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Mid-term Proposal

What is the actual problem?

The Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIAA of what is currently Canada are not protected by the same standards as other Canadian citizens. That is not up for debate and should be considered a nonpartisan objective truth. The National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls published in 2019 set in stone, through thorough testimonies, articles, and statistics, that a crisis we long knew existed was indeed happening (National Inquiry 2019).

What should be questioned instead are the reasons Canadians of white settler decent do not care more about saving those who lent us the lands we live on. Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIAA are disappearing and being killed at an alarming rate, most cases are left unsolved. We all know about it; it has been reported many times, solutions have been found (National Inquiry 2019). Yet, we do not act upon it to change anything. Why is that?

How does it happen?

It would have a lot to do with psychic numbing, according to psychology professor Paul Slovic of the University of Oregon. The idea behind this theory is that we become vaguely indifferent to human tragedies as we lose the sense of context of large numbers that are not

attached to individual faces and stories. We lose grasp of the extent of those statistics and therefore are not receptive to them (Slovic 2007). This means that we would feel a lot more emotions towards the lost of a single known, even for a brief moment, individual than the one of a large group of people, regardless how tragic the event leading to their disappearance is. Slovic even experimented on this. Given three possibilities, Slovic concluded that people will donate more after learning about one lived experience rather than getting educated on statistics of the matter or even learning about statistics as well as the individual lived experience (Slovic 2007). That is to say that even if the individual factor would be added to the equation, there would still be a need to remove the grandiose numbers to not scare off people from taking action. How do we then remove the pressuring factor to a crisis that has affected all three territories and 10 provinces of what is currently Canada? How are we able to look beyond the statistics and into the individual lived experiences of the lost sisters, while recognizing that this is not an alienated problem, it is a genocide?

What is a solution?

First, the text was intentionally written to ignore any statistics related to the MMIWG. That is a conscious choice. Other resources have somewhat fulfilled that role, even if much more information and data is needed into the matter. Nevertheless, to experiment on Slovic's theories, large numbers will be omitted from this project. Instead, users will be able to focus on a single girl, woman or 2SLGBTQIAA, randomly chosen as they press the '1' on the homepage. This will take them to a brief randomly scattered around their 'desk'. This is the brief of the 1 that is going to matter for them today. They will not be able to learn about another girl, woman or 2SLGBTQIA (unless they reload the website, of course). They will be able to go through articles, pictures, and videos by zooming and clicking on them. Some transitions and animations

will be added to accentuate the ephemeral life she lived on earth. Call to actions specific to every individual will be added in a clear way, as well as the path to find more information about her. Everything will be created to learn about her, lived experiences of those affected by her, media coverage as well as political changes that were impacted by her. In an attempt to approach this work within a decolonizing perspective, I will reduce to a minimum my voice within those briefs. This will reduce the chances that my biased opinion originating from my heritage as a white settler transcends the content of my project.

Works Cited

Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. Canada, 2019. Accessed on nov. 2nd, 2020.

<https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/>

Slovic, Paul. “Psychic Numbing and Genocide”. *Psychological Science Agenda*, Nov 2007. Accessed on nov. 1st, 2020. <https://www.apa.org/science/about/psa/2007/11/slovic>