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parti*Tions*



UCLA RADIO

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Table of Contents:

4-5

Foreword: Cracks in the Wall

UCLA Radio Editorial Board

How do you Read Homelessness?

Fiona Ruane

6-7

8-9

**Colonial Environmentalism
and the National Parks**

Ellis Wren

Bridging UCLA's Party Subcultures

Amanda Romankiw

10-12

14-17

**East
and West**

Natalie Chen

18-19

Who Does the US-Mexico Border Actually Divide?

Sydney Marks

20-21

We Have Berlin at Home, Sort of

William Grobmyer

Scars and Fractures

Muryam Hasan

22-23

24-25

Emerald Partition

Caroline Pangilinan

26-27

The California Red Wave

Ella Mitchell and Kimia Nuban

A Plea for Nuance

AJ Rosean

28-31



Foreword: *Cracks in the Wall*

Your struggle is a crack in the wall of the system... If you stop scratching at the crack it closes. The wall heals itself. That's why you have to keep at it without rest. Not only to expand the gap, but above all, so that it doesn't close.


Subcomandante Galeano, Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional

This issue's publication comes in a time of crisis and from an Earth on fire. We face new eruptions of state violence, rapidly receding democracy and accelerating inequality, over the backdrop of a heating, dying planet.

Trace the histories of today's crises, and at their root you will find a wall. From the barriers of apartheid that run across occupied Palestine to the border fences carving up Turtle Island along lines of empire, crisis always begins with partition — physical or social.

We write from a university built over the dispossessed lands of Tovaangar, meaning *the world* in the Tongva language, but now known as the Los Angeles Basin. The land that forms our campus today was carved out first by the Spanish, before it was privatized under Mexican administration and further ethnically cleansed by the United States. We share this history, not only to acknowledge our institution's role in this brutality, but because it mirrors all those of partition.

Each stage of the violence that facilitated the establishment of our campus began with partitions, deeply unnatural impositions that seek to immobilize a naturally fluid world along arbitrary lines. And so they are enforced with violence, dispossession and exploitation. Today, the University of California's investments continue to drive not only tenant displacement in Los Angeles, but also other regimes of division such as autocratic rule in the Philippines and the settler-colonial genocide in Gaza. This pattern of unjust enforcement extends beyond our campus: it is imbued in the logics of partition and continues to play out across the globe.



But when walls go up,
the Earth and its people
resist. The ground moves and
shifts. Rain falls and structures erode.
And slowly, cracks begin to form. They start as
small openings, but the ground keeps moving and the rain
keeps falling. And they grow. They combine, deepen and spread. No matter
how carefully engineered or maintained, the wall is no match for the Earth. Its
foundation gives way, and the wall crumbles.

Those who draw partitions would like us to believe that they are impenetrable and immutable, for our struggle ends when we resign to their permanence. But when these walls are built over people, families and communities — forever changing and adapting — the ground shifts and cracks form.

In this issue, we seek to draw attention to the cracks in the wall. We will discuss partitions built over disparate geographical and temporal landscapes, and therefore ones that present variable challenges and distinct struggles. But crucially, none are permanent: they all have fissures. Deepen these openings and they will naturally spread, connect and fracture.

From Tovaangar to Palestine, all unjust walls will fall. Until then, we urge you to keep scratching at the cracks.

In solidarity,
UCLA Radio Editorial Board
Disclose. Divest. Cops off campus.

How Do You Read Homelessness?

Fiona Ruane

Outside versus inside: the division between our indoor and outdoor space is a fundamental partition, one that defines traditional living, working, and learning spaces. But for 45,000 individuals in the city of Los Angeles, the partitions that establish where, when, and how they live look different and often take nonphysical, intangible forms. Conscious and passive cultural, social, and systemic mechanisms perpetuate the divisions and stigma associated with LA's unhoused population. A large proponent of this partition? **Language, literature, and media.**

Language permeates our zeitgeist, informing our collective beliefs with the power to dehumanize individuals or reinforce power dynamics. Literature—the storytelling we defer to—indicates what is right and what is wrong, who is worth listening to and who is not. Media reflects our social anxieties and capitalizes on fear and exclusionary policies, reinforcing harmful narratives in oversimplified ways.

With this in mind, I turned to one of the most prolific centers of language, literature, and media in my life in Los Angeles and at UCLA: The Daily Bruin. Since 1970, there have been countless articles about individuals experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles and in Westwood. Some discuss it blithely and amongst a slew of other issues. Others take a narrative approach, describing their “first encounter with homelessness.” For better or for worse, each undergraduate perspective reflected a particular cultural understanding. These articles were written, read, and internalized—creating further linguistic and literary partitions.

As the partitions affecting LA's unhoused continue to be written, we must look to recontextualize the language around us, uncover embedded stigmas, and reimagine narratives. We must look to retwist the vernacular pushed unto us and create something new, always reading between the lines and always aiming to dismantle the literary partitions that surround us.



The homeless must be provided with shelter

“The masses of our people are in a serious state of repression around the world.”
through the “process of miseducation.
the Homeless are so often controlled by others.

“We drove thousands of homeless to shelters,
set record lows in a dozen Eastern cities
“did nothing to stop
“did nothing to prevent the
the problems they encounter.

He is homeless, stranded
He did not lash out at the society that left him
the “sad state”
he went on his way

he went off, and I returned to my dorm.
The heater was on. I was warm.

the administration focuses on all their money.
cut funding for low-cost housing.

How do you feel ?
is your Office cold, dark and dreary.



Colonial Environmentalism and the National Parks

Ellis Wren

In recent years, the environmental movement has begun to engage in an arduous but crucial transformation. As the world stands at the precipice of climate catastrophe, Western environmentalism has been forced to reckon with its systemic weaknesses. The inability of preservationist tactics in particular to meaningfully address climate change has amplified challenges to eco-colonial thought that treats land and earth as commodity and reproduces patterns of dispossession.

Mainstream environmentalism in the US, at least prior to the incorporation of environmental justice frameworks into the movement's demands, was of a distinctly colonial mode that continued to assume and assert European supremacy. Originating in the transcendentalist thought of Emerson and Thoreau, environmental preservation emerged from a philosophy that located divine experience within nature untouched by humanity. Critically, this thought assumed the mythology of a pre-Columbian American wilderness that was untamed, uncultivated, and uninhabited - disregarding centuries of indigenous agricultural practice and decontextualizing indigenous knowledge from physical and cultural loci. The wilderness was conceived to be separate from humanity and thus commodifiable, romanticizing nature as a pursuable destination rather than an element of everyday life.

The National Parks system, often hailed as one of the environmental movement's greatest victories and "America's best idea," engaged with this mythology from its inception and consequently formed a mechanism for further dispossession. The link between land dispossession and environmental preservationism in the US, at its core, emerges from disparate relationships to the earth: indigenous conceptions of land emphasize our belonging to nature, fundamentally differing from the (colonial) commodification of land perpetrated by the National Parks model. Centuries of indigenous land management were wiped from the landscape as preservationists sought to transform native lands into their mythical "pristine" wilderness. Lands acquired by the National Park system rapidly became unrecognizable in a transformation paralleling the broader colonization of America by European settlers.

Among the clearest instances of this effect may be found in California's particularly brutal history of indigenous removal. The genocide that followed the conquest of California, only formally recognized by the state in 2019, is estimated to have killed nearly 90% of the region's Native population by 1900. The history of its National Parks such as Yosemite serve as powerful reminders of the violence upon which the state was founded and the continued struggle for true environmental justice.

After the discovery of gold in the Sierra Nevada, conflicts between miners and Native Americans culminated into the forced expulsion of Yosemite Valley's inhabitants in the Mariposa War of 1850-51. Although some of the native Ahwahneechees were allowed to return to the valley, the state's management of the area routinely exploited their labor and traditions to bolster the valley's booming tourist economy. The area was eventually named a national park in 1890, which ironically focused more on enhancing tourists' experiences than proper environmental management as practiced by the Ahwahneechees. As a result, the valley's ecological balance quickly became disrupted by aesthetic adjustments that modeled the park after the Europeans' mythical wilderness.

The use of National Parks to solidify Native expulsion and skirt treaties that protected indigenous land-based tradition soon became a defining characteristic of federal Indian policy. For instance, Death Valley's national park status delayed the return of traditional lands to the Timbisha Shoshone until 17 years after federal tribe recognition. As with resource extraction, tourism extraction is a strong dispossessing force rooted in the colonial commodification of land and America's founding genocide.

This dynamic extends beyond ecotourism: the US's mainstream environmental movement never fully broke from the preservationist social constructs that associated wilderness with whiteness. These tropes drove environmentalists to turn a blind eye to emerging patterns of environmental racism, where rural extractive operations and urban pollution sources came to disproportionately affect indigenous communities and people of color. This environmental injustice not only ensures that disenfranchised communities are hardest hit by climate disaster: by insulating the politically powerful from the full force of this crisis, environmental injustice constitutes a powerful obstacle to the structural reform needed to counter climate change.

One cannot properly understand the failures of (colonial) environmentalism without first assessing its roots in the erasure of indigenous voices from the struggle for environmental justice. Similarly, definitions of environmental justice that decontextualize themselves from the intertwined histories of genocide and ecological devastation on Turtle Island (such as that adopted by the EPA) fail to refute the movement's founding white supremacist notions. As the Red Nation tells us, we now face a choice: decolonization or extinction. It is clearer than ever that a reckoning with global colonialism is necessary to avert climate catastrophe.

Bridging UCLA's Party Subcultures

By Amanda Romankiw

My freshman year of college I was ecstatic to take on UCLA's party scene. All I had really known of college parties was from television's fabricated portrayal of fraternities — something along the lines of Project X.

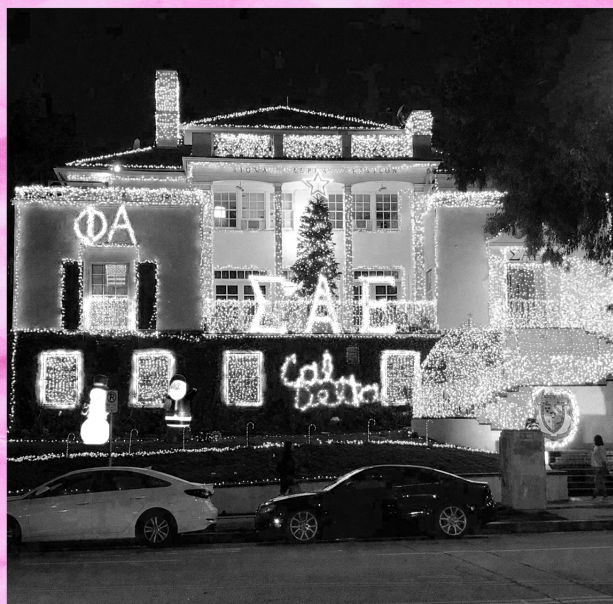
Soon enough it was Fall Quarter Black Out. I had only heard legends from upperclassmen and my fellow freshmen. I couldn't wait to step foot into the mansion bearing the Greek letters I had only dreamt about. But once I walked through the doorway, the oversaturated mixture of vape and sweat filled my brain. *I could hardly keep up with my friends in the almost pitch black room with Pitbull blaring in the speakers and strobe-lights blinding my vision.*

The moment that I had been anticipating for all these years lasted about ten minutes before I decided to leave. Despite my distaste for the frat-scene, I found myself going out to them the following weekends. While I initially had fun, the allure

eventually subsided and I was left feeling bored out of my mind at UCLA's social scene.

Thankfully one night a girl from my Political Science discussion invited me to a house show. The concept of this was foreign to me. Eager to meet new people and explore new things, I willingly accepted her invitation.

The first thing that stood out was that the show was at an apartment in someone's backyard. The smaller setting was more



intimate and the cool breeze of the outdoors was refreshing. Looking around me I saw a scene of people whom I had never encountered before, especially at the frat party scene. Instead of bearing the traditional Princess Polly crop top and black mini skirt, girls were wearing fur coats and smudged eyeliner. *Guys weren't repping the usual frat uniform of khakis and a pastel polo; instead they were in Affliction tees and baggy jeans, held up by an overpriced Ed Hardy belt found at the Silverlake Flea Market.*



As I walked through the crowd, the scene of vintage leather and cigarettes surrounded me. People were tuned into the live jazz playing before them and fully present with the company around them. The essence of community was riveting.

This year, as a sophomore, I feel comfortable saying that I have had my fair share of both party scenes: Greek Life and house shows. I have friends in both circles who have expressed explicit disinterest in the opposing social sphere. One guy told me that he would never step foot in a Greek-affiliated function and that the idea of being in a fraternity/sorority is humiliating. Later I found out that he and his "alternative" friends actually rushed (and were dropped). I've had friends in sororities express similar distaste in house shows. A lot of people here are so closed minded and berate opposing social spheres just to validate their own tastes.

continue reading on next page...

house shows

or

frat parties

However, both party scenes share a common denominator: they are a means of social interaction and meeting new people. We gravitate towards communities we think we will belong to or reflect who we aspire to be. With house shows, there is a subconscious pressure to put on your best outfit and carry an alluring presence throughout the night. Hardly are there rowdy drunk girls shoving their way through crowds or guys frat flicking while standing on tables. Nonetheless, the air is still thick with observation that borders on the realm of judgement. There is this yearning to assert your level of perceived “coolness.” I have seen this in real time, often with guys mansplaining Lana Del Rey lyrics or their niche obsession with Japanese denim. *One guy told me it was embarrassing that I rushed a sorority and then proceeded to show me his Pinterest board dedicated to the “divinity of the female body.”* I couldn’t help but gawk at the paradox.

There seems to be fixed preconceived notions about both social spheres. In hindsight, I have found that these two party-scenes overlap more than they may think. For one, within recent times fraternities and sororities have been throwing events that resemble house shows. Recently one house hosted a huge philanthropy event with live music from Westwood bands. Furthermore, many frat guys and sorority girls are actually in these bands that we see showcased at non-greek affiliated organizations. In order for us to grow, we must accept opposing opinions and delve into discomfort. College is meant for us to try new things and maintain an open mind about the endless possibilities offered here. Creating generalizations about Greek Life or the music scene only deepens the divide between the two social spheres. Rather, we should embrace their differences.



Pics From Our Own Events



wanna write (and party) with us?

then JOIN ucla radio's news department!

East and West


By Natalie Chen

With excerpts from Renata Adler, *Pitch Dark*

When
I learned
about the shrew,
the poor unevolved,
benighted shrew, which will
keep jumping high in the air at a
place in its accustomed path where an obstacle, a rock perhaps, once
was but no longer is, well, I wondered about all those places where,
though the obstacles have long been removed, one persists either in the
jump or in taking the long way round. It seemed such an unnecessary jolt or
expenditure of time and energy. And yet if you have acquired a profound aversion
for just such a place simply because of an obstacle that once was there, or an inca-
pacity to discern that the obstacle no longer exists, or an indifference as to whether
it exists or not, or if the habit of pointless jumping, or detour, or even turning back
dejected has become for you the path itself, or if you have a superstitious need to
treat the spot as though the obstacle remained, or even a belief that the discovery that
the obstacle is gone is in itself a punishable offense, if any of these things is true for
you, then you are lost. Or probably lost, unless the habitual path, the compulsion, the
leap, the turning back, the long detour have for you another value. Individuality, for
instance, love, obsession. Or for that matter, art.

For a few years of my life I lived in Taipei, which is awfully warm year-round,
painfully hot in the summer, and always maintains the presence of a certain wetness
deeply felt yet never addressed.

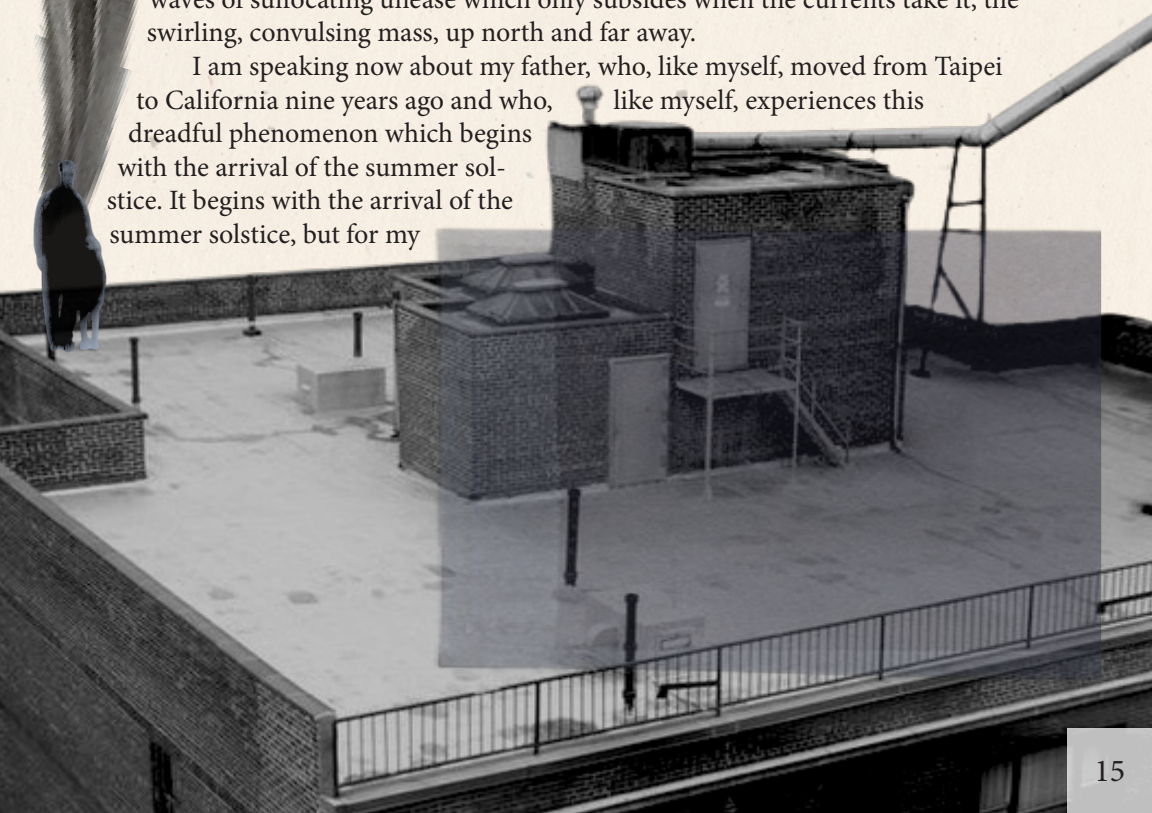
With a single exception I look back upon this interval of my life
with much fondness, inhibited only by an annual occurrence of culminat-
ing dread which began punctually with the arrival of the summer solstice
and would then only grow stronger. This dread grew in tandem with the
radiance of the sun and the weight of the air, swelling in magnitude with
the inevitable arrival of the typhoon at summer's peak, by then which the
air has become unbearably suffocating, except by then even the crash-
ing blows of howling winds bring a sadistic comfort of knowing that the
turmoil within can almost be represented by something tangible. The
arrival of the typhoon means that the worst has come and almost passed,
so when the swirling, convulsing mass finally curves north into



the main belt of the westerlies the dread seems to vanish instantly, like it was never there, like a malignant tumor suddenly benign, like something retrospectively trifling. It leaves no trace except for only a familiar tightness in the chest every time the clouds part and the rain clears and the petrichor emanating from damp tarmac lingers in the air, lingers just long enough to remind you that even though the mind may forget, the body always remembers.

I have since moved to California, where I have lived for the past nine years, and here it is so dry that my skin cracks constantly and my mind becomes reclusive. No one has ever asked me what it is like having spent substantial time in two hemispheres of the world so disparate, and I doubt that anyone ever will, but it opens with this: since moving from somewhere very wet to somewhere very dry, the absence of moisture serves as both a comfort and a curse. The dryness is convenient, albeit mundane, but since moving to California the sensation of culminating dread has not occurred even once, and this in itself is enough to pay the price of apathy. The curse, then, is an amalgamation of both deprivation and the natural movements of climate meteorology. They say it never rains in California, but of course this is not true, and when it does rain, and the clouds shift and the winds start and the petrichor begins to emanate from damp tarmac, I remember it all, each time sharper and more painful as a natural consequence of abstinence, but perhaps the worst consequence of all is that when my body remembers it no longer excludes my mind and instead feeds it, so that each time it rains in California my mind and body remembers and temporarily embodies those strange periods of time when it became unbearably difficult to breathe, a sensation swelling in magnitude with howling winds, crescendoed by the intrusive staccato of rain, culminating in waves of suffocating unease which only subsides when the currents take it, the swirling, convulsing mass, up north and far away.

I am speaking now about my father, who, like myself, moved from Taipei to California nine years ago and who, like myself, experiences this dreadful phenomenon which begins with the arrival of the summer solstice. It begins with the arrival of the summer solstice, but for my



father, since moving from somewhere very wet to somewhere very dry, it has never ended. All of which to say, my father is a man tormented by a culminating dread only except for when he is back home in Taipei. He has not had my privilege of leaving it behind.

One summer, amidst an emerging typhoon, my dread grew so intense I had to be hospitalized. It took the guise of a kidney infection, which manifested in the form of fever, nausea, and body shakes so violent that even five layers of wool blankets would not smother them. As my state of being was not unexpected given the time of year, my mother decided that we would wait it out — both my illness and the typhoon. This ongoing typhoon, named Soudelor, eventually became the third most intense tropical cyclone worldwide.

Of course a typhoon of this caliber could not simply be waited out, so after two weeks of a sustained fever we braved the weather to visit the hospital for some antibiotics. As it turns out my white blood cell count was alarmingly high, and instead of antibiotics they gave me an x-ray, an intravenous line, and a bed in which to stay for the next three weeks.

I recall seeing my father once. He came alone and asked if I wanted to leave. At the time I could not walk very well (it had been two weeks since I had last stood on two feet), so he borrowed a wheelchair from the front desk. As it turns out inpatients cannot leave hospital premises on a hospital wheelchair, so instead he brought me to the tenth floor (eleventh, to be exact, but fourth floors are often omitted from hospitals in the East to avoid the utterance of death), where it was raining very hard. The tomato plants on the rooftop garden looked nearly dead; the leaves, barraged by heavy rainfall, draped dejectedly down its vines. You could not tell they were tomato plants if not for their strikingly green wire frames, most of which were bent haphazardly. The wind was so strong that tilted raindrops sprayed jaggedly in meticulous ardor, speckled and quick like an army of silverfish. We felt the wet breath of the sky and the wet spray of the storm and knew we had reached its cusp.

Eventually we had both realized the futility of overhead cover and he brought me to the edge of the rooftop, where despite opaque clouds coating my peripheral, the sky was very bright and the skyline beautiful. At some indiscernible point between our arrival at that rooftop and the languid sky the morning after, I recall a moment when the clouds seemed to shift and the sky cleared, perhaps instantaneously, maybe longer, but definitely so. And when the clouds shift, as they did so on this certain July afternoon many years ago, adjacent to some theatrical unveiling of a higher modus operandi, everything seems to more or less fall into tune, and the hum of the tuning fork is swallowed by the cello's timbre, mellowing its screech, and the faces on the streets in the first dry morning after weeks of rainfall are suddenly those of kin, and there exists, unequivocally, brought about by some instantaneous moment when the clouds shift, a pronounced sense of possibility so pure it holds absolutely no air of reluctance.

I woke up the next morning to a settled sky through unmoving polyester curtains. Soudelor shifted north later that week, headed mainland, and on Friday the sun was shining again and by then I had been discharged. This was nine years ago, and we have since moved to California.

Look, the sun is a sort of bribe, you know, and so is a heavy thunderstorm or a snowfall. So is a dawn, though not I think a sunset. So is a warm bath or a shower, and a sound sleep. Bribes all, in the conspiracy of everything to continue to exist.

You've left out the B Minor Mass, Mozart, all kinds of music. Also pleasure in high speeds, the deeply comic, something to eat or drink, success in an enterprise.

Well, all of them have their ingredient of death, you know.

In Taipei we lived in a cerulean high-rise with sea-sand walls, which my father often left late at night, returning only in the early morning. This would happen once, maybe twice a week, and he executed this maneuver so flawlessly that you would not be able to tell if not for the silent giddiness with which he bounced his knee at dinner, the ease with which he smiled at breakfast. I never vocalized these observations to anyone, not even him, and in retrospect I did not need to; we were secretly both aware of what the other knew, and in keeping our respective secrets we both entertained a game created by the two of us, existing only between the two of us, for which silence was the opening bid, the raise, the match, the check, the sole requisite for playing, the cornerstone of it all.

I did not find out until years later. I think he had forgotten, by then, of our pas de deux, or maybe he had forgotten who he was speaking to. One night, my father, a taciturn man, never one for colloquies, began to reminisce. Many years ago, he often drove across the pier bridge to the historic old-town district, late at night when all the schoolchildren who played on the sidewalks had gone to bed, and would bike along the seemingly never ending riverbank for hours, through the night, until morning.

I imagined it then, in forbidden mise-en-scène, a version of him ten years younger biking on ashy pavement, eyes trained on the riverbank's parallel edge, the partition between black water and gray cement consuming his peripheral. I imagined the dark balmy river, its waves crashing languidly in vague rhythm, his pulse running childishly high. The wet spray on his ankles. The wet breath of the sky. I felt then as if the clouds had parted.

WHO DOES THE US-MEXICO BORDER ACTUALLY DIVIDE?

SYDNEY MARKS

The US-Mexico border as we know it was finalized in 1853 with the Gadsden Purchase when the United States government purchased the last areas of land that make up current-day New Mexico, California, and Texas. Railway construction shortly began, but progress was slowed by labor shortages originating from the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act. The subsequent recruiting efforts would make the late 1800s one of the first periods where the US incentivized migration across the US-Mexico border; by the 20th century, Mexican migrants made up the majority of railway laborers in the US.

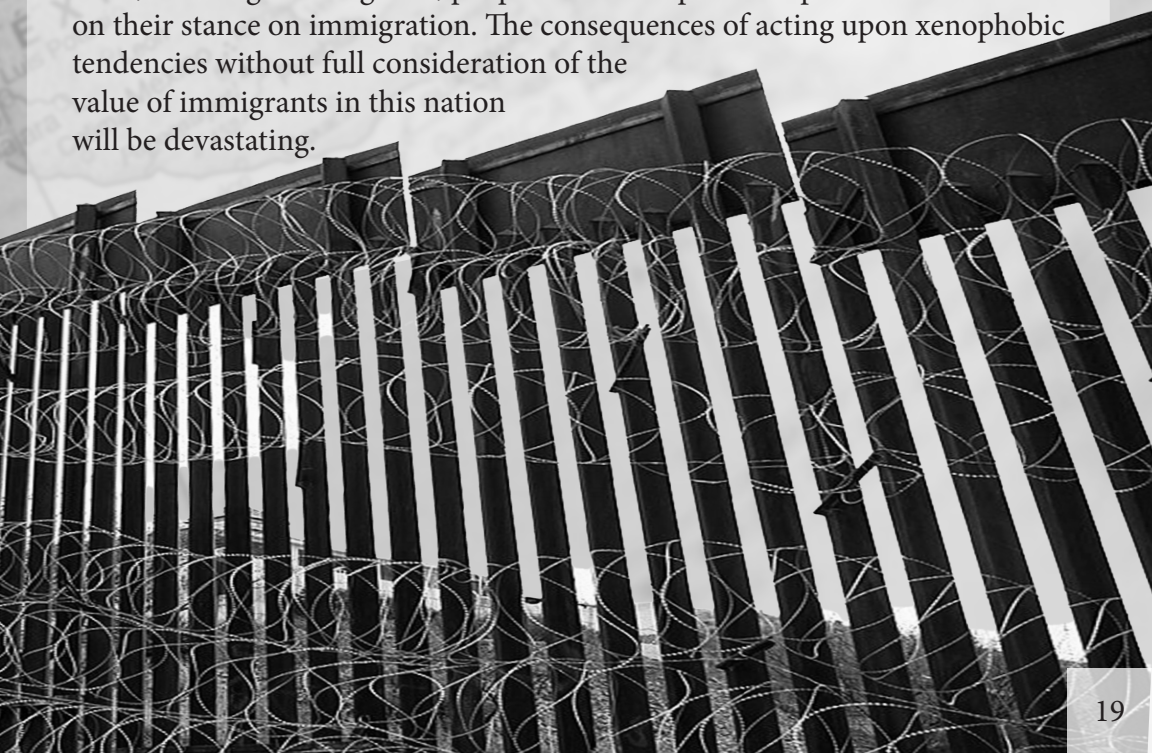
Flash forward to 2024. 23% percent of immigrants in the United States are Mexican, of whom 77% are documented. The spike in Mexican migration across the southern border that began in December 2023 has since plummeted. Donald Trump's election in November brought a campaign promising mass deportations to the White House. Masses of voters abandoned the Democratic Party in 2024, many citing immigration, an issue that has cut a deep partition between the two mainstream US parties.

This is not a partition set by a physical land border; rather it is a political, discursive divide. Disinformation fueled by the longstanding existence of xenophobia in the United States has allowed politicians to manufacture a border crisis, manipulating and polarizing voters along lines of identity politics.



I am from Albuquerque, New Mexico; my family lived there before the US border crossed over the region. One day we were Mexican and the next, American. The cultural significance of this event has not diminished with time — virtually every other family in New Mexico shares long-standing ties, having lived in the state for over a century. As the election drew near, I spoke with friends, co-workers, and older family members. I was hopeful that they would recognize that Donald Trump's policies would negatively impact their money, health, and well-being. But one issue overtook all: the perceived flood of Mexican immigrants coming in, supposedly taking their jobs and bringing crime into their neighborhoods. Somehow our very Mexican past was forgotten, replaced by mere stereotypes.

While these discussions frustrated me, the real culprit was clear: the media that continues to generate false perceptions and reinforce racial biases. Reality could not be more different: according to the American Immigration Council, the price tag for a mass deportation operation is 135 billion dollars. This does not even account for the long term impact that losing millions of workers would have on the economy at a time when there is a rising need for workers in the United States. The narrative of criminality too quickly collapses upon closer inspection: the arrest rates of undocumented people in the United States are lower than the rates of documented immigrants and significantly lower than citizens born in the US. 81.9% of drug trafficking cases in 2023 were from US citizens. The claims that immigration in particular causes violent crime, drugs, and steal jobs is just false. As Donald Trump's administration carries out its cruel, anti-migration agenda, people across the political spectrums must reflect on their stance on immigration. The consequences of acting upon xenophobic tendencies without full consideration of the value of immigrants in this nation will be devastating.



We Have Berlin at Home, Sort Of

William Grobmyer

The Iron Curtain. Multiculturalism. Nudity. Techno. Prior to last August, these four terms constituted my knowledge about Berlin. Sure, visiting the city for myself solidified these associations, but it also brought them to life, particularly in the case of the latter two.

No anecdote better captures my time in Berlin than the story of my time at KitKat, one of the city's hallmark clubs with a loosely defined yet strictly enforced dress code. While Berghain may be the city's most storied venue—from New York Times articles to the Berghain Community Subreddit, its name echoes across the internet—getting into KitKat is absolutely worth a try.

When one of my close friends and I had the pleasure of exploring Berlin together last summer, we stayed in Mitte. Artsy and youthful yet profoundly storied, the neighborhood was alive and stirring on the night we finally decided to take on KitKat. At around eleven, we set out for the späti across the street from our hostel. Imagine a bodega where you can grab a cold beer—along with a plastic pint of vodka and a wildberry Red Bull to share—open it at the counter, and take it to one of the picnic benches outside: the concept of a späti is utterly ingenious. When the clock struck

midnight, we finished what remained of our assorted drinks and set out for the U8 stop just a few feet away.

In the blink of an eye, we had arrived at the front of the line to enter the KitKat. After a brief and entirely silent staring contest with the club's bouncer, she opened its doors, revealing a bustling front desk of sorts. I found myself once again locking eyes with an employee, who pursed her lips and waved her index finger up and down at my jeans. "Those have to go," she said curtly, offering me a hanger and a plastic bag to store my phone—and go my jeans did. I pranced into the club's main room wearing only my cowboy boots and a Calvin Klein jock-strap.

There are many words I could use to describe the rest of my night at KitKat, but one stands



out above all others: electric. Between the reinvigorating first sip of each cold beer I purchased from the cash-only bar, the pulsing techno beats I felt in every bone of my body, the rush I felt dancing alongside a performance art student at Central Saint Martins, and the fleeting kiss I shared with a drugged-out consultant from Chicago, KitKat scratched an itch I did not know I had. When I emerged from the club at daybreak, I felt sensually stimulated and spiritually realigned.

If Berlin nightlife was a dream come true, returning to Los Angeles in mid-September represented a rude awakening. As much as I love this city, our mundane, stifling nightlife pales in comparison. I think of the gay bars that line Santa Monica Boulevard as a prime example.

In WeHo, there exists an unspoken set of rules governing everything from how you must dress to how you must conduct yourself. If you're not wearing a short-sleeve button-up or a solid t-shirt, you will undoubtedly stick out like a sore thumb. Dress to fit in, and refrain from making a statement at all costs. Likewise, if you want an ounce of respect from any of the uptight gays congregating in the corners of bars, you cannot appear to have fun. At all. Stare down strangers with a subtle frown, and make sure to roll your eyes every so often. If a well-meaning stranger tries to make conversation, turn up your vocal fry. Stick to short, terse responses. And—most importantly—feign disinterest in your surround-

ings, no matter how exciting they may seem. Since my first visit to WeHo at age nineteen, I've been aware of these guidelines, but I never realized how overbearing and misery-inducing they were until I experienced Berlin's wildly contradictory norms.

Thankfully, the countless UCLA students who came before me have created some semblance of a middle ground, a once-quarterly event that flirts with Berlin's tasteful, curated debauchery. This past fall, I found myself working diligently finishing my final papers well before Wednesday evening for the sole purpose of participating in the Undie Run wholeheartedly. The sheer number of phones grasped by white knuckles or tucked into waistbands prevents this ritual from being a perfect substitute for a trip to KitKat, but it is close enough to ease my withdrawals until I can make it back to Berlin.

The Undie Run's magic lies in the fact that everybody is almost naked. I know I sound perverse when I describe it that bluntly, but bear with me—not only does this characteristic match KitKat's charm aesthetically, but it cultivates a very specific social dynamic. Collective partial nudity means that participants are just a little bit out of their comfort zone, but because of the Undie Run's celebratory overtone, everybody is happy to be there. In turn, the event takes on a convivial atmosphere similar to that of KitKat, one marked by its oddly liberating tomfoolery.

Scars and Fractures:

The Legacy of British Colonial Partitions

Muryam Hasan

A partition is inherently an expression of power. Nothing encapsulates this truth as much as the partitions left in the wake of colonial regimes. The fall of the Ottoman Empire left the fate of Palestine vulnerable to British interference. The eventual 1922 British Mandate for Palestine charged the British government with executing all administrative and legislative powers, creating a “Jewish national home” as stated in the Balfour Declaration, and facilitating Jewish immigration and settlement.

In 1948, the British relinquished control over Mandatory Palestine, which faced increasing violence and instability due to British occupation and governance. Large-scale immigration for the expressed purpose of creating a separate national entity while denying the Indigenous people – a religiously and ethnically diverse population – the right to self-governance and sovereignty sabotaged the possibility of stable, unified governance and peaceful coexistence. The United Nations “solved” this issue through the Partition of Palestine into separate Arab and Jewish states, despite the diverse, heterogeneous communities living in the now divided lands. This led to violence, mass displacement of the Nakba, and the current oppression and apartheid Palestinians live under today.

The past year of the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian population has kept the disastrous consequences of colonial partitions in the forefront of my mind. These consequences exist in my own life. As a descendant of survivors of the British Partition of India, I remember the stories I heard as a child.

The British colonial rule over India lasted over 200 years. Five weeks ahead of British plans to leave India, authorities tasked lawyer Cyril Radcliffe – who had never been to India prior – with dividing British India mainly across religious lines. The announcement of the newly drawn border just after the British granted the subcontinent independence caused one of the largest mass migrations in human history. People desperately traveled across the border seeking refuge in the State designated for their religious community.

This migration between the newly separate states of Muslim-majority Pakistan and Hindu-majority India was bloody and violent. The displacement of 15 million people and the death of at least 1 million (though estimates range as high as 3 million) people permanently scarred and fractured the lives of people in the Indian subcontinent.

At 13 years old, my grandfather, separated from his family, rode alone in a truck bed for the lengthy distance into the newly designated Muslim-majority Pakistan. My grandmother was 2 years old at the time. Her immediate family of 8 siblings and her parents took a flight across the border. Her eldest brother, a university student at the time, made the last-minute decision to travel with the family. I remember my grandmother telling me how thankful she is that her older brother decided to join their family in hindsight. We shared an unspoken understanding of what would've happened to him. Her eldest brother's university campus was, like much of the country, a site of extreme violence and bloodshed. At the time, they believed they would return to the place they called home within months.

They never returned.

The legacy of the Partition of Palestine is incomparable to the Partition of India in many ways: unlike India and Pakistan, Palestine and Israel do not constitute two States of equal power, resources, and history in shared land. However, a similar theme emerges: forcibly homogenizing nations through these partitions allowed the violence and conflict in these regions to become rife with nationalist sentiment. Palestine is under Israeli occupation, and the state of Israel continues to systematically murder the Palestinian people. The death toll has been estimated at around 40,000 Palestinians – a figure likely exceeded by the true count. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's electoral wins signify Hindu nationalism's growing popularity in India, where anti-Muslim riots, lynchings, and hateful violence become increasingly normalized. Similar violence and discrimination towards Hindu communities in Pakistan has led to a shrinking minority Hindu population.

Partitions as extensions of colonial, white supremacist power have destabilized the Global South and have permanent global consequences. Historical global partitions inform modern-day politics, resistance, and collective identities shared by millions globally (like myself) in diaspora and otherwise.

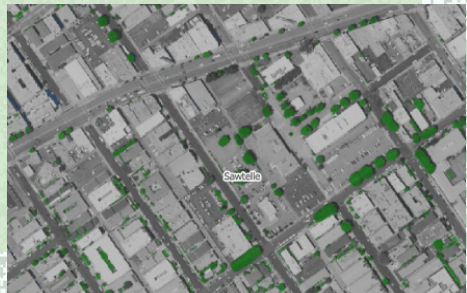
Emerald Partition

by Caroline Pangilinan

One of my favorite pastimes for the odds and ends in between classes is laying in the grass by Tongva Steps or Dickson Court North. I often marvel at the nature around me — in one glance, I can often see orange flowering blossoms as well as palm trees. Yet, as lush as the UCLA campus appears, this is not representative of how all of Los Angeles looks. In reality, the distribution of vegetation throughout LA County is highly uneven. Affluent neighborhoods, such as Beverly Hills and Brentwood, appear as green on satellite footage as any Midwestern suburb, while more inland, city-focused neighborhoods such as K-Town have hardly a speck of emerald.

This phenomenon is only one symptom of a larger issue looming over Los Angeles: global warming. Broadly, there is a metaphorical partition between the impact of climate change on different communities across LA County. Those in wealthier counties and neighborhoods not only have the resources to combat the changes but also physically experience less of the negative weather due to often being closer to the ocean.

In addition, there is a partition between how different economic statuses in LA experience the effects of global warming. Overall, the lower your income, the more that climate change will detrimentally impact your life. Other negative factors can similarly stem from a lower income.

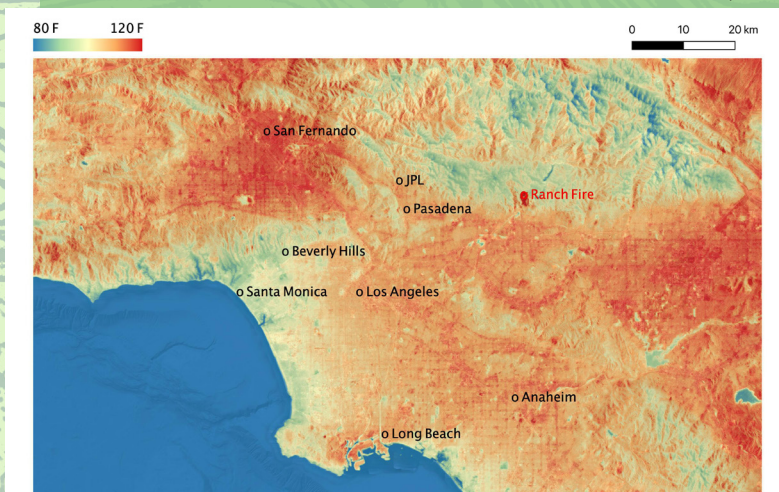


Two maps showing vegetation in Beverly Hills versus Sawtelle (extreme wealth versus less wealth)

For example, those with pre-existing health conditions are more sensitive to the effects of climate change, but lower income communities are disproportionately located extremely close to environmental health hazards — take Californian hazardous waste facilities — the worst of which operate on expired health permits and leak carcinogens like trichloroethylene and hexavalent chromium into the water supply. Other factors, such as abundant language barriers and low-resourced neighborhoods can be ultimately tied back to lower income. Money is the greatest weapon against the status quo of climate change — those who can pay to adapt are the ones who will survive, and those with less money will feel the climate changing effects even deeper.

Overall, global warming is an ever-pressing issue, and it is important to highlight that its extreme effects will only continue to worsen with time. Climate change will widen the gap between those of higher and lower incomes because of how the two groups experience climate change differently. UCLA's greenery is a privilege, and someday its emerald glow may look more like the dirt and soil under the grass.

Map showing how hot the earth is to the touch in various regions in Southern California. West Los Angeles and areas around the coast are the coolest, inland regions such as the San Fernando Valley are the hottest, and Eastern LA falls in the middle of those two temperatures.



<https://climate.nasa.gov/news/3280/nasa-maps-key-heat-wave-differences-in-southern-california/>
<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh/docs/about/climate-change-health-equity-report-executive-summary.pdf>
<https://calmatters.org/environment/2023/08/california-hazardous-waste-sites-permit-2/>



The California Red Wave

by Ella Mitchell & Kimia Nuban

California is a lot more conservative than the average person believes. As someone born and raised in Southern Orange County, I can attest to the majority Republican demographic that has created a partition dividing my community. The polarizing environment, denoted by Trump and Harris merch standing on the streets just fractions of a mile away from one another, lays the blueprint for ideological unrest and hatred. In high school, I was frequently ostracized for my left-leaning beliefs; I could not have been happier to get out when I left for college.

Many Californians don't realize the importance of state and local elections in determining their future. Places like Orange County were the populations that determined the outcomes of Senate races and Propositions like the tough-on-crime Prop 36. Too many people like to assume that California will always go blue thanks to areas like Los Angeles and San Francisco; however, this is far from the truth. California has more Republicans than any other state, and they always show out in high numbers during election season. Your voice as a voter, even in states like California, matters much more than you think, especially during times like these.

HOLLYWOOD

Ten counties in California flipped red this election, jarring many as Harris polled five points behind Biden. But California historically has not always been blue. The state voted Republican for 15 of the 25 presidential elections during the 20th century, the last being George H. W. Bush in 1988. It also was the home of an infamous Republican president, and I am haunted by his presence every time I drive past the Ronald Reagan Library in Simi Valley. However, the last time California voted red was during a time when the matters of voting left or right came down to whether or not policy choices aligned with the individual. In today's climate, who you vote for aligns with your identity, moral compass, and whether or not you believe certain groups deserve human rights.

The polarization of California has been a long time coming: the cost of living has increased rapidly by almost 20% since the last election, with housing and utilities increasing by 41.5%. Simultaneously, progressive candidates are being pushed out by more moderate or conservative ones, as the push for stricter policies on criminal punishment lies at the forefront of many conversations.

With all of this in mind, California is still a while away from completely flipping to a red state in the general election. But these statistics should not be taken lightly, as the 2026 midterm election holds potential to either cement or redefine this state's trajectory. Until then, it is up to you to exercise your right to vote, and decide which way the pendulum swings.

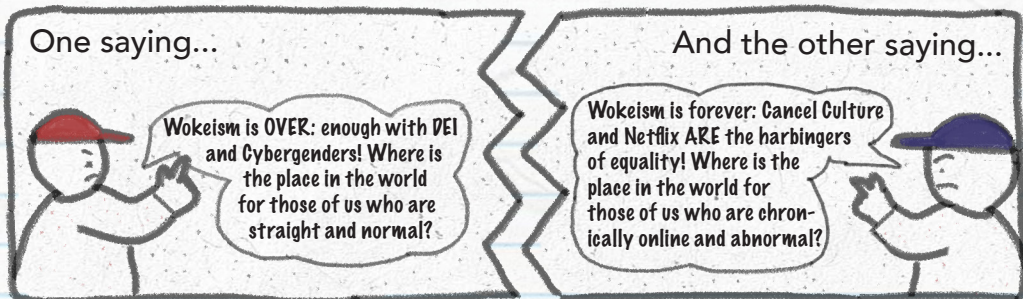
545 - A Beautiful California Coast Scene



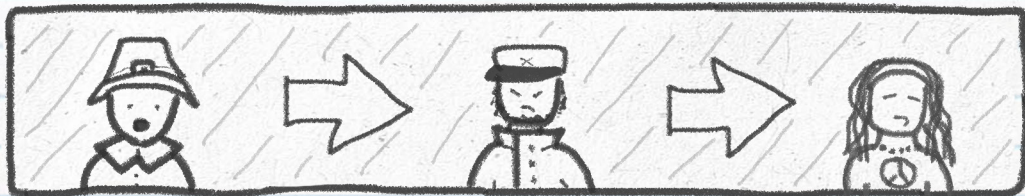
A Plea for Nuance

AJ Rosean

It's no secret that our country is "divided." It's not a particularly interesting thing to state. What may be more interesting, however, is to examine how we bridge the divide. Except, that too feels like a circular route. To do some gross oversimplification (it's not lost on me that this is the opposite of what my article intends to do but for argument's sake), the current digital political sphere feels like an argument between two distinct caricatures:



So it seems we have sort of an unworkable system; I mean, if the extremes are so extreme, so unyielding, then apparently the 'arc of justice' bends towards one side giving up completely. Given this premise, I think it's important to contextualize. Anyone familiar with American history will tell you, our domestic political tradition is cultural polarization. When our pendulum swings, it **SWINGS**. From a geriatric puppet to a billionaire loose-cannon (*who is still geriatric for the record*). From the Puritans and the Anglicans in 1600s England, to the North and South in the Civil War, all the way to the counterculture of the 1960s and 70s, we cannot seem to agree... ever...



As such, is it really fair for us to claim that this is some great, wholly unprecedented period of division - the likes of which we've never before seen?

Well, we're not fighting a civil war - so it would seem the answer is: **no**. Fortunately for humanity, and unfortunately for the sake of simplicity, you kind of can't just kill people you disagree with anymore (*bar Luigi Mangione and Kyle Rittenhouse I guess*).



(News Flash: it's like, totally trendy to kill for fame right now)

To make matter's worse, now we have to settle these cultural strifes with tweets and tiktoks - instead of cannons and guns. Was there always such contrast between left and right? Was the perceived nuance that was once attainable in the past just the apolitical disposition? One we don't tolerate anymore now that social media makes one's politics so obvious and paramount? That seems to be what's setting our current Culture War apart from the rest.

I think algorithmic echo chambers are one of the main threats to our democracy. I also think that term is gibberish to about 90% of our current congress. To clarify, I'm saying that if all you like and share online is content about X , then your algorithms are only gonna show you content about X , and then, as it would turn out, you're going to think that the world is overrun with X . Certainly, humans weren't made for this. I mean, I kind of think it's driving us all insane.

Insert Your own X :
What's your algorithmic echo chamber of choice?

a). Drag Queens
b). Anti-vaxxers
c). Illegal Migrants
d). Cat Videos

So, if being apolitical is unacceptable, and being too political is toxic, how do we find a balance? To start, I think we need to clarify what exactly apolitical means *(a lesson, much like how to do taxes or make a resume, that seems to be beyond the scope of required coursework in higher education).*

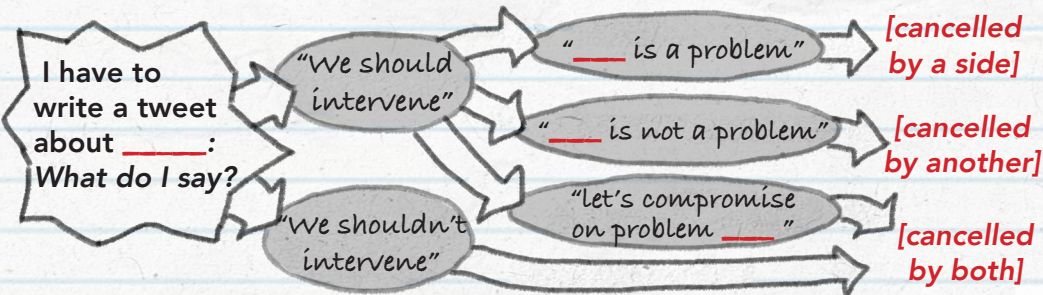
Lets work it out mathematically:

Axiom: Apolitical = Not Being Political
If Not Being Political = Cancelled then Apolitical = Cancelled.

Theorem: Moderate = Being Political
If Being Political ≠ Apolitical then Moderate ≠ Apolitical.

Therefore, by the transitive property of Gen Z Online Leftism, Moderate ≠ Cancelled, and being a centrist does not make you cancelled.

However, if my finger is as on the pulse as I believe it to be, being a centrist does, in fact, get you cancelled - **on both sides**. Let's illustrate with a hyperbolized decision tree about some contentious current event :



Cancellation decision tree aside, (btw: *please don't cancel me for making it*), each political persuasion seems to have a digital rulebook. Yet, internal crises arise: take for example this (*recreated*) true / false question from an exercise from UCLA's own "Global Islam Cluster M27B."

"True or False: From a sociological perspective, [Religion] is essentially conservative on issues of gender?"

- True
- False

the "correct" answer was 'False'



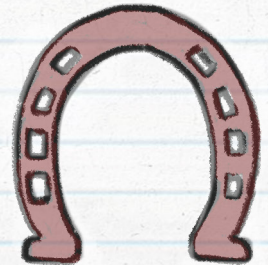
Joe Bruin does not appear to be a huge fan of nuance

Ironically, you are told to attend college to be "intellectually challenged" - unless, of course, that "intellectual challenge" challenges the greater political machinations of your university. Anyways, finding a definitive answer to that question is far, far beyond the scope of this article. But it points to an interesting question: how does the cookie crumble when it comes to the hierarchy of identity politics? In this case, do we discuss the nuances of religion and gender? Is it a disservice to religions to do that? Is it a disservice to women to not ascribe more nuance to the female experience than a true / false question? Again, beyond our scope.

Still, the message is clear: nuance is messy, messy is problematic, and problematic is cancelled. But, isn't disregarding nuance, like apoliticism, cancelled too?

Finding a comparable internal conflict for the Right is more difficult: where leftists must defend their ideological chastity, conservatives can relish in their indifference. See President Trump, who's championed for protecting women and children from illegal immigrant rapists and transgender drag queens (*despite having been accused of sexual assault by 27 women... and counting*)¹. Yet, this hypocrisy seems to attract many to Trump. Amidst a cultural movement which demands moral flawlessness, there seems to be a certain catharsis in bolstering someone who is, in every way, cancelled. While not a particularly honorable tactic, it is efficient. As Democrats battle for an infallible representative, Republicans can put on a unilateral front of unaccountability - a standard which has, undeniably, aided them in their takeover of the Supreme Court, Senate, House, and Presidency.

Internalized Horseshoes



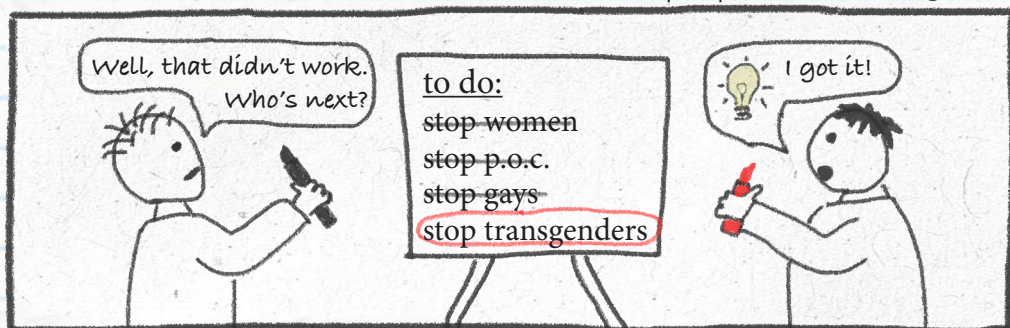
Protect the Kids from Drag Queens Firearms are Lead Cause of Death for Kids²



Positions of power shouldn't be based on race / gender Biden promises to pick his VP based on race / gender³

As the Left demands Perfect Perfection, the Right demands Perfect Imperfection. And that's really the root of much trouble for Gen Zers. **In other words, the young Leftist is going to have to loosen that virtual vice grip on virginal morality a little bit. That, or face political extinction.**

But that is not to say the young Conservative is exempt from the same criticism. Your proverbial parents fought a war on the gays, and lost. And now, like a consolation prize, you're fighting the war on the transgenders, and losing. And who knows? **Perhaps in 100 years your kids will be fighting the war on furies.** Regardless, it would seem that all available evidence points to a distinctly American truth: **opposing social progress is a losing battle, and history will not look upon you kindly [See Abolitionism, Women's Rights, Civil Rights, and Gay Marriage... to name a few].** So, loosen up, dip into the transient waters of gender and sexuality. Not everything needs to make perfect sense - in fact, things rarely ever do! I promise you, our collective existence has far more imminent threats than people crossdressing.



As I close, I realize I can't offer any tangible actionables for my fellow Gen Zers. It's bleak. **We spent our childhoods being told not to believe everything we read online, just to end up vastly politically outnumbered by a bunch of old people who believe everything they read online.**

If we are to inherit a nation that is broken, (an assessment that is seemingly the only thing Right and Left agree on), then I think we are going to have to embrace the nuance lying between us. **I'm talking about putting on your big kid shoes, stepping out of your on-line echo chamber (or your university one), listening to someone you disagree with, and at least trying, just a little eency weency try, to hear where they're coming from.** That, or I think we're pretty much doomed...



We Don't Demand Nuance, Nuance Demands Us

ALL
WALLS
MUST
FALL

