My Family Slave

Upon searching for Alex Tizon in google the first link that I am given is that of his Wikipedia page, rather than his article. The article, ‘My Family Slave’ informs the reader about how slavery in the Philippines, an issue for such a long time has been, that it is now just another part of their culture. When Alex writes, “Before the Spanish came…” (P8) [1] and, “When the Spanish arrived, in the 1500s…” (P9) [1] he gives the reader a frame of reference to just how long slavery has been rooted in Filippino society. People continue to be utusans, kutulongs, or kasambahays, not only because of how deeply rooted these ideas are, but also due to issues that arise in their life that make this concept preferable. In Lola’s case, Alex writes that she, “Her parents wanted her to marry a pig farmer twice her age, and she was desperately unhappy but had nowhere to go.” (P10) [1] showing the issues that she faced that led her to become a slave. Having a slave in America is at least socially reprehensible in American culture and at most it is strictly illegal as dictated in the Thirteenth Amendment [2]. Alex realizes that his family has, either through direct action or simple compliance, taken away any chance Lola had at a life made by her own choices. Alex points out that, “She had no contacts in America, and no facility for getting around…” admitting to the fact that her surroundings that she had been forced into removed any ability for Lola to have any chance without the Tizon family. Alex’s mother has decided to live in a warped sort of reality to push her mind away from the idea that Lola is in fact a slave as a direct result of her actions but places the blame on others. Alex recounts that his mother said, “I never wanted her in the first place…” (P61) [1] to say that it is her father’s fault for the situation that everyone is currently in, and refuses to admit that she perpetuated this, sometimes by her inaction to differ from her father and direct action. I don’t believe there was ever a time that she didn’t know full well about her part in this institution. As pointed out previously, she chooses willingly to live in a state of delusion and that her attempts at blaming others admits to me that she knows what she was doing and that it was wrong. Alex states his reasons for being hesitant to deliver Lola’s ashes to her family exactly in the line, “I hadn’t come sooner because I wasn’t sure anyone here cared that much about her.” (99) [1] . I have no reason to doubt this notion, as it has been 70 years since anyone has had any contact with Lola. Several generations have passed, most of her friends aren’t there anymore and those that are have been so long separated that they are more like friendly strangers now as outlined in the statement, “Everything was not the same…” (83) [1].

[1] <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/06/lolas-story/524490/>

[2] <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/13th-amendment>

No Name Woman

Maxine Hong Kingston wants us to take away the difficulties life can present to women in a environment with societal norms that are skewed so disadvantageously towards the women forced to live there. This story is being told to inform the average reader of the problems that were faced by the individuals who were forced to live it, as well as call into question the differences between what is perceived as the cultural heritage of Chinese people and what it is in actuality. When she writes the line, “… What is Chinese tradition and what is the movies?” (P12) [1] she is showing the disconnect between such vastly different cultures, even when someone is originally from the culture of the former. These changes made to the individuals that transition from one culture to another, or are of another culture and are raised in another, cause said persons to confuse what is the truth with fiction due in no small part to the insanity of what is being practiced as admitted to by the writer. This is further compounded in the line, “Whenever my mother had to warn us about life, she told us stories…” (P9) [1] where the mother knows of this issue and is attempting to develop the ability in order to prevent further issues in future generations. These ‘talk stories’ are a form of hardening the mind against forms of deceit that the mother has either had to deal with herself, or has known people that have been molded by this deception. If this is the world that her children will grow up into, then I find them to be an acceptable natural development. I have no reason to believe these stories, but if they were proven in my mind to be true, then I can safely say that I would not be surprised in the least. I already know of multiple cultural practices that were, and in some cases still are, as bad if not worse than the practices that are spoken about in this article. One such practice would be ‘foot binding’ where, “The feet were wrapped in a particular way with bandages..” (P6) [2] in order to make the feet appear smaller through blatant mutilation and shame was cast upon anyone unwilling to partake. I don’t think it matters if the stories are rooted in fact, are partially fictitious, or are entirely a work of fiction so long as it is made clear which stories are fictional and which are not. All cultures have these kinds of stories be they parables, allegorical tales, fables, anecdotes, etc. A family secret of experiences in the past are the standard method of a child’s development and is a strong part of shaping them as adults. From this story I have not exactly learned, that the lesson that what you might hear about cultural norms in other countries may not be what you think they are or are flat out lies, but it has reinforced this notion in my mind. Unsurprising, as that is the first thought that should be had towards any new, unsourced, unanalyzed information, however in this case it’s to be expected for children to believe what their parents tell them unconditionally. The themes of secrecy, ghosts, shame, suicide, and infanticide are all part of the story in service of its overall theme of culturally different treatment of life. Secrecy is demonstrated in the line, “She kept the man’s name to herself throughout her labor and her dying…” (P32) [1] to keep any of the punishment that she felt from spilling over into his life. Ghosts are present in the story as being a part of their world, “Spirits shimmered among the live creatures, balanced and held in equilibrium by time and land.” (P37) [1] showing their presence and the weight of all periods of life in their culture. Shame is present throughout the entirety of the story, from the treatment of the village to the treatment from their family in the line, “Aiaa, we’re going to die. Death is coming. Look what you’ve done. You killed us. Ghost!” (P41) [1]. Suicide and infanticide are demonstrated congruently as she brought herself and child to the well as the only method of absolving her family and herself of the perceived sins of their culture. I believe that she committed adultery given her determination to conceal the name of her otherwise would be assaulter, but is does remain uncertain given her line, “His demand must have surprised, then terrified her” as if this was not her wishes. I do not. American culture has its own customs, but even the most cherry picked of “customs” are a far cry to anything demonstrated here. Societal shame is present in every culture and America is no different in this regard, however it’s implementation differs greatly.

[1] <https://eagleonline.hccs.edu/courses/229708/files/53260359?module_item_id=14614474>

[2] <https://www.mylearning.org/stories/in-your-shoes/491>

Technology Videos Journal

As a social issue, social media and technology has forever opened the gateway for distant and continuous social interaction with people that was until then understandably difficult. This level of interaction has increased the number of tabs that each person may feel compelled to keep up with as well as the amount of influence from different sources. This has caused individuals to have an ever-expanding world view as well as increased pressure from feelings of inferiority towards the world at large. The technology videos present the present as filled with problems and the future as either a bright one if we embrace the technology that is purported to solve these issues, or a dark one should we refute the videos specific notions of how the future will be created. While I don’t subscribe to these ideas as they are presented in the video, I do have a reserved excitement for the future as I see it in my mind. The idea of these tech giants are the leaders of the charge into the future is something that I just don’t see happening, nor do I support their attempts to do so. Innovation is the lifeblood of the future of tech and has always been found in the struggle of those who need do better where no other option is feasible, something that the financially bloated rarely experience so long as they have the capital to solve issues. I believe that we are handling all avenues as well as can be expected of such an unrestrainable, ever-changing, and all-encompassing concept as technological progress. Technology is unrestrainable in that laws restricting any aspect of it aren’t absolute, nor are they present everywhere, making it an innately flawed attempt at unnatural control of natural development which is nothing short of a fool’s errand. Technology is ever-changing, making it difficult for anyone to really sort out any of the rules, methodology, safety, etc. before the field’s development has left it completely outdated. Technology is all encompassing, to mean that it has become a basic part of everyday life for everyone in practically every field of work, study, and necessities. While this can be seen as a horrifying concept to have such little control over something so potentially dangerous, that idea is mainly stemmed from the teaching that more control over one’s environment equates to more safety. This is mostly true when done at a very basic level, however this is a belief that should be forgotten with something so incorporeal as technology. I handle this by understanding that I have very little direct control over such concepts and that the only real practice to implement is to control myself to a level that I can ensure that I am not a factor to worry about when the inevitable occurs. Technological progress and social media is such an inevitability which will help me connect with others, affect the way I view the world, expose me to levels and types of interactions that some say people shouldn’t deal with, and foster negative behaviors in people.

Environmental Videos

Over the issue of climate change, my stance is that it has become mired in falsehoods for political or financial gain, misunderstandings, and misconceptions about the topic as a whole. Many get confused about what it is that is being discussed, and for good reason as it has been muddied into a massive issue with no clear goal or methods, save for a few poor excuses that will help a select few pushing these pretexts and not the issue in question. Climate change is constantly affecting the planet, sometimes as a whole, or separately in localized environments, whereas the topic of climate change is often centered around if and how much man’s contribution has affected natural climate change. This is a concept that I don’t have any faith in knowing the levels of change that the Earth has experienced, the conflicting reports of predictions for local and the global climate, and the hypocritical behavior of the iconic figures that support it. The number of variables that are needed to accurately predict the when, how, and manmade deviations of climate change, or climate disaster, are so numerous and difficult to quantify in their affects of the global or local climate, that is far beyond the capabilities of modern attempts. The solutions that have been presented to my, and subsequent generations, are so ludicrous or farcical, that it is honestly not worth worrying about even if it were true to me. The reduction in population necessary, the waste reduction, carbon footprint reduction, production limits, power generation restrictions, individual efforts, laws to be implemented, etc. that are predicted as being necessary are just not feasible, and if they really are what is required then we are doomed already, and as such it doesn’t matter. For all the negativity I’ve had towards the believability of this concept, there are unnatural contributions that do require attention and have been left to fester due in no small part to previous generations. China is arguably the main culprit for a great deal of woes such as it’s rampant pollution, intentional environmental decline for political gain, microplastic water saturation, but the prior generations are most at fault for permitting this to happen in first place by not being more alert and tougher on these transgressions. With the advent of social media, the unhappiness of future generations towards the practices of the past, and the more alert nature of the world to such issues in our time, I feel that our current generation and future ones are going to play a positive impact on the changes that will be seen in the decades to come. They will become more politically active and as such replace the problematic individuals in positions of power, they will be more open to having their minds changed by newer concepts since they’ve grown up in such a connected world where this is commonplace, and take more action having felt what inaction has done to their lives.

#MeToo Movement

While I have kept a distant watch on the #MeToo movement, these videos had further expanded my knowledge of some of it’s outcomes, primarily with the conclusion to Harvey Weinstein proceedings. The video surrounding R. Kelly was already known to me, but as with the Weinstein tribunal I did not follow the case long enough to know what the verdict, his current situation, or the state of his victims and their further actions was. I believe that the impact on millennial men and women has been a net positive for the generation when it comes to the situations of sexual assault and harassment by individuals that are otherwise immune to justice because of the power they wield. More men and women know that because of this movement there are methods, support, outreach, and other such benefits that are ready to assist people that feel isolated by such traumatic events. There are more than two sides of this movement such as victims that are in total favor as a way they can express what’s happened to them as well (Interview), cynics who are against it as they see it as nothing more than attempt to harness a frenzied public for financial gain (She Said Trailer), the guilty that know the truth of the matter and are against the movement in hopes that they will be spared the sword of Damocles (She Said Trailer), grifters who seek only financial gain and push it in whichever way benefits them the most, and critics who understand the why’s and how’s of the movement but have misgivings about the amount of power it retains and what damage can be done when wielded carelessly. Some background information that is necessary to understand this subject is knowledge of Twitter and it’s “Hashtag” system, the allegation histories of the individuals in question, the history of the allegers, and the history of abuse in the media industries. I stand as someone who is critical of the #MeToo movement, and I anticipate that the fallout from it will have a great deal of gain for the victims of the abuse, potential future victims knowing there is a precedent now in place, and society as a whole for having rid of the guilty and making the situation less likely to occur and more difficult for perpetuators to elude prosecution. However, this will also have negative effects when grifters are using this movement for financial gain, thus hurting the victim of this specious allegation as well as the movement’s credibility. The mass support for this movement will be used for nefarious purposes as well, with little regard for fact if the public is whipped into a frenzy. Oprah Winfrey’s “Time’s Up” speech is done in a way to maximize the public’s emotional response towards the movement, assure them of it’s virtuous nature, and rouse the audience as faithful, unstoppable supporters should they support and believe strongly enough. Her strategy during her speech seems very similar to that of a preacher, and I would describe the intention of her speech as wanting the listeners to react similarly as if it were a sermon. While this movement started centering it’s focus on Hollywood, it has henceforth expanded it’s scope to include anyone in a position of power. I would say that the connection to Hollywood has helped everyday people, as the familiarity with some of the individuals in question have opened minds to entertain the idea that if these seemingly close and innocent people are guilty, then they should be more open to future allegers of abuse. This topic doesn’t directly relate to either me, nor my friends and family, as far as I am aware in the latter’s case. There have been some indirect relations from the aftereffects of this movement such as people I know behave differently ever since the movement’s occurrence and these individuals have treated others, such as myself, differently as well.

(She Said Trailer) *She Said Official Trailer 2022* [*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i5pxUQecM3Y*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i5pxUQecM3Y)

(Interview) *R. Kelly Accuser Azriel Clay Interview 2021* [*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1GuevvS-H2E*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1GuevvS-H2E)