. The celebratory spirit of pride should not be an excuse not to protest, or not to demand equality of rights and opportunities against the persisting, overarching sexist and patriarchal structure, which is far from being undone. Rather, this spirit should motivate us to persist in the political battle for social justice in all its dimensions.

PRIDE IS STILL A RIOT

While Pride is an important celebration of queer identities and people, it is equally important as a protest to challenge the oppression these identities and people still face today. The fight to dismantle the systems that create and uphold this and many other forms of oppression is anything but over, and every person has a role to play in it. This is why we come together and synergise with other movements that counter discrimination and hatred, and will do so for as long as it is necessary.

In Switzerland, 2020 might become one key moment for the advancement of "lgb" rights in light of the victory of the plebiscite for the criminalisation of homophobia and the vote on same-sex marriage. While this should certainly be celebrated, the exclusion of the transgender and non-binary community as beneficiaries of those

policies, and their long time coming, should also make us reflect on the bigger picture.

Furthermore, the rise of openly anti-queer (as well as sexist, racist, anti-semitic, and islamophobic) political forces throughout the world – including in Europe and North America, where many wrongly thought this to be inconceivable – has not been met with the appropriate institutional resistance.

Anti-queer legislation has been recently proposed in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis. The ILGA-Europe has published its Index and Map with an alarming conclusion: it's a make-or-break moment for LGBTI equality. Just looking at Europe, several cases illustrate the rise of such infamous policies and discourses. Campaigning for reelection, the current president of Poland has proposed a ban on LGBT rights to marry and adopt. Likewise, his opponent is against the adoption of children by parents of the same sex, as he stated in his last

remark, after promising to ban LGBT teaching in schools. In Hungary, Viktor Orban has already made it impossible for transgender people to have their names corrected in official documents, in an attempt to deny their gender identities.

Furthermore, queer communities are constantly under attack in the political discourse. When they are not directly targets of hate and verbal violence, their oppression is systematically erased through various narratives aimed at obscuring the differentials of power entailed in a patriarchal society. In a way that is common to several other forms of institutional discrimination, those who benefit from the social marginalisation of other groups are quite keen to reduce it to individual disrespectful behaviours. In the political and public discourse, similar narratives are not just erroneous, but contribute to the reproduction of systemic oppression and violence.

For instance, the long-lived myth of the protection of the heteronormative family is still a powerful tool of mobilisation when some rights are

introduced in national legislation. In Italy, it was recently used by the leader of the Lega Nord, Matteo Salvini, who, in order to delegitimise the proposition of an anti-homophobia bill, reiterated the necessity of legislation against 'eterophobia' and for the defense of the 'Christian family'. Unsubstantiated prejudices still define the boundaries of legislation along the lines of sexual orientation, as testified, for instance, by the unattainable (non-scientific) conditions for homosexual men to donate blood in most European countries (like Switzerland) and the politicisation of the debate around any attempt

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BY FABIOLA MAZA

This piece was originally written for and published in Feminist Voices, the column of the Feminist Collective.

During the COVID pandemic, all of humanity is faced with lockdowns and other restrictive measures that have reduced our interaction with others. I have been questioning myself about the notion of collectivity and community, and my own individualistic behaviour. The lesson I have learned is that I –nay, we – need people. This personal process allowed me to think again about the value of the collectivity, especially in my feminist learning process, and it reminded me previous concerns raised by students, regarding our political isolation as a student community.

As students engaged in political debates, we need a community to engage in politics. We need a politics that fosters not only academic knowledge but also dialogue, critical

thinking, and political engagement, and creates the democratic space that is often mentioned in our academic work. But in order to do

and cooperation. We have experienced different

NO ONE IS AN ISLAND: BUILDING ON FEMINIST SOLIDARITY

that,
we need
a community
based
on
feminist solidarity.

Solidarity is a big word. It is a complex concept that entails mutual-aid and support, empathy, kinds of solidarity, within our families, among the students, professors, and others.



From

individual acts of kindness to activities organized by student initiatives, we all have benefited from some act of solidarity as students. But what happens when solidarity becomes political? As Nela Porobić Isaković argues, "When we exercise solidarity, we are making a political statement. It is an act born out of an understanding that we live in a system of oppression and inequality. It is an act born out of an understanding that we, as individuals or as part of a collective, can help bring down that system. As such, solidarity is subversive, and, unlike kindness, is dangerous for the establishment."

organizing and preparing food for those in need due to the COVID crisis in Geneva is a great example of how solidarity also uncovers a failure of the system and its institutions in providing living conditions. People clapping as a way to recognize health workers also manifest a critic towards the gendered devaluation of care work and inadequate wages. A solidarity fund to support LGBTQIA+ people in the Moria refugee camps in the context of COVID, currently promoted by several collectives in Geneva, demonstrates not only global structural failures but highlights the benefits from alliances and activist networks beyond borders. This is not charity or

individual kindness. This is taking political action. And solidarity needs to be rooted in a political action based on affection, horizontality and mutual-aid.

Last Saturday, the Latin American Initiative (LANI) and the Feminist Collective organized a conference with Helena Rocha, President of the Commission of Gender Violence of OAB/PR, and Lety Tordoya, member of the feminist collective "Mujeres Creando". Both feminist lawyers agree that laws, policies and institutions are not enough to prevent gender-based violence. Furthermore, they often reproduce the same gendered orders that are being questioned. But what is the alternative then?

Despite coming from different fields, they agreed that it is necessary to forge solidarity and get out of our bubbles of individuality to make a change. Lety called this the "underground revolution", happening outside the state, the institutions, and the norms. This revolution is made through solidarity networks and alliances, and perhaps this is the most powerful, transgressive, and even effective mechanism for social change. Each

community contributes in different ways, according to their capacities, knowledge, expertise and experiences: providing support and care, as a source of information, making statements, etc.

Surely, we can contest patriarchy through our own individual acts, but why not collectivize? As students who are talking about politics, we need to build on solidarity and mobilize ourselves. Let's exercise more solidarity as a political act.

First and foremost, we need to take into account that solidarity requires acknowledging inequities within and outside our student body. To build solidarity, we need to challenge our own situations. As Pauline mentioned in the last column of Feminist Voices, we need to acknowledge our privileges. Our varying backgrounds come with different experiences and struggles. We should also acknowledge that in Geneva we are privileged students from an elite institution.

Second, we need to engage more in dialogue and start challenging hegemonic discourses and structures that are sometimes taken for granted in politics and in our own academic work. As stated in one graffiti of Mujeres

Creando, "Be careful with the present you are building. It should look like the future you dream of."

The Conference organized last Saturday proves that having different perspectives and sharing lived experiences show the real complexities in contemporary debates. Gender violence is not only challenged in international courts or addressed in policies. It is also contested every day in households, through street graffiti and also in academic spaces.

Third, we really should be more active outside. Student initiatives are spaces for debate, critical thinking and could be a bridge with other student communities outside Maison de la Paix. For instance, there are several political issues happening now in Geneva, especially due to COVID, and several collectives and student initiatives are taking different political actions to support the most affected. Perhaps some of you are individually engaged, but what about as a student community?

Other students have raised important concerns about the

political ambivalence of our student environment and have remarked institutional limitations to the exercise of democracy inside the community. I wonder if we can use solidarity as a way to (also) contest those constraints, for example by being creative in finding spaces and ways to do politics as we aspire to.

My feeling is that we, as a student community, need to do more. Our "political awareness" should not be limited to our papers but rather it should be present in our everyday. We, myself included, need to get out of our political isolation. One lesson to learn from the quarantine is that we need people. And perhaps others need us too. Let's use this as an opportunity to step out and engage.



BY BENJAMIN
GAILLARD-GARRIDO

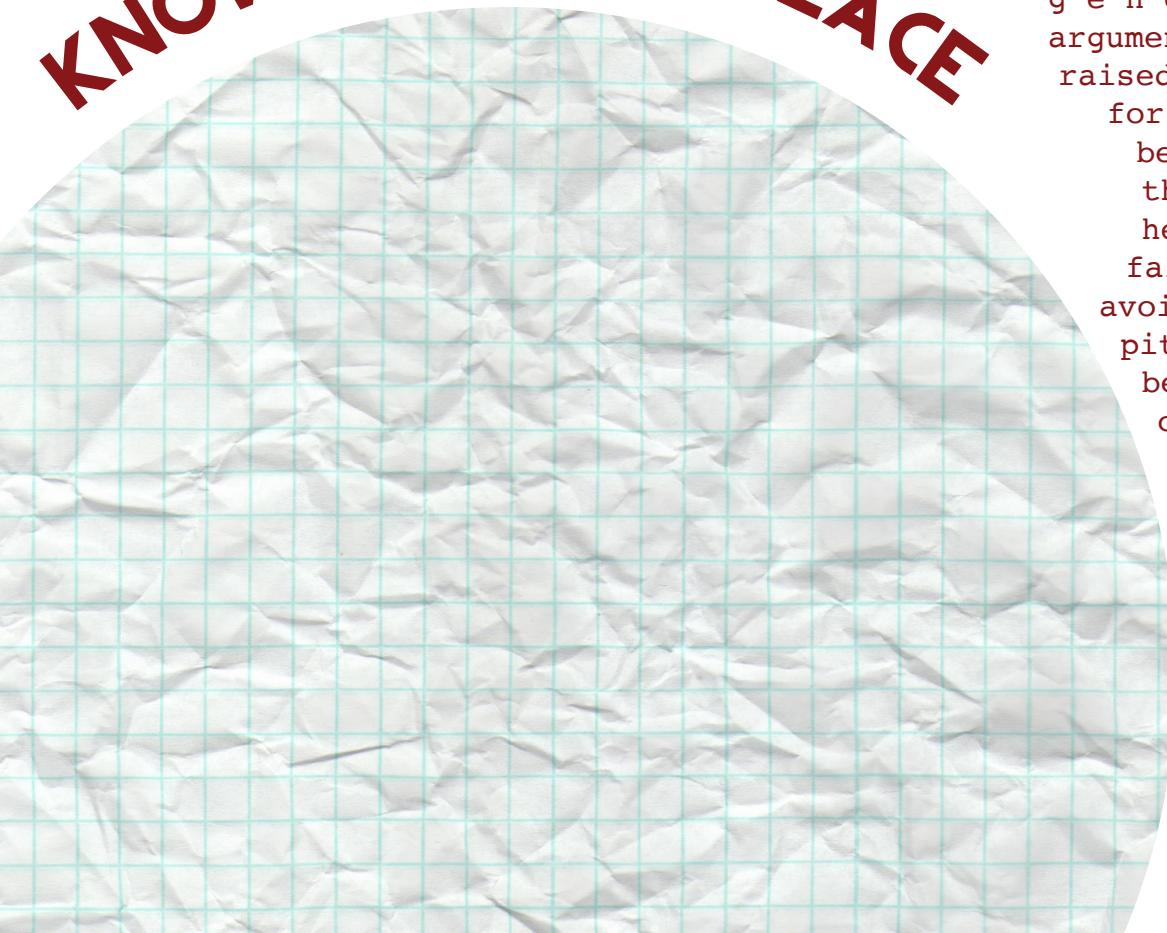
This piece was written in reaction to an *Op-Ed*, written in French, that was previously published on the *TGP* website. It addressed *GISA*'s reaction to the *Black Lives Matter* protests, the transnational complexity of reporting on such issues, and the perceived "Anglophonisation" and/or "Americanisation" of the Graduate Institute. While we felt that the debate addressed an important and ongoing conversation about the status of French at the Institute amongst other issues, we have chosen not to republish the *Op-Ed* in question, and have instead published a response.

In this article, I would like to respond and critically reflect on the problems, dilemmas, and impasses that the piece in question ended up generating not only for me, but also for many of my peers at the Institute. As such, this article is not preoccupied in any way with the author of the piece in question, but rather with the general ideas that mediate his commentary. In this sense, this article will offer an interpretation of the piece in question. While my interpretation could be wrong, I would still like to tease out the

issues that the piece's general argument has raised both for me and for other students, because I believe that doing so could help us in eschewing false dilemmas, avoiding regressive pitfalls, and better orienting our fights.

The issue here is not that of determining the nature of the article's intentions, but rather that of taking a critical stance

KNOWING ONE'S PLACE





towards some of its underlying ideas, its clumsy structure of argumentation, and its questionable phrasing. First of all, what seems clear is that the piece's lack of reflexivity ends up instrumentalizing the death of peoples in Myanmar, the Mediterranean, and Burkina Faso to highlight an ongoing debate at the Institute: that of the near-absence of French. Moreover, the implications of the article's framing,

which would seem to uncritically reiterate a tired binary of French versus English rivalry playing out at the local, parochial, Graduate-Institute-level, are, as other students have pointed out, extremely problematic. As such, beyond any concern for the author's intentionality, one gets the sense, as a reader, that there is a larger, unspoken, and surely unconscious agenda at play here.

It is therefore unsurprising that the article came to many of us students as weaponizing the death and dying of

peoples across the world to promote a very petty, local, parochial agenda implicitly understood, because of its exclusive framing as Anglo versus French, as alluding to a French colonial-civilizational project. In this sense, instead of reflecting on the ways in which the nearly exclusive – and thus definitely questionable – prominence of specifically US-based processes of racialization on social media could help initiate larger debates on the dynamics of racialization, colonization, and decolonization across the globe, the article seems to fall back on a regressive French civilizational rhetoric that reinscribes the same kind of "partial" "pseudo-humanism" it purports to be decrying, albeit under its Gallic, yet just as objectionable, guise.

As such, it ends up displacing what should be the central issue – that of racism and diversity both within and beyond the Institute – and thereby undermining what we should all be focused on building: solidarity. Let's proceed to analyzing some of the article's issues more in detail.

The article opens by describing the protests as America's long

awaited opportunity to finally "awaken" and denounce the "racism, incompetence, and immorality" of none other than — behold! — Donald Trump. In my opinion, this is a very reductive reading of the whole situation, precisely because it fails to grasp the extent and continuation

of Black Liberation and Resistance struggles. The article then proceeds to describe how much "disgust" its author experienced when first seeing the black squares on peoples' profiles on social media — which were meant, however performatively, to represent and stand in solidarity with George Floyd, his family, and

Black people across the world. A sense of

"irritation" then arises, we are told, when the author first received the Graduate Institute Students Association's widely circulated reading list on anti-racist literature.

The author's "disgust" and "irritation" comes, as we should surmise, from the hypocrisy of Western US-centric liberals and GISA, who would seem to perform their indignation merely selectively, calling out racism whenever a "US citizen" is murdered, but not flinching, or so it would seem, when a person dies at the Myanmar-Bangladesh border, in the Mediterranean, or in the Sahel.

(On a side note, let's not forget the problems of describing George Floyd uncritically as a "US citizen," in a way that completely ignores the consequences of racialization on an individual's position with regards to the "social contract" and thereby downplays racism.)

The piece is certainly correct in calling out the hypocrisy and selective indignation



of Western liberals – be they Anglo- or Francophones, we should add. But to do so, one need not to unself-consciously write about George Floyd, nor to instrumentalize the deaths of peoples across the world, nor to structure an essay in a way that ends up playing in the hands of a French language uncritically understood as an imperial project beleaguered by Anglophone hegemony. But as is common in most instrumental whataboutisms, either a nihilist cynicism or a crypto-regressive standpoint generally tends to lurk behind them.

After reading the article's last paragraph, I was struck by the impression that French is the "real" harbinger of "diversity" at an institute subdued by the "partial" "pseudo-humanism" of GISA and Americanization. But by pitting French against English as caught in an inescapable imperialistic binary and portraying French as the "true" representative of "diversity" at IHEID, the article ends up doing a disservice to those it was perhaps most fundamentally meant to advocate for. Those are the very students, Francophones or not, seeking to obtain a decent amount of courses in French – and

hopefully in Frenches! o f – at an institution that prides itself in being "bilingual" while simultaneously offering a meager 2% of its courses in what is supposed to be its "second" language.

But instead of unreflexively pitting a language against another in a tired iteration of a well-known and worn-out colonial revanchist complex, a better strategy to foment real linguistic diversity at the Institute – of which French(es) are undoubtedly an essential part – might consist of showing solidarity with people of color and in fighting to establish links between the international student body and the Swiss nationals who attend IHEID, regardless of mother tongue(s). In other words, a better strategy might be that of building, not burning, bridges across linguistic, national, and religious lines. Moreover, we should do so keeping in mind that both French and English are not first languages for most people, that both are historically constructed abstractions with painful colonial roots, and that both have been imposed within and outside their countries

"origin" through coercion and hegemony.

Let's be clear here: neither Anglo-Saxons nor their petty French cousins are the "real" representatives of "diversity" and "universality," whether here at the Institute or anywhere else around the world. We, students who are dedicated to anti-racism, denounce both US-centric liberal

imperialism and its pale French-centric variant as two examples of the same white racist patriarchal humanism that has plagued so much of our modern world. We know since Aimé Césaire that both are morally and spiritually indefensible. We also know since Léon Gontran-Damas and Zora Neale Hurston that both French and English can nonetheless be inflected, that both languages can be bent so that they might tell our experiences, that both can be forced to accommodate and carry the depth, beauty and resilience of our lives, and, in this sense, that both can be decolonized. As such, instead of reiterating colonial tropes that tend to foreclose any opportunity for productive student debate, we might begin by engaging in creative ways of decolonizing our curriculum, a point which has been at the center of student initiatives such as Black Conversations, LANI, and the CTRG and which is all the more important at an institution with a heavy imperialistic past (and

present) as the Graduate Institute (see Busino 1990, Solchany 2014, Solchany 2015, and Slobodian 2018.) And, particularly at a time like this, we will again stress the need for centering global processes of racialization in our debates and conversations.

In this regard, the fact that the article reduces the scope of the debate that has been going on at the Institute to GISA's reading list is rather unfortunate, to say the

least. The piece fails to mention the efforts led by student initiatives such as Black Conversations and the Afrique Students Association, who have actually been the drivers of the solidarity movement at IHEID in collaboration with GISA, or by LANI, which has not only extended the original reading list to include Spanish and Portuguese language





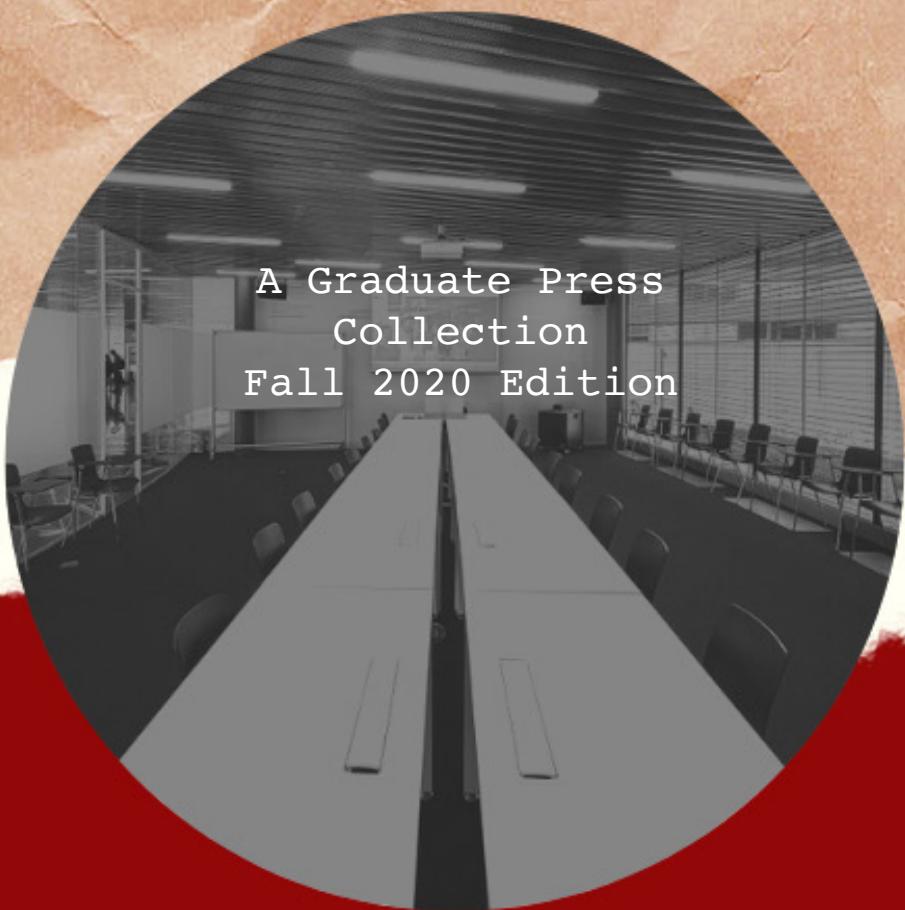
literature, but in which, as we speak, is also organizing a series and a conference on police brutality in Latin America. This is without mentioning last semester's events, such as the panel on "Diversity, Land, and Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Brazil," organized by LANI in collaboration with Brazil's Indigenous People Articulation and the Colectivo Grito, and the conference on Kashmir organized by the Understanding Kashmir Initiative. And we should still mention the panel organized by the CTRG, the Chaire Yves Oltramare, and the International History Department, which tackled, precisely, the issues of racialization

in historical, sociological, and philosophical perspective both within and beyond the "West." All these efforts, the article chose to ignore.

Instead of instrumentalizing the suffering, death, and dying of peoples across the world to speak on a crudely parochial Graduate-Institute-level issue, we might begin by disentangling what must be disentangled. At a time like this, we might begin instead by reflecting on the situation African-Americans are facing at home to inquire into the dynamics of racialization at a more global level. After all, both US- and non-US-based processes of racialization have been, and still are, deeply intertwined, as the Emory Douglas poster, which opens up this response, made clear more than fifty years ago. But anyone who has remained attentive and committed to these issues need

not wait on the US's prominence in social media, nor on any cable television's exclusive latest coverage to take a stand.

We might also begin to ponder on the extremely grave question of why nonwhite peoples generally emerge in the narrow political horizon as death-bound peoples whose perception as living human beings aspiring towards ends in the world is made impossible by white violence. And we should definitely self-reflect on our own particular role and place in this larger dehumanizing system. But to do so, we must begin by remembering that solidarity is always — always — unfinished and that, to have concrete effects, it must be collectively reimagined and recreated.



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