The Lion’s Pride Committee

Cole Galino
Karen Holum
Wes Mantooth
Elisa Parrett
Rochelle Schimke
Sue Wozniak

The Lion’s Pride seeks to showcase the creative work of our diverse students and programs of study at Lake Washington Institute of Technology. Please consider submitting your creative work for consideration. For details, please visit the publication homepage: http://www.lwtech.edu/lp
You may also contact wesley.mantooth@lwtech.edu if you have questions.

Notes on This Publication:
Members of the Lion’s Pride committee may make minor edits to submissions in order to standardize spelling, grammar, punctuation, and formatting. However, committee members do not thoroughly edit submissions for students, and the committee’s general policy is to present work in close to its submitted form to preserve the integrity of each student’s voice. Students are encouraged to edit their own work carefully before submission and to get assistance from instructors and campus tutors.

The Lion’s Pride may contain links to third-party web sites. These links are provided as a convenience to readers and are not under the control of The Lion’s Pride. If you access a third-party site linked to The Lion’s Pride publication, you are responsible for guarding against computer viruses or other potential risks of online navigation. The Lion’s Pride cannot guarantee the accuracy and completeness of such links and does not endorse information contained at the third-party web sites.

Lion’s Pride of Lake Washington Institute of Technology (LWTech) is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) license. For the individual, original works contained herein, all rights reserved and revert to artists after publication. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of LWTech or the magazine publication staff.
Cover Art: "Together in the Present" by Mark Yeremenko
Artist's Statement: The picture created here was meant to bring aspects of the past and future together into the present, bringing in the silver surfer with an 80s theme and combining them.
Table of Contents
(click on individual selections to go directly to those pages)

Private Prisons and Abuse of Power (Jovana Milosavljevic) - essay
Cactus (Kate Johnston) - visual
Emotional Imbalance (Cristian Ramses Montero) - visual
A Promise to the Brave (Patricia Irene Wells) - poem
Where I Happen to Be (Christian Ikaika Akua Sommer) - visual
Children Without Childhood: Why We Need to End All Child Labor (Parisa Afshar) - essay
City of I Sunrise (Marina L. Montanez) - visual
Math in Politics: Big Data to AI (Miles Brownell) - essay
Snow Lake (Ann Marie Bercaw) - visual
The Kite Runner Purpose Essay: Immigration (Serena Chiara Rizzi)- essay
Oracle (Miri Willis) - visual
Steampunk Magus (Miri Willis) - visual
My essay details the downfalls of private prisons and the hidden abuse of power that goes on within them. I learned a little about private prisons in the past and was confused on if they were good substitutes for public prisons or not. The further I researched this topic, the more passionate I became against private prisons.

Abstract

Private prisons are steadily growing in the United States, and all over the world. The more private prisons are established, the more questions arise. Used as a replacement for public prisons that are owned by the government, private prisons are owned by companies or singular owners. The reason why private prisons are so controversial at times is because of the moral and ethical dilemmas they bring up. Some private prisons have low safety and security, which leads to physical abuse and needless suffering of prisoners. Another thing that many private prisons are accused of doing is abusing their power on their prisoners. This abuse means that they might be forcing their prisoners to work laborious jobs for no pay or compensation. This is an ethical issue because the prisoners are not given anything in return for their labor while the owners of the private prisons reap the goods and profit their labor gives them. This brings up another issue: if some owners of private prisons make money from their prisoners forced labor, do they make money from an increase in incarceration rates? This means that the more people are being imprisoned, the more money private prisons make as they have
more people to put to work. This is another huge ethical and social problem that private prisons face today. Many private prisons could be gaining benefits from forced labor in their prisons and the United States would be none the wiser.

**Keywords:** Private prisons, abuse, security, safety, power

Private prisons are a not so well-known part of the United States that you might have never heard of. For reference, public prisons are government-owned prisons that abide by the same laws as all other public prisons. Private prisons have separate owners that create their own rules outside of what public prisons have to follow. A popular term for private prisons is “for profit prisons” because the owners of the prisons are allowed to use their power to force the prisoners to do manual labor with no compensation. While not all private prisons abuse their power in this way, it is easy to see how some would. Making money off of higher incarceration rates in the United States is just an example of a moral wrong that could be occurring in so many private prisons, but we would never know about it. Most private prisons are supposed to be used as extra space for when public prisons have no more room. However, many private prison owners do not accept many new prisoners into their prisons because these prisoners do not fit the standards that the prisons create for their inmates. Going even further, many private prisons also leave their prisoners in unsafe and unsecure
conditions. Private prisons are not a good alternative to public prisons because private prisons can abuse their power over their inmates by forcing them into unpaid labor and terrible treatment, they have safety and security issues, and the owners of private prisons can make revenue off of higher incarceration rates in the United States.

Rampant Abuse of Power in Private Prisons

Abuse of power in private prisons is a moral wrong that brings up the ethics of private prisons and whether they are abiding by the law. Private prisons are abusing their power over their prisoners because some of them force their prisoners to work for them without any pay. On top of that, many private prisons have faced allegations of physical abuse as well as terrible treatment of prisoners. While many private prison owners and companies will deny these allegations, cases of this occurring do pop up. Even “the nation’s second largest private prison company” (Woodruff, 2017) has been accused of forcing their prisoners to do labor for them with no compensation. This lawsuit has been “the first time that a private prison company has ever been accused of forced labor” (Woodruff, 2017) and also was the first time that the claims stated allowed the lawsuit to “go forward under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act and the bans in federal law on forced labor” (Woodruff, 2017). This claim made against the second largest private prison company in the United States strongly suggests that there is a chance of
abuse of power in any private prison you see. If one of the largest private prisons in the US was inducing forced labor on their prisoners, it seems likely that many other private prisons are doing the same, just under the radar. This recent lawsuit, made in 2017, has brought up controversies in private prisons, such as the GEO Group’s policies that force immigrant prisoners to “‘work for free on threat of solitary confinement or for a dollar a day’” (Woodruff, 2017). That is not the end of the abuse charges the GEO private prison company faces. Over the course of many years, many cases have popped up of horrendous treatment of prisoners in their private prisons. One investigation of a private prison housing mentally ill prisoners showed that “malnutrition was widespread, [as] an American Civil Liberties Union inspection team found” (Beall, 2013). That’s not even the worst of it: “walls were smeared with blood and excrement” (Beall, 2013) and “mice lived in [the] toilets” (Beall, 2013). The prisoners were clearly treated with a lack of care and effort and all the company had to say was that “assaults at the facility [were] sharply down and that it [was] making improvements” (Beall, 2013). Whatever those improvements were, why did the private prison ever get into such a horrid and disgusting state of mistreatment and abuse?

**Private Prisons and Their Safety and Security Issues**

Private prisons are unsafe for many of the prisoners that they house. Many large-scale private prison companies face allegations and
charges of safety and security issues and abuse. In 2016, “private prisons, which [held] 12 percent of about 200,000 federal inmates, [had] more ‘safety and security incidents per capita’ than those operated by the Federal Bureau of Prisons” (“Private Prison,” 2017). One such private prison company, MTC, has had safety, security, and abuse issues since 2006. It had opened a prison that later “earned the nickname of ‘Ritmo’” (“Private Prison,” 2017) because of the reports of rampant “sexual abuse, overcrowding, vermin infestations and unsanitary conditions” (“Private Prison,” 2017) found in its place. Now, MTC is looking forward to opening a new private prison that will house arrested immigrants. Arrested immigrants seem to be the most likely targets for abuse in private prisons. Many immigrants who “had been convicted of only nonviolent crimes” (Edelman, 2014) were “subjected to worse conditions than those in government-run federal prisons,” which included “pervasive overcrowding, squalid conditions, insufficient medical care and overuse of isolation units” (Edelman, 2014). These reports of abuse of arrested immigrants came from a five year-long investigation that started in 2009. They are not the last of the cases that have come up, either. There are cases like MTC opening up a facility that was meant to be used as a “‘criminal alien requirement prison’” (“Private Prison,” 2017), which would keep criminal immigrants who were not US citizens. This prison was called the Willacy County facility, and after four years, allegations about the treatment of prisoners there
sprung out. Many of the allegations included “‘overcrowding, toilets that constantly overflowed, insects crawling into the tents, solitary confinement cells being used as overflow space and inadequate medical treatment’” (‘Private Prison,’ 2017). Not long after, a lawsuit was filed against MTC, which they responded to by “‘[allowing] the abysmal conditions to continue without taking any action or notifying the County of or attempting to rectify the problems with the Prison’” (‘Private Prison,’ 2017). MTC also “failed to address the issue of prison overcrowding” (‘Private Prison,’ 2017), probably because they “‘[were] paid an additional per diem for inmates beyond the 90 percent capacity threshold’” (‘Private Prison,’ 2017). They did not change or respond to the overcrowding issue because they were gaining money by having the most prisoners in their prison. This type of abuse and neglect is what contributes to the safety and security issues that so many private prisons subject their prisoners to.

Does the Good Outweigh the Bad?

Many people will argue that private prisons are a good thing for the United States and that they are providing room for more prisoners and are creating healthier environments for prisoners to not re-offend again. While potentially good reasons for keeping private prisons, they don’t acknowledge that many private prisons have as many downsides as they do good and that private prison owners face many “social and logistical...
disadvantages as well” (Antonuccio, 2008). One reason for private prisons being better than public prisons is “that they are more efficient and cost-effective than their public counterparts” (Gran & Henry, 2007). This may be true, but it might also be true because “even if they are less expensive, it may be the result of cost cutting by the private firms” (Gran & Henry, 2007), in which case, them being more “cost-effective” is not a very good thing. Some “private prison corporations claim they can build and staff their prisons more quickly” (Antonuccio, 2008), but those private prison officials might not “hire adequately credentialed staff members” (Gran & Henry, 2007) and they might not “[train] their staff members appropriately for the types of prisoners the staff will guard” (Gran & Henry, 2007). No prisons should be trying to hire staff quickly and be cost-effective when the things they do to become more “effective” are flawed and only work against them.

Do Private Prisons Make Money Off of Increasing Incarceration Rates?

Private prisons can gain revenue through an increase in incarceration rates. This means that an increase in prisoners will cause an increase in the amount of money that they make because private prison owners can make money off of their prisoners. As Volokh (2014) stated, “one can argue against privatization on the grounds that … it enables greater expansion of the prison system and therefore may
increase incarceration and hinder the search for alternative penal policies”. In 2006, one company called the Corrections Corporation of America, known as CXW, “posted a $21.3 million first quarter profit” (Antonuccio, 2008), and many other companies seemed to do very well in those years too. One private prison company called CCA was proud to have a slogan that said, “if you build it, they will come” (Antonuccio, 2008), which implied that more private prisons would equal higher incarceration rates. This type of thinking was heavily criticized by most, and thus they changed their slogan. However, this change to their slogan did not mean they changed in their thinking. CCA “continues to build prisons ahead of demand” (Antonuccio, 2008) in order to always be ready for more prisoners, and thus, more profit. It is difficult to imagine, but “even as crime rates decline” (Antonuccio, 2008), “the number of prisoners in this country [has] always increased to fill available prison space” (Antonuccio, 2008). Private prisons make money off of having more prisoners and thus more people to put to work. This makes sense, but what does not make sense is the number of crimes decreasing but the number of prisoners increasing. This comparison seems widely confusing and also explains how private prisons make more and more money off of increasing incarceration rates. This process is unfair to everybody except for the owners of the private prisons and needs to be stopped in order for them to not gain revenue off of increasing incarceration rates.
Conclusion

Abuse in private prisons is a rampant issue that needs to be investigated, as it is a mixture of ethical and physical abuses. Many private prisons that are owned by large companies face allegations of physical abuse and abuse of power. If some of the largest private prisons in the United States have been accused of mistreating their prisoners, what does that say about smaller private prisons that are not ever investigated for malpractice? Prisoners in private prisons suffer in unhealthy conditions where they are placed in unsafe and unsecure situations that lead to abuse. These conditions are rarely investigated and also occur the most often in private prisons that are primarily for illegal immigrants convicted of crimes. Just because they are not US citizens does not mean that they should be mistreated horribly and allowed to suffer until their sentences end. Their suffering is mainly due to a greed for money that so many private prison owners and companies have. The more prisoners that they house in their private prisons, the more money that the government gives them for creating space for more prisoners. This allows for overcrowding in prisons, which, again, creates unhealthy conditions for prisoners. If private prisons make money off of having more prisoners, then that also means that they make money off of increasing incarceration rates in the United States because the more prisoners that need room, the more prisoners that will be accepted into
private prisons. Thus, private prisons need to stop abusing their power over their prisoners, stop safety and security issues, and not gain revenue from increasing incarceration rates. Sadly, many owners of private prisons will abuse their power for their own gain and the prisoners’ loss. That is why, instead of allowing private prisons to exist, public prisons should improve upon themselves to be able to lower re-offense rates by themselves and to offer everything a smaller-scale private prison could. This way, there is no need for private prisons, and nobody can make money off of the suffering of prisoners.
References


Cactus
Kate Johnston

I took a printmaking class at LWTECH, and loved it. I had a photo I took of a cactus in front of my brother-in-law's home in Arizona. I'd already used this as inspiration for a painting, and wanted to use it again for a print. The painting was an opportunity to learn about Cubism, and I created a Cubist cactus for it. This is a screen print of my cubist cactus.
Emotional Imbalance

Cristian Ramses Montero

This piece was from an Art 102 project I worked on and had a concept of showing motion. Two different emotions were layered on top of each other from cut paper and viewers can bounce off the different emotions depending on the colors being observed. Media used was paper and glue.
A Promise to the Brave
Patricia Irene Wells

I wrote this as an assignment in Social Diversity class. The idea came from the reoccurring thoughts that I had as we explored the subjects throughout the class. I purposely wrote it without punctuation so the reader would contemplate the event/subject on their own thought and time.

Mildred and Richard Loving
I think you are brave

The homeless student has perfect attendance and straight A’s
I think you are brave

To the refugee family that comes to America without knowing the language
I think you are brave

A woman who held the hand of a Muslim girl on a bus while another passenger harassed and called the girl a terrorist
I think you both are brave

For the high school student born Grace who now identifies as Greg
I think you are brave

Women who stand up for equal pay and lose their job
I think you are brave

All people who fought for legal same sex marriage
I think you are brave

I promise to support, ask questions and include because
I think you are brave
Where I Happen to Be
Christian Ikaika Akua Sommer

Inspired by Twenty-One Pilots, I made this portrait of Tyler Joseph as a personal project with lyrics from their song 'Trees.'
Children Without Childhood: Why We Need to End All Child Labor
Parisa Afshar

7 years ago, I left my country in hopes of finding a better life and better economic conditions, but in all these years I've always been thinking of people in my country. They are getting poorer day by day, and my country's economic situation worsens. Last year, I went to my country to visit my family, everything had been terribly worse, many of those I knew became poorer. But the thing that harassed me, and hurt my heart was to see the kids who were forced to work because of the poverty of their families, the children of my home land instead of having fun and joy, while they were tired and hungry, they had to work to help their families. Hoping for a day when all the children of the world will be happy, and no one has to work at a child's age.
Last summer, when I traveled back to my home country of Iran, I met a boy who was sitting in a corner, tired and alone. He was very hungry, so every so often he was looking at the biscuits that he brought with him. He really wanted to eat one of the biscuits, but could not, because he had to sell them to earn money for his family. The mother and his little sister, as well as the sick father, waited for him to take some money back home to have something for dinner. I sat down and talked with him. I asked him how old he was, and he said he was seven years old. I asked why, instead of being in school or playing with his friends, he was sitting here and waiting for people to buy biscuits from him. He replied that he must earn money for his family, his dad is sick, and his mother cleans up people’s houses and makes them food, and she earns very little money for all this work. Therefore, he had to work to help his mother. He wished to be a doctor and treat his father for free, so his father would be able to work. He wanted to be very rich, so his mother would not have to work in people’s houses. And another of his wishes was to become rich enough to buy a doll for his three-year-old sister. These small wishes were the greatest wishes of this child laborer.

This experience raised so many questions in my mind: Who are these child laborers? What future do these child laborers have? What is the statistic of child laborers? And also, what are the conditions of child labor in the world and in Iran? In this essay, I will share what I have learned through researching the problem of child labor. I will argue that
every country should take all steps possible to end the problem of child labor.

The term “child labor” often refers to child laborers who are constantly recruited, which in most cases makes them incapable of going to school and experiencing childhood, threatening them physically and mentally. Child labor is very common and can involve working factories, in mines, in prostitution, in agriculture, as assistants in the parent's business, having a personal business, such as selling food, or doing other physical labor. The most inappropriate forms of child labor involve child abuse and child prostitution. Less controversial and usually legal (with some limitations) include farm work during school holidays (seasonal work). As Edmonds and Edmonds (2010) explain: “There is no universally accepted definition of child labor. Some researchers view the phrase as referencing all non-school, non-leisure activities of children. Others define “child labor” as referring to activities that harm the child in some sense.” Although some child labor might be acceptable, many categories of child labor are clearly harmful and thus unacceptable.

Looking at history, we find that besides developing countries, developed and large countries like the United States have had this big social problem:

The Progressive Era brought increased public concern for child welfare and, with it, a nationally organized effort to
regulate, if not eradicate, child labor. The National Child Labor Committee (NCLC) was founded in 1904, first to document child labor and then to advocate national legislation to control it. The NCLC's task was not easy, thanks to opposition from business leaders, who used child labor in part to keep costs down, and from the Southern states, who viewed national legislation as an infringement of states' rights. The first successful national child labor law, the Keating-Owen Act, was passed in 1916, only to be struck down by the Supreme Court in 1918. A second child labor law, passed the following year, was struck down in 1922. A subsequently proposed child labor amendment to the Constitution failed to achieve ratification. Finally, in 1938, the Fair Labor Standards Act successfully established minimum ages and maximum hours for most forms of work, with more lenient standards for agricultural work. Although child labor has been largely eliminated, problems remain, especially among migrant agricultural workers. (Breitzer, 2004)

Years later, this problem has been reduced dramatically in the United States of America, but continues in other countries, with many children and families facing this problem. One of these countries is Iran, where, according to statistics, there are about 7 million child laborers. This child
labor includes “prostitution, handling of hazardous materials, and heavy labor” (Iran HRM, 2018).

Children in extreme undesirable conditions are suffering in terms of nutrition and overall health because of physically demanding, long, and even dangerous work. These children can easily be the playthings of professional offenders, such as robbers or drug distribution bands, and the creation of corruption houses, and, also, the lack of access to education and science and technology, the ability to compete with other children in creating a healthy lifestyle, each one denies more than these children. In general, these children are more vulnerable than other children of the same age due to their inadequate emotional status and special conditions of life, because they have a sensitive and emotional spirit. Therefore, neglecting these children has led to the hidden anger in their subconscious, and in adulthood can cause many abnormalities in society.

Economic fluctuations and economic growth are increasing globally, with the effects of extreme poverty. Only in the past decade there has been a severe economic crisis in the world, which has greatly increased the price of fuel and food, and created unpredictable situations among vulnerable families.

Climate change is another important factor of these fluctuations. It is accompanied by rising temperatures, changing rainfall patterns, rising sea levels, and a massive increase in unexpected climate change.
Especially for millions of poor families, climate change affects the developing countries that continue to derive their livelihood from the land. Global affinities and entanglements also exacerbate these fluctuations, which means that the consequences of unexpected changes that appear to be occurring locally may even be felt globally. Bonnet and Maguire (2009) explain how some of these factors affect people in Africa:

Apart from a brief improvement in the 1960s, the fifty years since African independence have seen deterioration in the population’s living and working conditions. We have lost count of the number of conferences and reports by international institutions that, decade after decade, have sounded the alarm in a bid to halt what has been called “Africa’s decline.” The most exhaustive of these reports is without doubt the 464-page document presented to the G8 summit in Gleneagles in July 2005 (Commission for Africa 2005). The problem of Africa was deemed sufficiently serious to merit an entire chapter in the global report on child labor presented to the International Labor Conference in June 2006. We must not forget that Africa’s population doubles every twenty-five years and that children under age fifteen represent 44 percent of that population. Africa is the continent with the highest number of working children as a
percentage of the child population, exceeding 50 percent in some regions.

Some big companies abuse this problem and use child labor to make their product, and poor families also force their children to work in these factories to get some money. Some of these companies are Apple, Gap, Nestle, Walmart, and H&M (Lamarque, 2016). As Lamarque (2016) explains, “Despite global efforts and petitions from humanitarian groups, there are still many major companies around the world that employ child labour in order to make a profit. With overhead costs and an increasingly competitive market to think of, many major companies turn to young labourers in order to get their products made quickly, and incredibly cheaply.”

If there are no decent jobs for young people who graduate from school, families will not have much incentive to invest in their children's education. Inadequate initial utilities, such as plumbing and electricity, may result in children being given burdensome jobs, such as collecting firewood for fuel and bringing in water.

Legislation on child labor describes and documents the duties of governments to protect their children against child labor and helps them achieve a common understanding of the definition of child labor.

Now I want to examine child labor specifically in Iran, my homeland. About seven years ago, when I left my country, the economic and social
conditions in Iran were very bad. People were poor, the economic situation was very bad, and I thought that it was not possible to make things worse, but a few months ago when I went to Iran to visit my family, the situation in the country was unbelievable to me. People’s lives had been broken by poverty. The pressure of the economic situation was so high that all family members had to work to be able to afford family expenses. Many children were working in the city. This was a very unfortunate and tragic situation. The number of child laborers has multiplied from a few years ago. As the Vice-President of the Association for the Protection of Children’s Rights, Tahereh Pazhuhesh, reports, “Despite global reduction in the child labor statistics, we see child labor surge in Iran” (as cited in Iran HRM, 2018). Further, “These children work as breadwinners, losing their only opportunity of childhood as they toil along the highways and streets, amidst the smoke and commotion or in sweatshops. Iranian society is all too familiar with images of child laborers. Children are frequently seen working as vendors, cleaning car windscreens, or working on farms and in factories. Most of them have dropped out of school” (IranHRM, 2018).

Child laborers generally have a family, and when they are gathered by the municipality units and workers, they move to welfare centers, but welfare centers do not have the permission of the judiciary to keep these children, and they are obliged to deliver the children to the families, and because the families need money, they send the children again to the
street because families are in dire need of food and experience pain from their situation. These children must work long hours and endure hunger and thirst and fatigue, and, in many cases, they will be raped in addition to these hardships. As reported by Iran HRM (2017), an organization that monitors Iran’s human rights, “Research shows 45% of labor children and those living on the streets are suffering from illnesses such as AIDS, hepatitis and others. These children are also known to be suffering from malnutrition, being short in height, low weight, skin illnesses and psychological disorders. Many such children work at least 6 hours a day and don’t eat even a single decent meal, providing the grounds for these children to obtain even more illnesses.”

Typically, government is responsible for such problems in countries. In most countries, the government accepts these problems and seeks to solve these problems, but in Iran, the government doesn’t even accept that there are so many problems in the country. Iran’s government, instead of solving problems, tries to depict these problems as small and unimportant. As The Baghdad Post (2018) explains, “The Iranian regime has said that there are more than 60,000 children living on the streets in Iran. However, this number must be taken with a pinch of salt because the regime is known for trying to downplay the issues in the country. Some have said that there are probably more than 200,000 homeless children on the street. Most of these are centred around large cities including Tehran. Homeless children are particularly susceptible to
child labour because not only are they living in extreme poverty, but they are also unprotected by the regime.”

Iran’s highly valuable mines and oil can make Iran one of the richest countries in the world, but the Iranian government invests all the money in its worthless goals and does not care about the people of Iran, which is why people in Iran are getting poorer and poorer, and problems such as child labor are seen more and more in Iran.

Despite the international efforts to eradicate child labor around the world, even though June 12 was named on the World Calendar as the Day of Child Labor Prohibition, there are still more than 150 million children working in the world, more than half of them doing high-risk jobs. These children are from poor and low-income families of the society. They do everything to help the family, give their children the opportunity to spend their childhood on the streets in the midst of smoke and fuss or in the tiny isolated rooms without any facilities.

They are exposed to various forms of exploitation, in place from high risk streets to agricultural fields and unknown and illegal workshops. The community is very familiar with these children's image; many of them approach cars in large cities and sell flowers, gum, and wash car windows, or simply beg for money. Many of these children are deprived of the right of education.
Child labor is at risk due to employment in many jobs and insufficient security. The infections of these children with AIDS and other illnesses are just one of the damages awaiting them on the streets. Child laborers are one of the most vulnerable social strata. Not only do they lack safe space, family, educational and healthcare facilities, but they are also deprived of the simplest human freedoms: the right to pleasure, play, and recreation. Governments and other organizations should have good programs to reduce this problem. This is a huge problem that threatens the future of the society, because these children are going to be adults in the future. In order to have a better future, we must solve today’s social problems. I hope government will step in and take this problem seriously. This issue is very significant, important, and global. If they forget about children, we will face tragedy in the future. I hope that the next time I go to my country, instead of seeing child laborers, I see happy kids who are playing with their friends.
Reference:


City of I Sunrise
Marina L. Montanez

I'm a Running Start student in the design program at LWTech. I really enjoy creating things with my hands and have always taken an interest in design. This piece was created using paper cut with an x-acto knife. The entire design is made of the letter I, just in different sizes and angles. I went for an industrial feel with the straight imposing lines and city look. I wanted viewers to feel inspired and realize beautiful moments, (like sunrises), break through the dreary 9-5 daily routine of life, and that is what makes life interesting.
Math in Politics: Big Data to AI
Miles Brownell

For a recent math assignment, we were tasked to find a connection between the mathematics we learned in class and the real world. I picked the topic of politics to investigate. I choose this topic because one of my hobbies is following news and foreign affairs. Politics seemed like a topic tangentially related to news with more readily available data. I know from prior experience that politics is heavily reliant on data. This is true now more than ever. These caches of data’s value became glaringly apparent in the election of 2008.

The United States election of 2008 was a turning point in American politics. This was of course the year Barack Obama was elected president, the first African-American elected to the highest office. However, this was far from the biggest change in Washington, D.C. Obama’s democratic campaign was the first to fully commit to using big data. Previous campaigns used elements of it in 2004, but 2008 was the first time this data was incorporated into the campaign’s core strategy. This was due to technology advancing enough to begin turning the gluttony of big data into real world actionable plans. Big data is a term used to describe data sets so vast that old curations styles no longer apply. Ahron Wasserman, co-founder of the big data startup NGP VAN, described how campaigns handled data prior to 2008: "Data at the time was pretty soft, there were direct mail operations, but most data—
demographic information, voting history—was unstructured” (Patterson, 2016). As Wasserman noted, the data was already there; someone just needed to collate it. This is where the math comes in. Every campaign nowadays has computer models. These models are used to predict the outcomes of elections based on inputting data which the campaign has collected or purchased. While they are called models, they are, in a sense, just long algorithms. Most current models are built like static machines which take in data, then run math programs to compare said data against large amounts of controlling variables. Campaign models use data like location or if the person voted in the last election to help narrow down targets for advertising (or more direct methods) to influence the vote (Patterson, 2018). This tactic will be even more valuable when AI begins to be incorporated into the models. AI, or artificial intelligence, will allow people to create programs which, in turn, start making contextual connections on its own, with little human intervention. The current way data is used requires a human to be standing by cranking the dials till the expected outcome pops out. AI will lessen the reliance on humans to ensure a model's accuracy.

FiveThirtyEight is a leader in the news plus data analysis market. They are owned by ABC news and use data imputed into math models to predict outcomes of a wide variety of events. They release many of their models on the code sharing website GitHub. Their models are based on building data sets like a CSV and running a series of algorithms which
weighs each variable against inputted parameters. They construct many of their models in a way so that they can add any new source of data into it while still being able to assign its start value. This allows the model to weight more reliable sources more heavily. Big data and political modeling use the math concept of statistics. Statistics helps people predict outcomes within a certain percentage. Big data and AI allow one to take the basic concepts of statistics and amplify it on a scale never seen before in human mathematics. If one wants to continue to push the boundary of intelligence, one might need to define intelligence. Below is a simple equation for defining intelligence.

\[
\text{AIXI } a_k := \arg \max_{a_k} \sum \max_{\ldots} \sum [r_k + \ldots + r_m] \sum 2^{-\ell(q)}
\]

As you can see from this equation, intelligence is rather simple to define, thus no further explanation is needed. I will, however, leave you with this interesting quote found during my research: “There is nothing that can be said by mathematical symbols and relations which cannot also be said by words. The converse, however, is false. Much that can be and is said by words cannot be put into equations – because it is nonsense” (Hutter, 2018).

A large part of political statistics is figuring out which data should be ranked higher in terms of predicted value. Also, which indicators you want to avoid or rank lower because they might feed your model misleading data. A recent blog post on FiveThirtyEight laid out a formula for calculating political results while accounting for incumbency advantage. Election Result = Partisan Lean + (Popular Vote
x Elasticity) + Net Incumbency Advantage (Rakich, 2018). This equation breaks down as follows: ‘Election Result’ is the incumbent politician’s margin of victory or defeat, ‘partisan lean’ is a variable used to weight the local area’s affinity for one party vs. the average for the country, ‘Popular Vote’ is the total vote for the U.S. House, ‘Elasticity’ is a variable which factors in how much the national mood affects the state, ‘Net Incumbency Advantage’ is an influencing variable that is based on several metrics and generally gives the candidate an advantage. They used this equation to rank the winners and losers of the 2018 mid-terms to determine each candidate’s advantage/dis-advantage. Below are the results of running the equation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOUSE INCUMBENTS</th>
<th>NET INCUMBENCY ADVANTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All representatives</td>
<td>+2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1- to 2-term</td>
<td>+2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3- to 4-term</td>
<td>+2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5- to 9-term</td>
<td>+2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10+ term</td>
<td>+2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SENATE INCUMBENTS</th>
<th>NET INCUMBENCY ADVANTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All senators</td>
<td>+2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In small states</td>
<td>+1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In big states</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointed</td>
<td>+0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-term</td>
<td>+2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-term</td>
<td>+5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-term</td>
<td>-2.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Math, in a very real sense, is all around us. There is nearly nothing in the universe mathematics cannot break down into its respective parts and assign values to. This is what makes math such a major factor in all humans' lives. Mathematics is often called the universal language.
because it remains a constant in a universe full of change. It's this ability of math to never change yet continue to grow and adapt which gives it its immense value. Math is the greatest discovery humankind has ever discovered. I say ‘discovered’ because math is not just an invention created by humans in order to count sheep. It’s a fundamental force of the universe. A force of which is still mostly hidden, a force all of humankind must strive to figure out.

References


After trekking up a dusty mountain side, a whoosh of wind swept past me as I summited the ridge line. From the top of the ridge, peeking through the trees, lay a sparkling lake. A pinwheel of colors, bright turquoise mixed with a deep blues, glistened throughout Snow Lake.


The Kite Runner Purpose Essay: Immigration
Serena Chiara Rizzi

*This essay is about immigration: its up and downs, laws that were passed to help/keep people out, and the novel, The Kite Runner, by Khaled Hosseini, which echoes real situations where people emigrate from their countries at war.*

“The land of the free,” a famous line in the U.S. National Anthem, “reflects the history, struggles, and traditions of a nation and its people and serves as an expression of national identity” (Oishimaya Sen, 2017). The United States is supposed to be a land where people seek refuge from wars or come to fulfill their lifetime dreams, but this is not possible for everybody now with all the new laws of immigration that our current president has set up to keep most of the people from entering the land of the free. It seems that this nation is no longer free; people have difficulty entering the land where all dreams come true. These people are called immigrants. Immigration has its up and downs; many laws are passed to keep people out, and the novel, *The Kite Runner*, by Khaled Hosseini echoes real situations where people emigrate from their countries at war.

Immigration is the process of people permanently immigrating to a foreign country, in most cases the U.S., where a lot of jobs are offered, and pay is better from where people originally come from. There are some positive and negative things about immigration. The positives are that immigrants “take up jobs [in the states] that many do not want,” like agriculture (PBS, Q13 news). Since there are not so many immigrants
coming in because of the new laws, it is hard to find people to work on farms and cultivate food. Immigrations also “raise questions on human rights to the government” and, because of it, the government is divided. The negative things of immigration are not having enough housing/accommodations because of cities growing.

Immigrants are certain people who come from their countries to the United States to search for or rebuild their lives. To make this happen, these people needed to follow rules, a type of law that the country he or she is entering must follow. Many laws passed since the beginning, like the Naturalization Act of 1790, which required “immigrants to live in the U.S. for two years … respective state of residence for one year prior to applying for citizenship” (“The History of U.S. Immigration Laws”, 2018). Many other laws have been approved in the past, though there are two most important ones that have changed the States in some way. The first is the Illegal Immigrant Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act, also known as the IIRIRA, accepted by President Bill Clinton in 1996. This act changed laws on immigration and did many other things, like tightening the “Attorney General’s authority”, “deported aliens (a citizen from a country or state other than the U.S.) who were falsely [claimed to be] U.S. citizens.” The second important act is the Nicaragua Adjustment and Central America Relief Act, also known as the NACARA, passed by President Clinton in 1998. This act made it possible for certain “Nicaraguans, Cubans, Salvadorans” and people
from other nations who were “former soviet bloc countries” to have the green card.

People tend to immigrate to a better country to escape, to seek refuge or to start a new life. The causes are mother nature and wars. In the novel *The Kite Runner*, Amir and Baba (his father) relocate to “Fremont, California 1980s” (Hosseini, pg.125) where they start a new life. Amir gets older, finds his future wife, and, from there, his life continues. There are many stories that are like what Baba and Amir have been through, like the Syrians. The Syrians are currently in a civil war that is impossible to know when it started and how the “uprising turned from a predominately peaceful protest movement into a militarized rebellion, armed clashes became increasingly common” (The Editors of Encyclopedia, 2018). To be safe, the Syrians would flee their country and seek refuge in Europe, which is within walking distance, and the United States of America. Under the Obama administration, a total of “18,007 Syrian refugees were resettled in the United States between October 1, 2011 and December 31, 2016” (Jie et al, 2017). Many of the Syrians journeyed to the states so that they could escape their country at war and start new lives like in the novel *The Kite Runner*.

In conclusion, many people see the States as the land of the free, where they come to restart life. Even though there are laws that the immigrants need to follow, good and bad come from them that help the society in many ways. There are many stories of the life the immigrants
have been through to get to the point where they want to be in the United States and these stories can be found in articles and in books like in the novel *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini, and they all show that life is not always easy to get. You might need to make some adjustments in the future to get and become what you always dreamed to be in the new world.

Works Cited


PBS and Q13 Fox news

Oracle
Miri Willis

Only time can heal all wounds, a sentence that resonates with Oracles abilities, and resonates with my own personal struggles and traumas.
Steampunk Magus
Miri Willis

*Rendition of Rubick from DotA 2, as an alternate version created by his father Aghanim. This Rubick is an Automaton fueled by semi-unstable arcane magic. His memory lacks where his skills empower, making him strong, but forgetful. His forgetfulness leads him on journeys to beautiful isles and cities, only to forget not long later his visitation, making every travel destination to and from a new, fresh experience. He also has a pet fish contained in a magical cube of water to accompany him on his journeys.*